

**REPORT  
FROM THE  
INSPECTORATE**

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# **Leeds College of Art and Design**

**August 1997**

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**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 the 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 1996, some 329 college inspections had been completed. The grade profiles for aspects of cross-college provision and programme areas for the 329 colleges are shown in the following table.*

### **College grade profiles 1993-96**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Inspection grades</b>				
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Programme area	9%	59%	29%	3%	<1%
Cross-college provision	14%	50%	31%	5%	<1%
Overall	12%	54%	30%	4%	<1%

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# FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 91/97

**LEEDS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN**  
**YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGION**  
**Inspected January 1996-April 1997**

## Summary

Leeds College of Art and Design is a specialist college. It offers a wide range of courses in art, craft and design including those designed to meet the needs of the community. The governors are supportive and involved in the life of the college. The senior management team provides strong leadership. Teaching is generally well planned and effective. Staff are well qualified and experienced. They include practising professional artists. Relationships between staff and students are good. The college has a wide range of up-to-date, specialist equipment. To build on its strengths the college should: ensure that all students receive effective tutorial support; address poor levels of attendance and retention on a minority of courses; further develop the implementation of quality assurance procedures; and improve the appearance of some studios.

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

<b>Aspects of cross-college provision</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Responsiveness and range of provision	2
Governance and management	2
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	3
Quality assurance	2
Resources: staffing	2
equipment/learning resources	1
accommodation	2

<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Printed textiles and GNVQs	2	Visual communications	2
Three-dimensional design	2	Furniture	2
Foundation studies	1	Clothing and fashion	2

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1 Leeds College of Art and Design was inspected between January 1996 and April 1997. Enrolment and induction of students were inspected in September 1996. Inspectors visited 72 classes, examined students' work and college documentation, and held discussions with college governors, college managers, parents, students, staff, a representative from the Leeds Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), representatives from industry and other members of the local community.

## **THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS**

2 Leeds College of Art and Design provides a comprehensive range of further and higher education courses in art, craft and design. The origins of the college go back to 1846 when the Leeds Mechanics' Institute merged with the Literary Institute to form the Leeds School of Art. The college is located on two sites. The city centre site comprises two adjacent listed buildings: Rossington Street built in 1886 as the Boys Modern School, and the School of Art which was built in 1903. The college also has premises on another site, half a mile from the city centre. These were purpose built in 1983.

3 The college offers a wide range of courses in art, craft and design. It has well-established specialist provision in fashion, clothing, three-dimensional design, furniture, graphics and photomedia. In November 1996, 2,222 students were enrolled at the college, of whom 872 were studying full time. Of the full-time students, 275 were on higher education courses. Of the part-time students, 1,350 were enrolled on vocational courses. Student numbers by age, by level of study, and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 1, 2, and 3. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

4 Leeds has one of the largest labour markets in England, with more than 350,000 people in employment from a total population of approximately 725,000. The services sector employs 73 per cent of the workforce. Approximately 8 per cent of the workforce are unemployed and this proportion is below both regional and national averages. However, long-term unemployment is high, especially for males. In six of the inner-city wards, unemployment rates are between 17 and 24 per cent.

5 The college recruits locally, nationally and internationally. Twenty-one per cent of the college's students come from outside Leeds. Within the city, there are five general further education colleges, a Catholic sixth form college and two other specialist colleges which are the Leeds College of Music and the Leeds College of Building. There are three higher education institutions in the city: two universities and the Northern School of Contemporary Dance. The city has a strong artistic and cultural life.

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6 The college is organised into six programmes: foundation studies; clothing and fashion; printed textiles; general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) three-dimensional design; visual communications and community education. The curriculum is overseen by the assistant principal, academic affairs, and the six programme directors. Other cross-college roles are undertaken by the principal, and the assistant principal, finance. These nine senior managers form the college board of management.

7 The college's mission is to provide distinctive education in art, design and the crafts, enabling its students to progress to successful and rewarding careers. In addition, the college seeks to lead and innovate, particularly in areas of new technology.

### **RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION**

8 The college offers a wide range of full-time and part-time courses in art, craft and design and related technologies from intermediate to undergraduate levels. It has recently introduced GNVQ courses in art, craft and design at advanced and intermediate levels, and courses leading to the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) national diploma and certificate. There are courses in design subjects leading to BTEC higher national certificates and there is provision at undergraduate level. In response to the needs of adult students, the college has introduced courses for access to both further and higher education. Students on further education courses, including the access course, can progress to art, craft and design foundation courses which are usually followed, post general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) or post GNVQ advanced level. In addition, there are opportunities for students to progress to courses leading to national diplomas in photomedia, graphic design, surface pattern, illustration, furniture making and restoration, fashion and accessories, clothing, and three-dimensional design. All these specialist courses are modular, and students can enrol for a single module or for groups of modules. Students can progress to the college's own bachelor of art degrees in fashion and clothing, printed textiles, interior design or visual communications, which are validated by the University of Leeds. The college has no formal compact arrangements with higher education institutions, whereby successful students are guaranteed entry to them.

9 There is provision for students wishing to study for GCE A levels in art and design, media studies, business studies, art history, English and psychology. Full-time students on advanced level courses are encouraged to take a GCE A level subject to increase their chances of securing a place in higher education. In addition, extra classes are available for those students who do not have grade C or above in general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) English and mathematics. Students also have an opportunity to study a European language. Attendance and retention on these courses have been poor. Staff are now providing more systematic support and encouragement for students to complete these courses.

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10 The college has courses in art, media, information technology and craft and design which are validated by the Open College Network. Most of the courses offered take place in the evening, and drawing and painting courses are available on Saturday mornings. Students may choose to take single courses, or they can put together a portfolio of courses at different levels in different subjects. Courses for industry are offered in computer-aided design and multimedia.

11 The college attracts small numbers of students from a large number of local and regional schools. It concentrates its liaison activities on those schools that regularly provide it with students. The college has a range of links with over 35 schools. College staff attend open days and careers functions at these schools. Art teachers from the schools are invited to college events. The college has open days for prospective students to visit its facilities. A series of life drawing classes is offered to sixth form pupils to complement their school studies. This provides them with an opportunity to improve their drawing skills, meet staff and students and observe the work of the college. Approximately 12 per cent of the students who have taken this opportunity enrol as students at the college.

12 Staff believe that 16 to 19 year old students should be treated as adults. Any information on progress is, therefore, addressed to students and not their parents. Staff acknowledge that parents would like to receive more information on their children's progress and have a greater involvement in their educational process. Since September 1996, a number of measures have been introduced. These include parents' evenings, a self-assessment report which is completed by the student at the end of the first term and contains comments from the course leader. Some parents report that they are still unsatisfied with the feedback and information they receive from the college.

13 The college's links with the Leeds community have been underdeveloped. In order to increase the profile of the college locally, and in an attempt to address the needs of groups under represented in art and design education, a number of projects have been undertaken in co-operation with Leeds City Council. These have led to programmes directed towards unemployed or homeless young people, minority ethnic communities, women returners and those with learning difficulties. Most of this work is carried out within the community, and it covers a range of subjects including video, photography, multimedia, digital imaging, fashion, arts and crafts and oral history. The college bids for funding from Leeds City Council for all its community work. The council sees the college as responsive to community needs. A successful development has been the college's support for the Leeds Tapestry 2000 project. The college has helped this project in a number of ways, for example, by providing tuition for the volunteers to enable them to learn how to construct and stitch their pieces.



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14 Through its links with Leeds TEC, the college participates in various activities such as initiatives to link schools with colleges, competitiveness fund bids, the education business partnership, and collaborative projects. The TEC considers the college to be responsive to the needs of the community.

15 The TEC worked with the college on a successful bid to develop a multimedia centre that would provide training for local employers and the community. The multimedia centre which opened in 1996, is a valuable resource for both staff and students. A project in association with a local video production company fulfils the bid's requirement that the centre should enable community and disadvantaged groups to be involved in multimedia activity. Through this project, 11 students from a variety of ethnic, work and educational backgrounds participate in a modular one-year higher national certificate course. None have withdrawn, although the programme is challenging and students have to work under pressure.

16 Through collaborative arrangements with colleges on the European continent, the college has placements for college students in France, Portugal and Spain. Students from these colleges are found similar work placements within the United Kingdom. Students on most courses are regularly taken on cultural visits to various parts of the continent. New links are being made with colleges in other European countries in relation to joint project work. The college is also developing its international activities by marketing its courses overseas.

17 The promotional and information documents produced by the college are clearly written, well designed and effectively presented. Following consultation with students, the prospectus has been modified to include more information on course content. Students and schools staff report that they find the prospectus informative and attractive. Market intelligence (for example, analytical surveys of the local population) is mostly provided by an external agency. Marketing activity is currently directed by the principal. Draft marketing plans have been produced which are referenced to the college's mission and strategic plan.

18 The college has policies covering equal opportunities, and student and staff conduct. An equal opportunities subcommittee meets termly and has appropriate membership, including a representative of the student union. The equal opportunities policy statement was reviewed by the committee last year.

#### **GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

19 The corporation of the college has 12 members, including the principal. Seven are business members who have expertise in law, accountancy, design, education and the clothing industry. The board also has two co-opted members: the college's assistant principals, curriculum and finance. In addition, there is one community member and a TEC

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nominee. Governors have reviewed the membership. The most recent appointment is of a member with architectural experience who will assist with the development of the college's buildings. The clerk to the corporation is a practising solicitor who has considerable experience in clerking duties. All meetings of the corporation and its committees are well organised and minuted by the clerk. A search committee contacts external professional bodies, and interested parties are short-listed and interviewed. The board has decided not to have elected staff or student members.

20 The board has five committees: finance, remuneration, personnel, audit, and academic standards. Committees have well-documented terms of reference and appropriate membership. Major college policies are approved by the board. Members are very supportive of the college and are clear about their strategic role. There is a clear division of responsibilities between the board of the corporation and the executive of the college. Governors are aware of current issues relating to art and design, further education in general, and the financial pressures affecting college managers. They have close links with the academic life of the college. The board routinely receives minutes from the academic board. Each business member is formally linked to specialist curriculum areas. Some business members attend course team meetings and all receive the appropriate minutes. Many attend social functions and exhibitions of students' work organised by the college. Members of the board have evaluated their own performance.

21 Board members, senior managers and many staff have been involved in the review of the mission statement. They have had a number of meetings to discuss this and the strategic objectives for the college. There is a thorough process for the development of the strategic plan which involves course teams in the preparation of plans based on objectives set by the board. Course plans are aggregated into programme area plans which, in turn, have formed the basis for the college's overall strategic plan. This is the first year that course teams and the college as a whole have prepared operating statements to complement the planning process.

22 The senior managers have shown strong leadership. A consultative style of management involves staff in the decision-making process. There are two main committees: the management board and the academic board. The management board has been extended to include representatives from those programme areas where, currently, there is no director in post.

23 There are good lines of communication within the college. Means of communication include the principal's newsletter and meetings for all the staff. Each course team has regular meetings. Course teams report through their minutes to programme area committees, which in turn report to the management and academic boards. There are a large number of subcommittees to these boards. Although staff are kept well informed of current developments in the college through their involvement in

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committees, the large number of committees and the timing of their meetings have caused some difficulties. In some cases, the meetings have interfered with teaching commitments. The principal is reviewing the management arrangements of the college. Some programme directors have yet to fully develop the management skills to ensure that college policies and procedures are consistently implemented. Student surveys on a minority of courses indicate some weaknesses in course organisation which the college is addressing.

24 The management board has three subcommittees: health and safety, support staff and staff training and development. Arrangements for ensuring health and safety are well organised. Major responsibilities for health and safety are allocated to the two recently-appointed building supervisors. The academic board has a high profile in the college. Its membership includes programme directors, course leaders and managers of cross-college functions. There are a number of sub-committees: marketing, student services, equal opportunities, bachelor of arts academic standards, quality assurance and internal verification.

25 The principal and the assistant principal, finance, ensure that expenditure is kept within the budget approved by the corporation. Regular reports include entries showing any predicted variation from the original budget. Budgets have been allocated to course team leaders and others using a formula based on student numbers. The formula is well understood and the system of financial allocation is considered fair. All budget holders receive regular and clear reports on expenditure. Next year's financial allocation to budget holders will be determined on the basis of Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) units. The college has provided staff development on financial matters.

26 The college's income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1996 are shown in figures 5 and 6. Its average level of funding for 1996-97 is £18.87 per unit. The median for art and design colleges is £22.31 per unit. Enrolment targets are set and progress towards achieving them is carefully monitored by the academic standards committee of the corporation. The college has been oversubscribed since its formation, and in each of the last three years it has met its growth target for further education units.

27 College managers accept that their computerised management information systems have some limitations. Too much information is maintained in a variety of computerised systems. The college has recently appointed a management information officer and an external consultant to rationalise the systems. There are three systems in operation: a finance system, a personnel system and a students' records system. They are not integrated. Managers do not have confidence that the students' records system provides accurate data. For example, the information on students' achievements required by inspectors was inaccurate and was being

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updated during the team week inspection. The management information systems are not networked across the college, and, in consequence, access to them is restricted. Only the management information officer has direct access to the students' records database.

### **STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

28 Prospective students receive advice and guidance through open days, visits to schools by college staff, informal visits to the college, and discussions with student services staff or course leaders. All students are offered an initial interview by student services, at which they can receive impartial guidance and also discuss financial and welfare issues. Students comment on the friendly welcome which they receive on these occasions. College staff attend careers conventions, and have participated in the BBC Clothes Show Live. Opportunities have been provided for careers teachers to visit the college, either individually or in groups, and to attend end-of-year exhibitions. A school links and work experience programme for years 10 and 11, and a Saturday morning programme for students aged 11 to 14, raise awareness of the specialist provision.

29 Application procedures are clear. At all course interviews, at least two members of staff examine the students' portfolios. Students complete an interview evaluation form on which they can request a further interview. Successful candidates are sent comprehensive enrolment and induction information before they start their course. They are offered a tutorial before enrolment at which they can have their prior achievements recognised. There were inconsistencies in the advice prospective students received during open days. For example, some were left to their own devices, receiving little or no advice about the courses available. Others received detailed information on a range of courses, and they were given a tour of specialist facilities. Not all prospective full-time students were given an interview. Of those who were, the majority expressed satisfaction with the interview they received. Nevertheless, there were inconsistencies in the amount of information given during interviews. For example, some students received detailed information on the costs involved in studying whilst others did not.

30 During August and September, the college organises a three-week programme of enrolment and induction for all full-time students. The programme includes information about college structures and facilities, and the students' chosen course of study. Tutors are provided with an induction policy and guidelines to help them to ensure that they are uniform in their approach to induction. Students receive a comprehensive guide and course handbook which they consider helpful and informative. Student services staff also provide an introduction to the advice and support available. During their induction, all full-time further education students are advised of their rights and responsibilities under the college charter. Students are tested in numeracy and literacy. The college arranges tuition in English for speakers of other languages

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(ESOL) at a nearby college. Students wishing to transfer between courses receive guidance from course leaders and student services. There was variation in the length of induction to courses. A minority of students felt induction lacked value and did not maintain their interest.

31 Student services staff provide guidance to second-year students with their applications to higher education. Visiting speakers are invited to college to talk on issues such as AIDS and drug abuse. Staff maintain close contacts with external agencies within Leeds. For example, the college's welfare and educational guidance adviser spends one day a week at the local citizens advice bureau.

32 All students interviewed spoke positively about their experience of college life and the good relationships between staff and students. All full-time and part-time students have access to a personal tutor. The college has recently appointed a tutor to provide support to students on courses accredited by the Open College Network. Students valued the informal nature of tutorial support provided by course tutors. The tutorial programme did not always meet the needs of individual students. The college gives a commitment in its charter that students will receive a minimum of two tutorials a term. Responses to a questionnaire on the quality of provision in the academic year, 1995-96, indicated that some students were not satisfied with the support given by their course tutor, and that they had not received two tutorials a term.

33 The majority of students value the guidance they are given when they apply for higher education courses. Students receive careers education and guidance from various sources, including student services, course tutors and the Leeds Careers Guidance Service. Up-to-date information concerning employment, higher education, and computerised reference materials is available on the two sites. Most of the information concerning careers and higher education relates to art and design. Former students have returned to the college to give presentations on the art and design courses they are following at university. These presentations are valued by students. For those students seeking employment, there are sessions on job search, job applications and the preparation of curricula vitae. Foundation art and design students only receive informal advice on progression to higher education.

34 Students' attendance is monitored automatically by means of a registration card which students use whenever they enter and leave a building; in addition, attendance is monitored through class registration. The college registration officer forwards registration card data to student services and course leaders on a weekly and monthly basis. Letters are sent to students who are persistently absent. There is, however, some confusion over whether it is staff in students' services or course tutors who should take follow up action after letters have been sent to absentee students. Class registers were not always marked consistently.

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35 The student union is active in its attempt to promote sporting, leisure and cultural activities amongst students. The college subsidises the union. There is a staff-student liaison group which meets on a regular basis. This provides an effective channel of communication between staff and students.

### **TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING**

36 Strengths outweighed the weaknesses in 70 per cent of the sessions inspected. In 3 per cent of sessions the weaknesses outweighed the strengths. These percentages compare with 63 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, for all colleges inspected in 1995-96, according to figures published in the *Chief Inspector's Annual Report 1995-96*. During the inspection, the number of students attending classes as a percentage of those on the register ranged from 72 per cent in printed textiles and GNVQ courses, to 62 per cent in three-dimensional design. The average attendance was 70 per cent and, on average, 16 students attended each of the lessons observed. The national figure for attendance in general further education colleges inspected during 1995-96 was 73 per cent and an average of 11 students attended the lessons observed, according to figures published in the *Chief Inspector's Annual Report 1995-96*. The following table shows the grades awarded to the teaching sessions inspected.

#### **Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study**

<b>Programmes</b>	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Other vocational	14	17	7	1	0	39
GNVQ	1	5	4	1	0	11
Higher education	2	0	0	0	0	2
Other	2	9	9	0	0	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>72</b>

37 Relationships between staff and students were good. Lessons were well planned. Students benefited from lessons which had purpose and direction, and which engaged their interest. Teaching in the studios was particularly effective. Teachers gave good individual support to students. Project briefings for students were produced to a common format; most were wordprocessed and included details of the tasks, assessment criteria, deadlines and relevant background information. In less successful lessons, teachers talked too much and failed to ensure that students participated fully in learning activities. In some classes, teachers did not question the students sufficiently to check that they understood what was being taught.

38 Teaching on the three-dimensional course was effective. Learning strategies covered aspects of design, and of technical and creative work. For example, a first-year project on Cityscape introduced students to aspects of scale and model making. Using texts from literature as starting

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points, the students were encouraged to explore alternative forms of expression. At the end of the project they presented their work to the group for it to be assessed by the other students. In some lessons, the use of information technology was inappropriate for the lesson objectives and the ability of individual students.

39 In clothing, teaching was generally effective. In many lessons, the teacher summarised the students' achievements at the end of the session. Students' learning was further developed by industrial placements. For example, on their return from placements, students enthusiastically presented their work to their fellow students and gave their views on their work experience. One student, working for a clothing manufacturer, had been asked to design all their new season's menswear. The teaching of technical aspects of the course was good. In some lessons, teachers did not ensure that students understood the briefs for particular tasks and the order in which work was to be carried out.

40 Graphic design and photomedia lessons had clear objectives. The teachers were sensitive to the needs of their students. They provided them with help and support to enable them to undertake tasks which challenged them to think and use their skills well. For example, students on a first-year diploma course in illustration who were making a series of fashion drawings, used coloured tissue paper and line to form a figure drawing of a jazz guitarist, who played whilst he posed for them. The students were given examples of work to consider and they received advice and encouragement. In some drawing sessions, the students were disadvantaged by the limited range of models available.

41 Teachers on the GNVQ intermediate and advanced art and design courses, provided stimulating activities for students. For example, second-year students on the GNVQ advanced course were given a detailed brief to prepare and deliver 10-minute illustrated talks on 'heroes and heroines' and on pairs of artists and designers who had something in common. In some lessons, where the class contained students of varying abilities, teachers failed to ensure that all students were fully engaged in activities which suited their aptitude.

42 Teaching in furniture was well organised and schemes of work paid proper attention to detail. The teachers worked well as a team and gave good individual support to the students. For example, teachers had developed extensive teaching and learning resources to meet the needs of students with widely differing abilities and experiences. Staff had established a good standard of health and safety practice in each specialist area. In some classes, the pace of learning was inappropriate to the needs of some students. The teacher neglected to help the students with their design skills or to promote their visual development.

43 Teaching on the foundation course was well planned and well structured. Students received appropriate information to ensure that they understood all aspects of the programme of study. For example, the course

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handbook and information pack for students contained the course aims, structure and content. Teachers used a range of stimulating activities which helped to develop students' professional and creative skills. These included: one-to-one teaching, formal presentations, group work, critiques, seminars and projects devised by staff and students. Teachers varied the pace and level of their presentations to match the needs and abilities of their students. Of particular note were the high standards of work produced by the mature part-time students, many of whom were studying after a significant break from education.

### **STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS**

44 Most students are highly motivated and benefit from the range of opportunities provided for them to develop their professional and technical expertise. They have chosen to come to the college because of their strong commitment to their specialist area of art and design and because of the college's good reputation. They have a professional attitude to their work, and demonstrate energy and enthusiasm in lessons and in their project work.

45 In general, assessment procedures are appropriate. A variety of assessment methods is used, including self-assessment and peer assessment. On the BTEC diploma course in foundation studies in art and design, the end-of-course grading meeting is attended by several of the course teachers to ensure that there is a consensus on the overall grade. Students are aware of formal assessment schedules and reviews. The completed work of students on GNVQ intermediate and advanced courses in art and design is not kept as a record of students' achievements which teachers may consult in order to help them to ensure consistency in assessment. On some courses, students failed to reach appropriate standards in presenting their portfolios.

46 Most students worked effectively in small groups. For example, groups of students on the BTEC national diploma course in three-dimensional design discussed ideas, justified decisions and made constructive criticism. Most students' work is technically competent, original and professional. Clothing and fashion students were invited to exhibit at the National Exhibition Centre. The drawing skills of some students on the GNVQ advanced art and design were not up to standard.

47 The achievements of students in examinations vary. All the full-time students aged 16 to 19 who were entered for GCE A level art and design obtained a pass grade and 66 per cent of them achieved a pass at grade C or above. In 1996, 91 per cent of students who completed the higher national certificate in interior decoration course gained the award. On the BTEC diploma course in foundation studies in art and design, 97 per cent of students who completed it obtained the award in 1996. Ninety per cent of students resitting GCSE English language obtained grade C or above. Results for GCSE mathematics were low; only 33 per cent of



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students obtained grade C or above. The pass rates on the BTEC national diploma courses in three-dimensional design and illustration were 66 per cent and 64 per cent, respectively, both above the national average. Pass rates were low on the GNVQ intermediate course in art and design: of the 52 students enrolled on the course, only 61 per cent obtained the award. Pass rates on the BTEC national diploma course in furniture making and restoration have fallen significantly from 75 per cent in 1995 to 43 per cent in 1996.

48 Retention rates vary considerably. On the GNVQ intermediate course in art and design, 94 per cent of students completed the course. Retention rates on other courses are less satisfactory. For example, in the first term of the current academic year, the retention rate on the BTEC national diploma course in three-dimensional design was 71 per cent. Of those students who enrolled in 1994 on the BTEC national diploma course in graphics and on the City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) cabinet making course, 66 per cent and 62 per cent, respectively, completed the programme.

49 Most students progress to employment or to higher education. Eighty-two per cent of students who enrolled on the BTEC diploma course in foundation studies progressed to higher education. Of the remaining full-time further education students, 50 per cent progressed to higher education, 30 per cent to other further education programmes, and 11 per cent obtained employment. The destinations of a further 9 per cent of leavers were unknown. Some course teams do not maintain comprehensive information on students' destinations.

#### **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

50 The responsibility for quality assurance rests with the governors, through an academic standards committee of the corporation. A new structure of course review and evaluation was introduced for courses and service areas in 1995. Its administration is the responsibility of the assistant principal, academic affairs. The principal contributes to the implementation of the quality assurance policy by participating in some of its constituent events, and by serving as chair of the academic board and the management board which advise on different aspects of quality improvement. Quality assurance reports are submitted by course and support teams to the management board, principal and the governors. The assistant principal, academic affairs, and the quality assurance team have the responsibility for evolving the system and resolving outstanding issues. The academic board and its quality assurance and validation committee approve new course proposals and monitor the quality of provision across the college.

51 It is intended that as many staff as possible should be involved in the implementation of the quality assurance system in order that the college may sustain a culture of continuous improvement. During 1995, course

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and support teams established operational standards. They identified who the college's clients were, identified their needs and the services they required. Standard procedures for evaluating the quality of provision were introduced. Documentation for these procedures identifies the staff who have responsibilities for evaluation, specifies the timescales within which evaluation must be completed and states the performance indicators against which the college's success may be measured. The standards which the college sets itself are regularly revised. Course and support teams meet fortnightly. The best of them work to agendas and deal decisively with issues relating to quality. Students are members of course teams.

52 Course teams produce an annual review. These summative reviews are evaluated by the assistant principal, academic affairs, and the quality assurance committee of the academic board. The reviews are succinct and they have accompanying action plans. Staff see the review process as effective. However, the rigour with which summative reviews are conducted varies.

53 During the first two years of the implementation of the quality assurance system, priority has been given to securing the compliance of all staff across the college with quality assurance procedures. In producing course reviews, staff are required to confront and explain data which indicate poor performance. A team of staff, working to the academic board, carries out an academic audit process annually. In 1996, the audit included the observation of teaching. There is, as yet, no evidence to show that the audit system has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and students' achievements, and in attendance and retention rates.

54 The college carries out additional checks on quality. For example, students are invited to offer written suggestions for improving the college's provision and place these in suggestion boxes. There are regular meetings between students' representatives and the principal at which students' views and complaints may be raised. The college takes action on issues which arise from these additional checks. For example, the refectory facilities and the learning resource centre at the Jacob Kramer building have been improved.

55 The college requires that internal assessments are carried out by at least two members of staff. This practice is traditional in art and design. Internal verification of assessment is, however, underdeveloped. The college is aware of this and intends to carry out appropriate verification procedures.

56 A staff-appraisal scheme for teaching and support staff was introduced in 1996. It operates over a two-year cycle. In 1996, staff agreed objectives for their work. In 1997, staff were subject to an interim review of their performance. In 1998, staff will be fully appraised and they will revise their objectives. As part of their appraisal process, staff are observed carrying out tasks. Staff speak positively of the care that

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management took to allay their previous anxieties about appraisal. They say that they have found their initial appraisal interviews helpful. New teaching and support staff serve a probationary period. During this, they have three formal guidance sessions with managers and with the personnel department.

57 The college achieved the Investor in People standard in February 1997. In 1996-97 the college stated that 2.2 per cent of pay costs had been devoted to staff and curriculum development. Priorities for training are set in accordance with the college's strategic plan and a training needs analysis. There has been an emphasis on management training. Staff development is well organised by a training officer.

58 The college produced a self-assessment report for the inspection. Separate sections dealt with curriculum areas and cross-college functions, in accordance with Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. The report is set out in tabular form and it is easy to follow. Course teams took part in preparing the document, but neither the governors nor all the staff have seen it in its completed form. Self-assessment is not yet a routine outcome of the college's quality assurance system. There is much commonality between the findings of the college's self-assessment report and those of the inspectors. The self-assessment report failed to record some weaknesses in provision, even though the college was aware of these.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Staffing**

59 Most teachers are well qualified and experienced for the work they undertake. A number of full-time staff are also practising artists and designers. Thirty-three per cent of full-time staff and 12 per cent of part-time staff possess training and development lead body assessor awards. Twenty-seven per cent of the full-time staff have a teaching qualification.

60 The college deploys staff efficiently and students benefit from the support which teachers, technical tutors and workshop managers all provide. Good use is made of part-time teachers and visiting lecturers who bring a wide range of specialist expertise to the programmes. Many of them are practising designers and artists and their up-to-date knowledge and experience in their respective fields are respected and valued by the students. Seventy-nine per cent of the part-time staff have a degree or professional qualification. Twenty-one per cent of part-time staff have a higher degree.

61 Employment policies and procedures are well documented and those covering the recruitment and selection of staff are particularly clear. All staff receive a comprehensive staff handbook which they value as a source of information. Employment policies and practices for all staff have been harmonised in key areas such as appraisal and conduct and in

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relation to grievance procedures. Staff absence is monitored. Sixty-seven per cent of the full-time staff are male and 33 per cent female. Forty-seven per cent of the male members of staff, and only 13 per cent of the female members of staff, are managers.

62 Technical and business support staff are well qualified, suitably experienced and fully integrated with the teaching staff. They provide good levels of support in the information technology library and learning resource centre, and for the multimedia, photography and administrative services. The support staff attend course team meetings and contribute to the course planning process. They feel that the college values their work and they receive the same encouragement and support as the teaching staff to acquire further qualifications.

### **Equipment/learning resources**

63 Studios and workshops have an extensive range of specialist equipment which is up to current professional and technical standards. The recently-updated photography and printmaking equipment is particularly good. The lecture theatre has been refurbished and provided with the latest audio-visual presentation facilities, including those for persons with a hearing impediment. The multimedia centre provides students with access to extensive computer, video and animation technology. There is also a video editing suite. Fashion students are able to work in a realistic working environment which includes industrial sewing machines, pressing machines and related production machinery. There are specialist jewellery workbenches with an appropriate range of handtools. Metal and plastics workshops are equipped for metal turning, milling, welding and soldering. Further education students benefit from being able to use the specialist equipment and facilities provided for higher education programmes. Equipment is well maintained.

64 The overall quality of information technology equipment is high. The college is well equipped with vocationally-relevant modern computers and software which reflect current industrial standards. The fashion and three-dimensional design programmes have a personal computer-based resource, and the graphic-related design equipment matches that found in current commercial practice. There is a ratio of one machine to every 11 full-time equivalent students. Capital expenditure since 1994 on computers and software has been £476,528. One co-ordinator is responsible for the information technology facilities on the two college sites.

65 The extensive library provides good study facilities and it has a carefully chosen reference section of essential resources including magazines and prospectuses. There are packs of open learning materials which students can study on their own for mathematics, communications, information technology and European languages. The library has 17,000 books, 3,000 slides, a range of over 90 specialist periodicals, nine compact

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disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) databases and a collection of videos. It also has an illustration collection and large archive for reference. The library is well managed by a qualified tutor librarian. There are 6.5 full-time equivalent library staff with appropriate qualifications and experience, who are involved in college committees and course team meetings. A small learning resource centre at the Jacob Kramer building has been developed and this offers a selection of reference books and CD-ROMs, prospectuses, language materials, and packs of learning materials to help students to develop study skills.

### **Accommodation**

66 Accommodation is generally well organised; courses, staff and students are based on one specific site to minimise disruption. At the time of inspection, the college was carrying out major refurbishment on all sites; the refurbishment at Rossington Street was still largely unfinished. Since incorporation, £1,864,874 has been spent on improvements to the accommodation. Staff were consulted at different times during the refurbishment process. As a result of refurbishment, the college has acquired an excellent photographic and multimedia resource, additional storage spaces and student lockers, and several mezzanine floors housing design studios. Since September 1994, £239,682 has been spent on lifts, ramps and toilets to provide access for people with disabilities. Some practical work areas are cramped. There is a lack of visually stimulating display material in some studios and public areas.

67 The refectory and social facilities are poor and, as a result, students engage in the unprofessional practice of eating and drinking in studios. The untidy state of some studios reflects a failure, on the part of students, to carry out good housekeeping as part of their professional development.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES**

68 The strengths of the college are:

- a wide range of art, craft and design provision for full-time and part-time students
- provision which meets the needs of the under-represented groups in the community
- the strong and supportive leadership provided by senior managers
- its supportive governors who are involved in the life of the college
- teaching which is generally well planned and effective
- its well-qualified and experienced staff, including some who are practising professionals in their specialist fields
- a wide range of up-to-date specialist equipment
- the good relationships between staff and students.

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69 If it is to continue to improve its provision the college should address:

- inconsistencies in tutorial practice
- poor procedures for monitoring retention and attendance rates on some courses
- the need to ensure the further development of its quality assurance procedures
- the appearance of some studios.

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## FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage student numbers by age (as at November 1996)

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  - 2 Percentage student numbers by level of study (as at November 1996)

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  - 3 Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at November 1996)

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  - 4 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at November 1996)

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  - 5 Income (for 12 months to July 1996)

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  - 6 Expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)

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

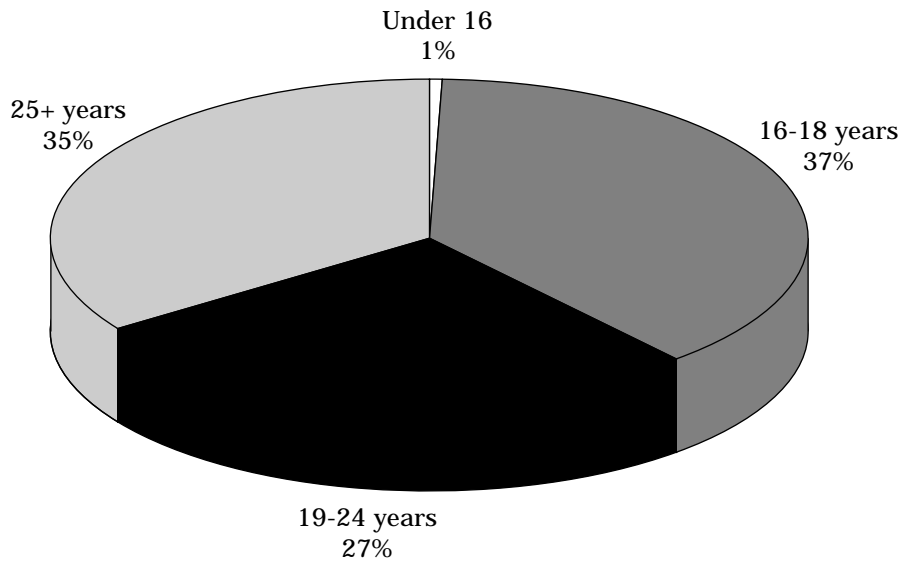
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**Figure 1**

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**Leeds College of Art and Design: percentage student numbers by age  
(as at November 1996)**



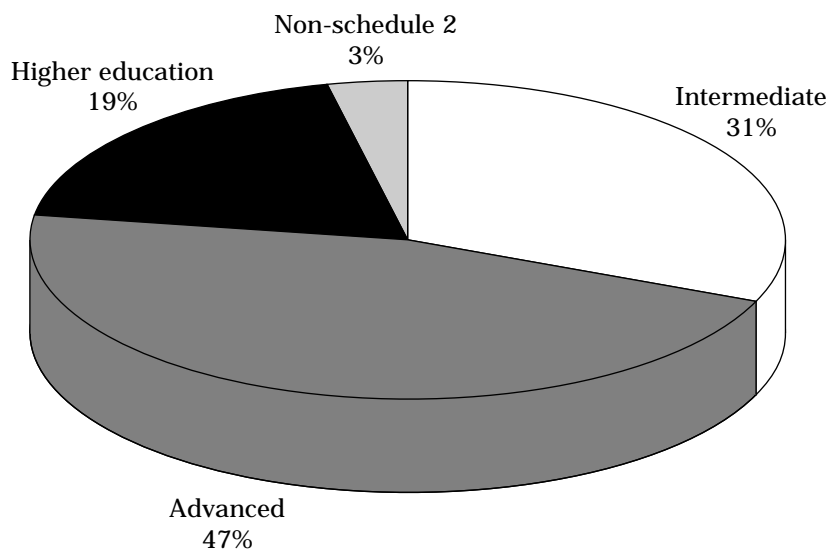
Student numbers: 2,222

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**Figure 2**

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**Leeds College of Art and Design: percentage student numbers by level of study  
(as at November 1996)**



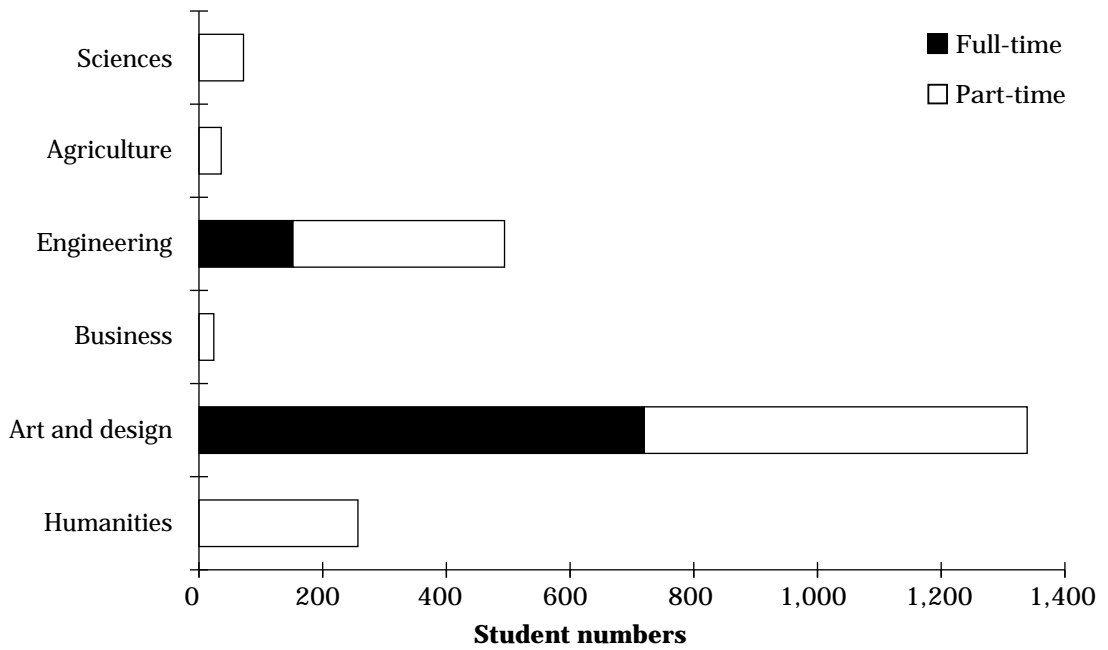
Student numbers: 2,222



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**Figure 3**

**Leeds College of Art and Design: student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at November 1996)**

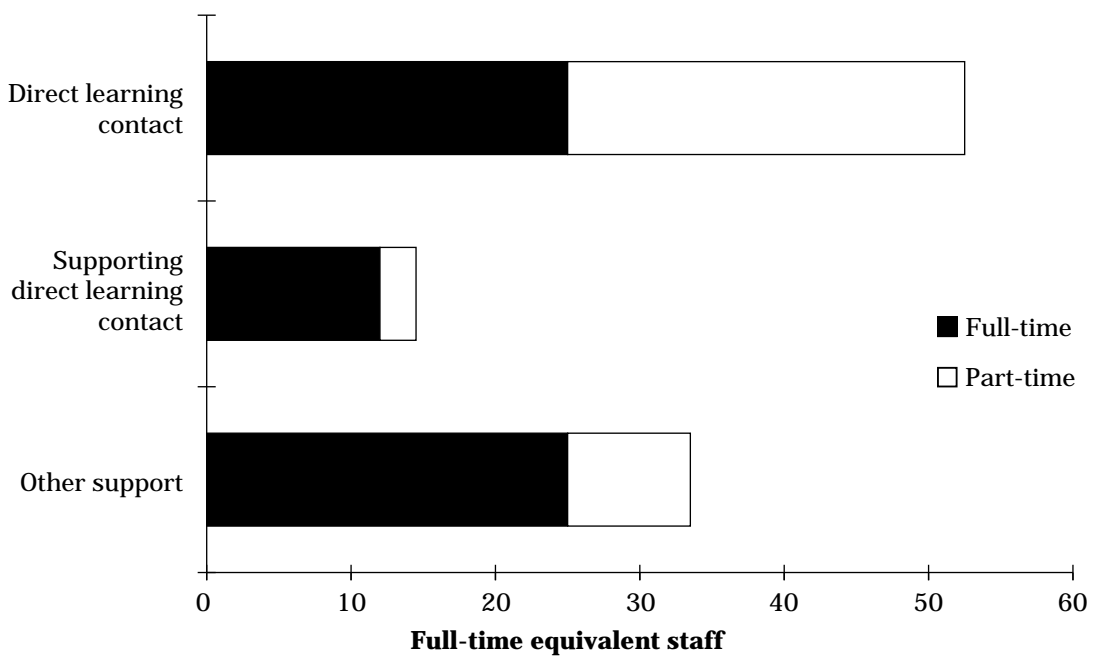


Student numbers: 2,222

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**Figure 4**

**Leeds College of Art and Design: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at November 1996)**



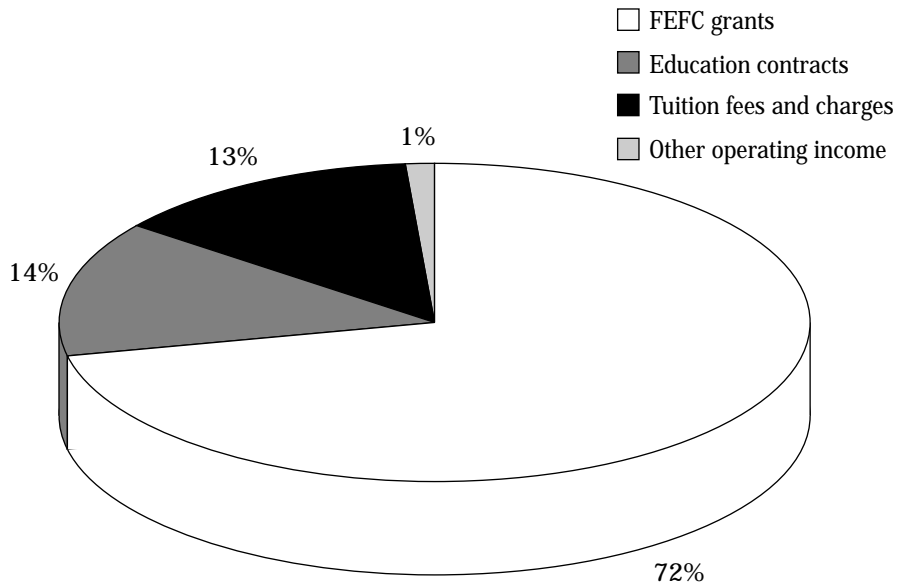
Full-time equivalent staff: 101

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**Figure 5**

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**Leeds College of Art and Design: income (for 12 months to July 1996)**

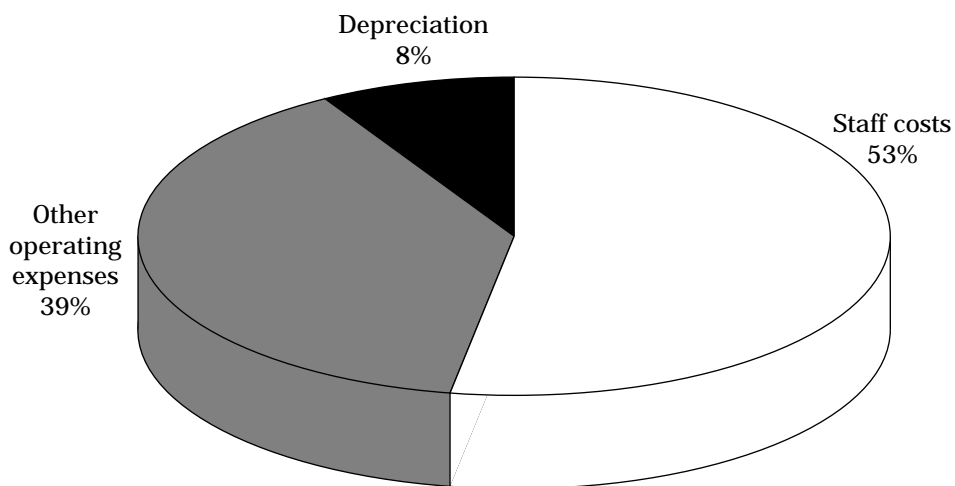


Income: £4,133,133

**Figure 6**

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**Leeds College of Art and Design: expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)**



Expenditure: £4,132,867

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