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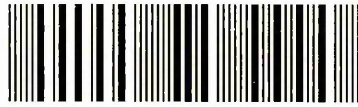
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MANAGING MARKETING IN
FURTHER EDUCATION

by

DERECK WEBSTER B A (Hons)

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of Sheffield Hallam University
for the degree of Master of Philosophy

December 1996

Collaborating Organisations: THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE

SHREWSBURY COLLEGE OF

ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

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A B S T R A C T

Preliminary research suggests that approaches to marketing within further education are poorly developed and inadequately executed. The research programme starts with a review of literature in order to identify patterns of thought and the application of marketing within further education.

The demands by the public and the Government for greater accessibility and responsiveness in further education, has created an awareness of the need for a more committed approach to marketing. One of the specific aims of the research is to identify patterns of current thinking and staff perceptions of the role of marketing, and to identify the principal dimensions of best marketing practice within further education.

For the selected colleges, a case study approach consisting of a mixture of marketing questionnaires and interviews with a range of staff, is made. From this research, similarities and differences between the perceived and actual approaches to marketing are analysed, tables compiled and comparisons are made.

The final outcome is a list of detailed recommendations of best marketing practice for further education colleges.

CHAPTER 1 : AN OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH AND RELATED FACTORS

INTRODUCTION

Within this first chapter, the reader is introduced to the aims and objectives of the work , the programme of the research, and to the various changes taking place in the tertiary sector of education. This is done by focusing initially upon the changing environment of further education and then moving to a consideration of the forces for and against change being faced by the sector.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN FURTHER EDUCATION

Further and higher education is developing rapidly in the UK. The Labour Market and Skill Trends Report (1), states 'increasing numbers are participating in continuing education and training. The Spring 1994 Labour Force Survey shows that over 3 million employees received education and training in the month prior to interview, an increase of 66% from the Spring 1984 Survey.' Opportunities for post-16 education have changed in a variety of ways, largely as a result of the Education Reform Act (1988) and the Further & Higher Education Act (1992). Education is seen by the Government to be a key factor in closing the competitive gap with other nations. According to the Department of Education and Science Report, (2) 'that means building the skilled and motivated workforce required to take on international

competition, and beat it.' The Report contains the Government's plans to improve and develop the education and training system for 16 to 19 year olds, and explains how the Government intends to meet the needs and aspirations of young people going into work towards the end of this century. The Report is also a response to the rising demand from employers for more and higher level of skills to meet the growing challenge from overseas competitors in world markets. The education system is seen to have a major role in ensuring that there is an adequate supply of appropriately qualified people to match employer needs. In turn, this has led to very different management pressures and has also led to managers looking at tools and techniques previously the province of the private sector. Prominent amongst these is the area of marketing.

Colleagues in the Sheffield College have had one year exchanges with lecturers in colleges in Oregon, USA. Based on detailed discussions with these lecturers regarding their experiences of working practices, students and courses on offer, it appears that Further Education (FE) in US and UK are broadly similar in structure, processes, problems and challenges, therefore quotations from American authors are relevant. Market forces in the US have been in play in education longer and the Americans have therefore been forced to look at the marketing of FE for a longer period. Kotler (3), in discussing the situation in the US, states that 'many educational institutions face marketing

problems. Many face changing student needs and societal expectations, increasing competition for scarce clients and funding resources, and unabating financial pressures.' Paralleled with the UK, it has become increasingly necessary for FE colleges to recruit from non-traditional student groups and to generate a higher proportion of their own income. These institutions have turned towards marketing in a more conscious and open way, with demographic trends having reduced the traditional number of students aged 16-19. In addition, there have been other significant changes by way of economic pressures resulting in funds becoming more restricted and the emergence of a more intensely competitive environment. Kotler and Fox (4), observe that 'the point at which an educational institution turns towards marketing generally depends on the depth of its marketing problems.' In the past, institutions that enjoyed a sellers' market with an abundance of customers, tended to ignore or avoid marketing. It has long been argued (see for example Kotler 1985, Piercy 1992 and Baker 1987) that institutions typically become aware of marketing when their market undergoes a change. When students, funds, or other needed resources get scarce or harder to attract, the institution faces pressure.

For FE colleges, the implications of change equates to a need for new responses by management and the acquiring of new techniques and new cultures, all leading to new management approaches to deal with competitive market forces.

In recent years, marketing has attracted the attention and criticism of many people, directly and indirectly connected with further education. Many are interested in how marketing concepts are relevant to current issues faced by FE colleges and how these might contribute to possible solutions. Gray (5), the educationalist, observes that 'in an increasingly competitive environment, colleges emphasise the quality of curriculum provision rather than any distinctive content.' While there is much that the education service can learn from the private sector, it appears that there are no easy recipes for improvement and no ideas which can be lifted wholesale and applied within colleges. This is because it is a service and has a very different set of objectives and constraints. Education institutions may learn from the marketing skills and practices used for physical goods but clearly the service sector requires a different approach and special application of marketing for an educational service.

On the face of it, however, a marketing perspective offers a framework which can be applied to many features of the current further education scene. Public demands from Parliament and The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) for greater accountability and responsiveness in education have created an awareness of the need for a more detailed understanding of the market and a greater focus of activity; something which by definition highlights the need for a committed approach to

marketing. Marketing concepts and techniques, it is argued by Gray (5) and Piercy (6), present FE with significant solutions. An accent on the positive benefits of marketing, rather than the dangers of standing aloof from it, is likely to gain more long-term commitment to changes in the systems and procedures which may be required as a consequence. Piercy (6) states that 'for all organisations the only thing that really matters is the long-term satisfaction of customers ... this is the only reason for the existence of an organisation.'



CHANGE: The forces for change include

1. Legal changes
2. Government pressure to impose market forces in education
3. Increased competition from private providers
4. Financial constraints imposed by the FEFC
5. Demographic changes



CHANGE: The forces against change include

1. Uncertainty of the future
2. People; some are naturally cautious
3. Culture and groups
4. A lack of understanding of marketing by managers in FE colleges
5. A lack of marketing expertise

FIG 1.1 : Forces For and Against Change

Given our comments so far, it appears that we can identify a series of forces for change and a series of factors which inhibit change; these are illustrated in Fig 1.1.

Within chapter 1 and chapter 2, the focus, therefore is upon the changing environment of FE, a consideration of the forces for and against change being faced by the sector and upon the principal concepts of marketing theory, particularly the issues relating to market orientation and culture, and the development of a strategic approach to products and markets. Included within this is the need to define target markets and examine market segments. A marketing perspective is examined as a potential stimulus for a range of changes in the delivery of further education.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Preliminary research, (see for example Gray (5), Piercy (6) and Cowell (7)) suggests that approaches to marketing within FE are both poorly developed and inadequately executed. It is against this background that this research has been formulated and the specific aims and objectives are developed:

1. By means of a review of the literature, to identify patterns of current thinking and perceptions of the role of marketing within FE in the UK and the US, and to identify the principal dimensions of apparent best marketing practice.
2. By means of a case study approach, to identify and evaluate

the espoused and actual approaches to marketing within selected FE colleges.

3. To develop measures of marketing effectiveness within FE and to identify the nature and causes of good and bad marketing practices within selected colleges.
4. By using the results from 2 and 3 above, to develop recommendations for best marketing practice that will allow for the development and dissemination of actual practice.

The programme of the research commences with a review of the literature, with a view to identifying patterns of thought and the applications of marketing within FE in the UK and the US. It starts from the premise that the fundamental purpose of marketing is most concerned with managing exchanges. Using current prescriptions, the relevance of the marketing concept and its application to further education will be developed to identify the principal dimensions of best UK and US practice.

Against the background of the findings that emerge from the first stage, a case study approach will be developed and applied within a sample of colleges. This will involve the analysis of, among other areas, objectives both explicit and implicit, stakeholders' expectations, organisational cultures and managerial practice. It will consist of a mixture of in-depth, semi-structured interviews and self-completion questionnaires with the Principal, Senior Managers, Departmental Heads and a sample of staff within each of

the selected colleges. In doing this, attention will also be paid to perceptions and interpretations of marketing, organisational structure, budgets, levels of marketing expertise, perceptions of competition and possible environmental development. One of the outcomes will be the highlighting of any differences between the espoused and actual approaches to marketing within selected FE colleges.

Given that little has seemingly been done so far in developing measures of marketing effectiveness within colleges, attention will also be paid to the development of appropriate qualitative and quantitative measures. This will be done in conjunction with, and as the result of, discussions with the respondents referred to in the second stage. It is anticipated that the measures will encompass issues of growth, patterns of student recruitment, employer and student perceptions, development (market and service) and image, as well as selected competitive dimensions. Comparisons against the background of the findings of the literature review in the first stage, will be made with a view to identify the principles of best practice and the development of recommendations of best practice. It is anticipated the recommendations will allow the nature and causes of bad practice to be identified and reduced.

GOVERNMENT EDUCATION POLICIES SINCE 1979

Coxall & Robins (8) observe that 'political-socialisation research findings confirm that education is a very political process and that schools help to reproduce the inequalities found in wider society.' In an advanced industrial society such as Britain, the major features of the educational system result from its task of producing a workforce able to fill roles in the economy.

Savage and Robins (9) state that, 'Mrs Thatcher believed the entrepreneurial spirit had been shackled by years of excessive state interference ... a new enterprise culture had to be created in the country which would stimulate a more efficient and productive market. The government's role would be restricted to ensuring the right external conditions for the self-revival of the market prevailed and that any constraints over its full and unrestricted operation were effectively removed.' Mrs Thatcher and her supporters believed that the state's role should be reduced to a minimum and that the private sector was a more efficient and effective provider of goods and services. The public sector was seen as wasteful and inefficient when compared with the private sector. The solution was simple - return as many of the state's functions as possible to the market. In those cases where the state could not be withdrawn, then the Government's task was to introduce management methods based upon those found in the private sector emphasising in particular cost

control and value for money. At all levels of education, successive Conservative Governments were committed to strengthen the perceived traditional virtues such as parental choice.

In the two decades following the Second World War, there appears to have been a large degree of agreement between the two major political parties on primary, secondary and tertiary education policy. However, during the 1970s this consensus began to break down due to different political philosophies and the legislation of the 1980/90s including The Education Reform Act (1988) and The Further & Higher Education Act (1992) which heralded a different structure and policy approach to education. Jones (10) states that 'education policy has been shaped by scientific arguments which have contained highly political ingredients. The arguments of traditional psychologists were attractive to right-wing individuals who saw the existence of social classes as natural and desirable. Sociological research lent support to liberal and left-wing individuals who wanted social change.' In 1976, James Callaghan, the Labour Prime Minister, highlighted concerns with the education system in a speech delivered at Ruskin College, when, according to McVicar (11) 'he asked key questions of the Department of Education and Science.' McVicar (12) goes on to observe that 'the DES believed that the education system should be aimed primarily at meeting the economy's needs for trained manpower rather than on developing individual's diverse potentials and this had come to dominate education policy.'

On the face of it, there appears to be a contradiction in arguing that there has been a centralisation of decision-making power within the educational system whilst at the same time saying that there has been an attempt to introduce market forces to education. Coxall and Robins (13) state that 'within education, the contradiction has been resolved to some extent through pursuing the different goals at distinct operational and aspiration levels.' In other words policy has involved centralisation whilst rhetoric and speeches have focused on free market intentions. The most obvious working of the free market is found in the existence of the private sector in education. Coxall and Robins (14) go on to observe that 'private schools increased in popularity during the years of the Thatcher governments.'

Whitty (15) observes that 'the resulting Education Reform Act was summed up by the Secretary of State as embodying standards, freedom and choice.' All larger schools and colleges were freed from detailed bureaucratic control of local education authorities (LEAs) by a system of devolved budgets and local management. Many reforms sought to increase the accountability of educational institutions to central government. Student loans which top up grants were introduced in the belief that these would make students more discriminating about the courses they chose.

The Manpower Services Commission (MSC), under the sponsorship of the Department of Trade & Industry, was established in 1973 to provide a co-ordinated public sector response to growing joblessness. Atkinson & Lupton (16) state that 'the Commission expanded in both size and ambition, setting out to establish itself as the authoritative centre of a unified and comprehensive labour power policy.' The deepening of the economic recession in the late 1970's however rather diverted the MSC from this strategic planning role to develop a range of temporary schemes to alleviate the plight of those hardest hit by rising unemployment. Savage and Robins (17) observe 'the balance of emphasis within MSC was tipped away from development of longer-term labour market strategies to the administration of short-term, politically useful responses to rising levels of unemployment.' Under the Conservatives, the MSC's growth continued since the youth unemployment problem rapidly became a key political controversy. Adding to the debate, Coxall and Robins (18) state, 'the criticism that education had not met the needs of industry and had failed to generate economic growth led to demands for increased vocational education in schools and FE colleges.'

In the late 1980s, according to McVicar (19), the Training Commission (TC), as successor to the MSC, 'turned its attention to the curriculum in higher education through the Enterprise Scheme'. By offering relatively small additional sums of money to

FE colleges, whose budgets had been seriously eroded, the TC, according to McVicar (20) 'was attempting to shift the emphasis in the higher education curriculum towards more vocationally related training, personal transferable skills and an enterprise culture.' The Department for Trade & Industry, Enterprise Initiative, 1993, (21) states that 'employer involvement in education and training is being secured through local Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). We have now for the first time, given leadership of training to top business people and other key local people and the power and resources to apply local solutions to local needs.' The delivery of education, particularly vocationally based education, was expanded with the MSC/TC putting out contracts to the private sector. All of these initiatives had the clear aim of giving people the skills and attitudes they would need for the work place. They clearly show the strong emphasis being given to vocationalism in contemporary education policy.

McVicar (22) states that, 'another theme during this period was the strengthening of management and the accompanying weakening of the power of the professionals and their trade unions.' The term 'management' was not used very much in the education system in the 1960/70s but during the 1980s not only was it used increasingly, but McVicar (23) observes that 'management also became closely associated with techniques which derived largely from the private sector.' An assumption held by the public at

large at the beginning of the decade was that the public services were inefficient and ineffective, with amateurish managements impotent in the face of organised labour and featherbedded from the harsh realities of life by generous public spending. As the emphasis on efficiency, effectiveness and value for money increased, so the role of management was progressively strengthened. The 1988 Education Reform Act contained a set of radical proposals which were intended to transform the education service in England and Wales. For FE the most important development was the removal of Public Sector Higher Education (PSHE) from the local authority sector altogether and its transfer to independent corporate bodies. The new arrangements seem to put LEAs and teachers into an agency relationship with central government rather than a partnership. Coxall & Robins (24) observe that 'many Conservatives are attracted by schemes and changes which make the education system a market through increasing the element of choice available.'

Jones & Kavanagh (25) observe that 'education has become a vital factor in determining social mobility.' People in well-rewarded, high-status occupations can give their children the best opportunities. Education is the means whereby skills are acquired that can determine occupation. Access to higher education, which provides the long training necessary for many elite jobs, is particularly important.

Concerns to increase access to further and higher education coincide with the need perceived by the government to produce more highly qualified manpower. The implications of this are clear; competition will increase. More and more institutions will have to compete in terms of the quality of their products and the value for money they provide. Customers will need to be convinced that they are gaining real benefits in exchange for their money and time.

Reviewing the educational aspects, it is apparent that politics and education are interwoven. Education has developed into an increasingly political issue during the last twenty five years. The political consensus on the aims and methods has crumbled under regular attacks from the left, right and centre. Different philosophies about education come into conflict from time to time. The main implications are that the Educational Reform Act (1988) freed FE colleges from LEA control and was followed by incorporation when the new further education sector was established on the 1 April 1993, comprising of colleges of further education, sixth form colleges, tertiary colleges and a number of specialised institutions. FE has had to cope with this changing role at the same time it has had to cope with other factors such as declining unit resources, demographic changes and increased competition, all within the constraints imposed by FEFC. There is strong competition. New management approaches are being used and greater emphasis is being placed on marketing

concepts to contribute to possible solutions. A summary of the main political/educational developments considered above, are listed in the following Table 1.1.

TABLE 1.1 : SUMMARY OF POLITICAL/EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>D E V E L O P M E N T S</u>
1973	Manpower Services Commission was established to provide a public sector response to joblessness.
1976	James Callaghan highlights concern with the education system. DES believe the education system should aim to provide trained manpower rather than developing individuals's potential.
1979	Conservative Government elected; it believed that the state's role should be reduced and that the private sector was a more efficient and effective provider of goods and services. The Government's task was to introduce management methods based on those found in the private sector emphasising in particular cost control.
1988	Educational Reform Act. FE colleges freed from control of LEAs by a system of devolved budgets and local management. Training Commission, as successor to MSC, launched the Enterprise Scheme and moved curriculum emphasis towards vocationally related training and personal transferable skills. During this period, there was a stre-

ngthening of management and an accompanying weakening of the power of educational professionals and their trade unions. There was an emphasis on efficiency, effectiveness and value for money.

1992 Further and Higher Education Act.

April

1993 A new FE sector was established.

MARKETING, MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

Like many other disciplines, marketing is now being examined critically and taken to task to provide value for money to target selected groups in FE. Colleges are increasingly looking at all aspects of marketing activities, particularly marketing research to gain factual information related to the needs of students in order to balance with programme provisions and finances available.

The Chartered Institute of Marketing defines marketing as follows: 'Marketing is the management process for identifying, anticipating, and satisfying customer requirements profitably.' This may be regarded as a process definition with the emphasis on customers. Every organisation has customers. For all organisations the only things that really matter are the long-term satisfaction of customers and making a surplus. The process of marketing is simple in concept but putting it into effect and achieving what is wanted is often difficult. Piercy

(26) states, 'the most common reasons why marketing fails in practice are to do with confused management decisions about strategic marketing issues and a lack of real commitment to making marketing work.' For lecturers in FE, the lack of involvement in marketing may be due, among other constraints, to a lack of time to devote to these marketing activities.

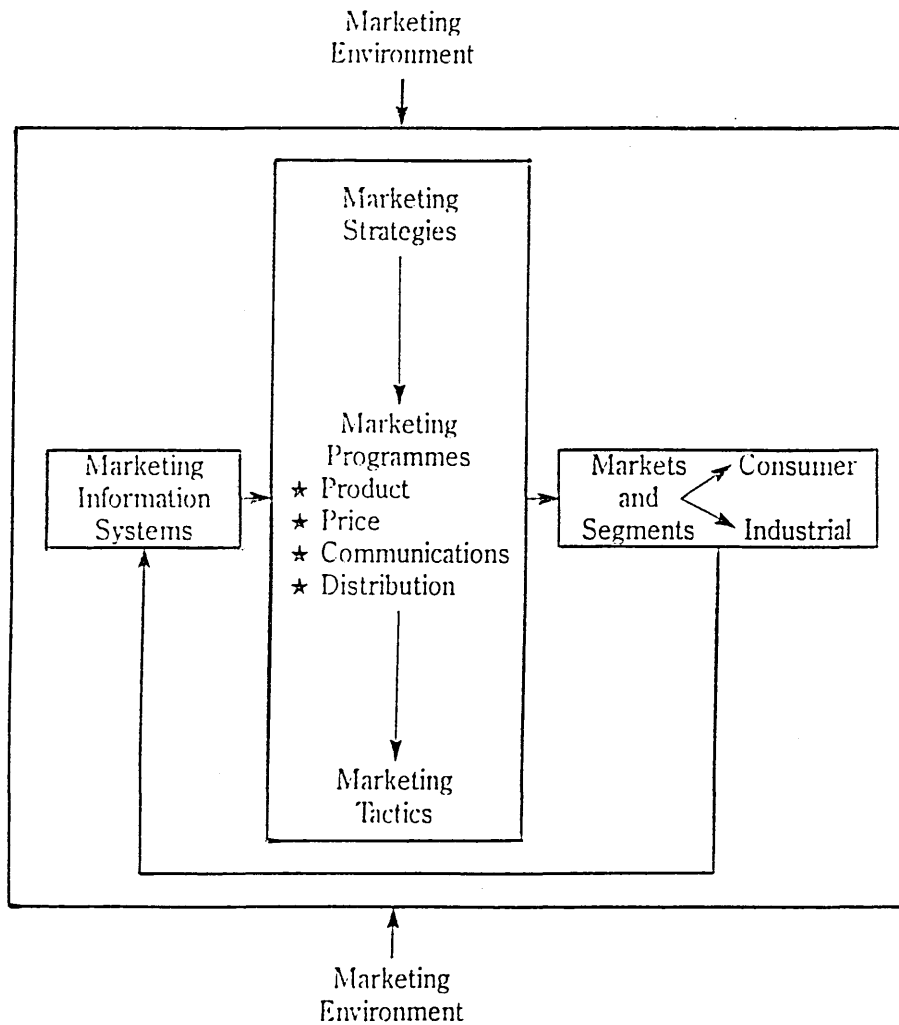


FIG 1.2 : A CONVENTIONAL MODEL OF MARKETING

Source : Piercy 1992

The conventional model of marketing can be used as a vehicle for identifying the principal issues for developing training and education in marketing, and identifying marketing research briefs. Fig 1.2 is a starting point and highlights some of the major issues. However what it does not and cannot do, is to deal with a whole set of practical realities which have to be confronted in making marketing actually happen for an organisation. The quest to make the conventional approach to marketing more realistic and actionable did not start from the pure academic search for eternal truths. The search for realism comes from the reaction of managers of businesses who pay for consultancy and training products. A simple structure which can be used to examine the main processes is shown in Fig 1.3.

Fig 1.3 suggests that marketing strategies are directly connected to marketing programmes, and with planning and implementing specific actions in the market-place. Marketing information is concerned with gaining intelligence about the market-place and helping in the process of determining the programmes to be implemented. Effective planning is based on two important factors. Firstly, the market environment must be analysed, and secondly, the organisation's ability to take advantage of opportunities and cope with threats must be assessed.

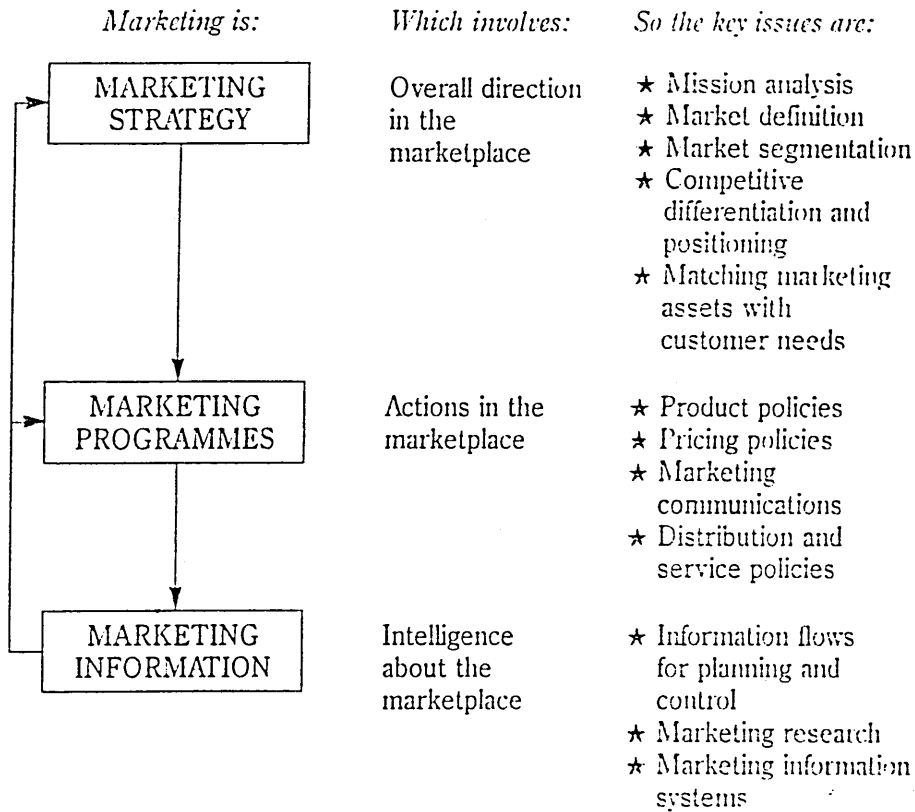


FIG 1.3 : MARKETING THEORIES

Source : Piercy 1992

All organisations are capable of benefiting from truly understanding the needs and wants of their customers and an educational service will not succeed unless it listens to its

clients. If the marketing concept as applied to an education service is accepted, it equates to acceptance that supply is a function of demand. Demand is the controlling factor and an understanding of basic economics underpins marketing functions. The marketing concept is the managerial orientation which recognises that success primarily depends upon identifying the changing wants of customers more effectively than competitive organisations. The management of marketing strategies can be looked at from a variety of viewpoints. Wilson & Gilligan (27) observe that 'management may be seen from one perspective as being largely an attitude that reflects a willingness to debate issues and resolve them through the use of appropriate techniques and procedures. Alternatively, management may be viewed in terms of its responsibility for achieving desired objectives which requires the selection of means to accomplish prescribed ends as well as the articulation of those ends.'

The process of management or decision making, is made problematic because of the existence of risk and uncertainty. When faced with risk or uncertainty some managers postpone making a choice between alternative courses of action for fear of making the wrong choice. Strategic decisions relate to the matching of the organisation's activities with the opportunities of its environment; and as the environment is continually changing, it is necessary for decision making to anticipate various outcomes.

For FE colleges, decision-making should result in a well thought out policy of segmentation and plays a pivotal role in the determination of success. FE colleges have to address the question of market segmentation and to position themselves to maximise their competitive advantage, to best serve their target markets in the most effective ways possible. Because markets are changing, a far tighter focus is needed, with a greater emphasis upon delivery of what the market wants, not what colleges want. There is a specific requirement for an external focus led by customer needs and target marketing is the tailored approach to satisfying a market.

In order to practice target marketing, methods of segmentation need to be used. Gilligan and Hird (28) observe that 'despite the developments in recent years of ever more sophisticated techniques, the best known and most commonly used methods of segmentation are still those that are based upon relatively straightforward criteria. They include:

1. demographic variables such as age, sex, income, occupation, family life cycle, religion and social class;
2. cultural factors;
3. geographic differences; and
4. behavioural factors such as product usage rates, buying motives, and receptiveness to new ideas and products.'

Marketing depends on the co-ordination of managerial aspects of demand to achieve a suitable mix. Cowell (29) observes that 'the marketing mix (product, place, price and promotion) is the set of controllable elements the organisation can use to influence customer response. A major task of marketing management in an enterprise is to blend together these elements of the marketing mix in such a way that they fulfil the needs of selected target markets.' According to Borden (30), 'the marketing mix refers to the apportionment of effort, the combination, the designing and the integration of the elements of marketing into a programme or "mix" which on the basis of an appraisal of the market forces, best achieves the objectives of an enterprise at a given time.' Each function is a specialisation in its own right.

Following the 1988 Education Reform Act, there was a clear need for management in general, and the management of marketing in particular, to adopt more positive and aggressive techniques. For service industries such as general medical practice, Gilligan and Lowe (31) observe 'as general practice faces some of its biggest changes and challenges of the post-war period, the need for tighter, more professional and forward-looking management is greater than ever before.' Clearly the same message applies to FE. Managers in FE are required to pay much more attention to modern practices and are being forced to improve their skills and techniques. FE colleges do need a sharper focus on marketing activities and improved marketing expertise. There needs to be a

shift in thinking from the professional ethos to managerial ethos. This may prove difficult depending upon the background of the managers, as many have spent most of their working life in FE. Successfully managing cultures is one of the basic differences between good and bad management.

FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

Colleges have had to face a steep learning curve since incorporation, coping with complex funding arrangements; being directly accountable for very large budgets; acting as employers of diverse workforces; and taking full responsibility for extensive and often neglected property portfolios. Today, the FEFC impose tight restrictions, particularly financial, on colleges. These are forcing colleges to examine most critically, all their activities through the eyes of market forces as opposed to educational enrichment as in previous years. There is a much stronger emphasis on finance, cost justification, efficiency and effectiveness. The current funding crisis in further education has now brought some colleges to the brink of bankruptcy. Figures from the FEFC at the end of September 1995 (Council News No. 25) show that 40 colleges face a financial disaster unless they can cut costs or expand student numbers.

FE colleges are introducing more efficient, effective and flexible learning activities. According to the mission statements of the colleges upon which the research here is based, they appear to be accepting the rapidly changing nature of society and future employment with the growing need for lifelong education and training, retraining and upskilling of the workforce. In addition, the selected colleges want to open up access, increase participation and contribute to the increased capability of society including those who wish to enter the world of work over the next decade. It is essential that the funding regimes recognise these developments and provide adequate levels of resources.

Arising from staff room conversations and staff meetings, lecturers appear to believe that current FEFC policies are aimed at producing a sanitized and homogeneous sector, primarily focused on full-time provision for young people. The current funding most certainly disadvantages mature students and any provision other than full-time. Following the 1988 incorporation, some colleges have expanded over the past few years and are still attempting to cope with the insufficient and inappropriate accommodation to match both the volume of the growth and the methods of delivering it requires. These difficulties will now be compounded by the projected growth. However, additional resources have been made available commencing 1995/96, with the proviso that the sector increases its student full-time equivalent

population by 25% over the next three years, as stated in various FEFC Directives. This has been coupled with a 16% increase in resources and will require institutions to make a 3% efficiency gain , each year over the next three years, all as stated in various FEFC Circulars.

Because of very tight financial constraints, FE colleges are having to look for ways and means to free up money. They are trying to make money available from within existing budgets, in order to fund new initiatives. Many schemes based on new ideas with potential for improvement, cannot be actioned due to lack of new money.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Students provide educational institutions with their reason for being there. Many educational institutions now face up to, and confront, threatening demographic realities which can include fewer young adults, population migration and shifting demand from the liberal arts to career preparation. Demographic trends are reducing the number of school leavers. This is partly reflected in a fall in demand for traditional programmes with the reduction in numbers of school and college leavers. Institutions have been forced, by a shrinking pool of traditional students, to turn to more proactive recruitment. Because of this change in the traditional student population and the trend for employers to

run their own training schemes, students are not always progressing through FE for off-the-course training and colleges are turning to other markets.

The pattern of post-16 transition has changed dramatically over the past decade. According to Labour Market & Skill Trends (32), 'in 1987/88, less than 47% of 16 year olds in Britain continued in full-time education. By 1991/92 this had risen to 64%, and to 69% for 1992/93.' Over half of 17 year olds now stay on in education: an estimated 52% in 1992/93 compared with only 32% in 1987/88. Labour Market and Skill Trends (33) continues the discussion and states that 'many young people are continuing their education beyond 18, either in FE or HE. A third of 18 year olds in England now study full-time, almost evenly divided between higher and further education,' see Fig 1.4.

The majority of young people staying on at 16 do not remain in the same school: 53% of the 16 and 17 year olds in England now study in a college (including sixth form colleges) rather than in traditional school sixth forms.

Jones and Kavanagh (34) observe that 'a small percentage of children educated at fee-paying schools (about 6 per cent), notably those attending the prestigious Eton, Harrow, Westminster, Marlborough, Rugby and Charterhouse, have the best chance of entering HE and going on to fill the top jobs.' The lower one is down the social hierarchy the less chance one has of

entering further and higher education. The replacement of middle-class dominated grammar schools with comprehensives has helped only slightly. A study by The Sunday Times, (35) revealed that, even in comprehensives, middle-class children have six times more chance of entering higher education than working-class children.

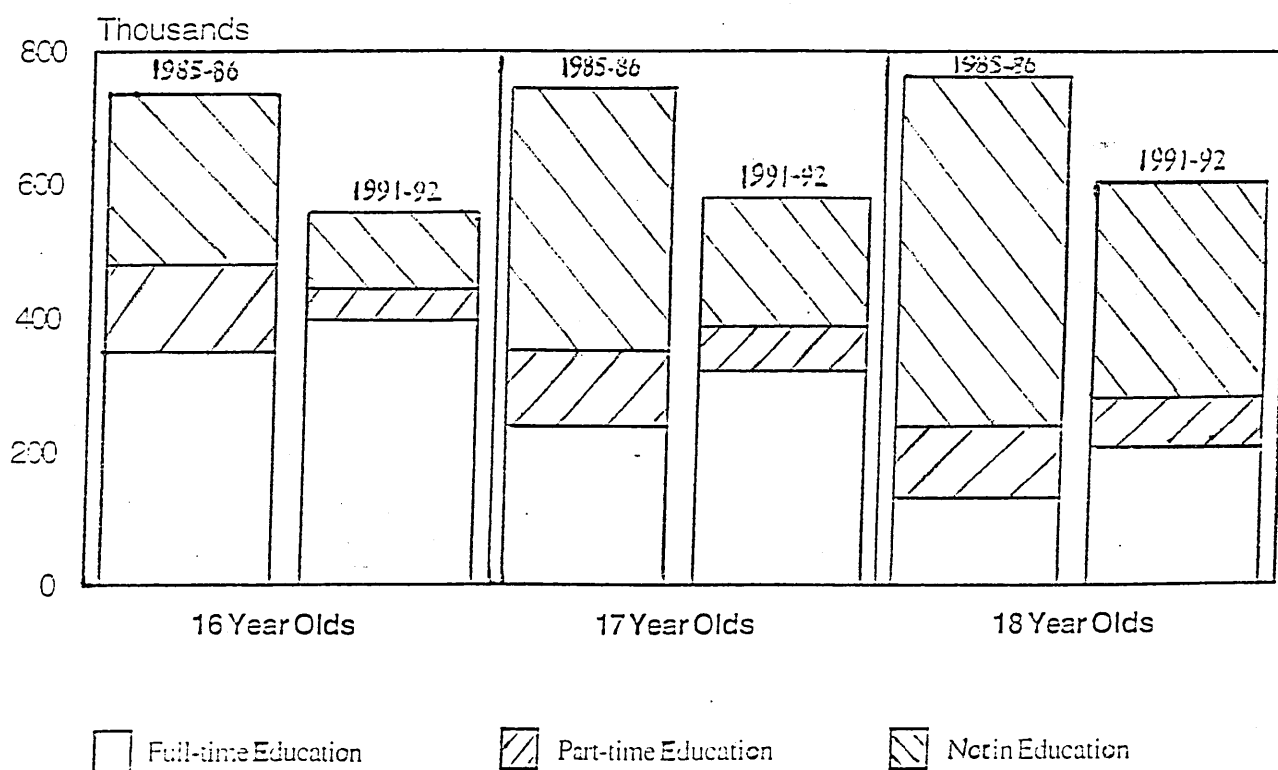


FIG 1.4 : FEWER YOUNG PEOPLE, BUT MORE STAYING ON

Source : Department For Education Bulletin, 16/93

A Department for Trade & Industry Report (36), states that 'employers claim more women will be required to return to work to make up the depleted work force'. There is a challenge to train adults and marketing must help to attract potential clients. More women are seeking further and higher education and many want to prepare for skilled jobs. College courses have to be flexible to allow students to mix and match programmes and to meet their particular needs for progression. Most of the increase in the labour force in the mid-1990s will be among women, especially married women in the 25-45 age group.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

Within this chapter, the nature of the principal changes taking place within the FE environment have been examined. It follows from this that there is a need for FE managers to employ techniques which have previously been seen to be of little direct value to the sector. However, there appear to be problems in implementing the marketing concept. There are marketing concepts which may be used to help satisfy the wants and needs of potential customers. To find the right combination of the elements to meet the needs of the target market is a complex job. It requires knowledge of concepts of each of the elements and the ability to put the parts together into a workable whole.

Marketing must be integrated with other activities so that the performance is effective. Effectiveness relates to the objectives of the organisation and the degree to which they are attained.

Marketing is the exchange process between buyer and seller. It involves a number of interrelated business activities designed to promote, distribute and price a product or service in order to meet the wants and needs of both consumers and producers, and refers to the total system of the organisation. It implies that all the various activities should be directed towards the consumer.

Since 1979, Conservative Governments have believed that the state's role should be reduced to a minimum and clearly this has influenced the provision of welfare, including education. The legislation of the 1980/90s indicates the completely different approach to education with a marked swing from left to right wing traditions. Since the Educational Reform Act (1988), there has been considerable strengthening of management and an accompanying weakening of the power of educational professionals and their trade unions. There is now a marked emphasis on efficiency, effectiveness and value for money.

Arising from the major changes detailed in this chapter ie Government pressure, legal and demographic changes, financial constraints and increased competition, there is a clear

implication of the need for a new management approach using the latest skills and techniques, and a greater use of marketing concepts and activities to contribute to possible solutions.

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CHAPTER 2 : MARKETING IN FURTHER EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Following chapter 1, which outlines the aims and objectives of the research and indicates the main forces for and against change in FE, the purpose of this chapter is to focus on marketing in FE colleges. This is done by considering the two clearly expressed objectives which have dominated central government policy for the British education services over the past decade. The first has been to move control of the service from the providers, teachers and local education authorities, and shift it to consumers, parents, employers and communities, and to central government agencies, particularly the then Departments for Education and Employment. The second objective has been to improve efficiency and effectiveness by increasing competition and reducing unit resources in the public sector; an explicit purpose of the 1988 Education Reform Act. One important benefit sought in this way has been some reduction in public expenditure by reducing waste and by promoting the notion of value for money. The consequences of these policies has been to inject a number of features of a market economy into public sector education.

THE NEED FOR MARKETING

It can be argued that, in the past, FE colleges have explicitly or implicitly marketed themselves although more recently, colleges have responded to the need for a more obvious and explicit approach to marketing in various ways. Their approach may be described as a move towards strategic planning and market planning, with managers analysing their environment, markets and competition; assessing strengths and weaknesses; and developing a clearer sense of mission, target markets and market positioning.

Through Parliament, public demands for greater accountability and responsiveness in education, has highlighted the need for more professional business management, and as a consequence, a more committed approach to marketing. Educational institutions face problems to which marketing can contribute solutions. Many face changing student needs and expectations of society, increasing competition for scarce client and funding resources, and continuous financial pressures. Although educational administrators have adopted business functions such as accounting, planning and public relations, they have been more cautious about marketing.

THE MARKETING APPROACH WITHIN STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

The diagram Fig 2.1, indicates in simple terms, the main features of the marketing approach.

Stage 1 MARKETING ANALYSIS: where are we now?

which includes marketing audit and SWOT analysis

Stage 2 STRATEGY FORMULATION & DIRECTION: where do we want to

be? including mission, objectives, segmentation,

targeting and positioning

Stage 3 CHOICE: how do we get there?

the management of the expanded marketing mix

Stage 4 EVALUATION & IMPLEMENTATION: the best way forward

including evaluation of choices, selection,

implementation and monitoring

FIG 2.1 : MAIN FEATURES OF THE MARKETING APPROACH IN FE

Source : Adapted from Wilson & Gilligan with Pearson, 1992

This approach applies regardless of the organisation. The starting point of the marketing approach in stage 1 is a marketing audit, with the results incorporated into a SWOT analysis. The analysis is designed to provide an understanding or measure of the organisation's marketing capability and the nature of the environment. In stage 2, the mission statement represents a vision of what the FE college is or attempts to become. It is a statement of core values and is the framework for its business plans. Effective segmentation, targeting and positioning are vital for a marketing strategy and have implications for everything else in the process. Stage 3 is concerned with

strategic choice related to products/services, pricing policies, advertising, promotions, distribution and place of delivery. The main contribution made by marketing is to achieve the objectives of the college and therefore involves the marketing mix. An FE college needs products and services to satisfy the needs of its customers and to inform potential customers of their benefits. The interdependent variables of the marketing mix highlights the need for these elements to be integrated in a harmonious way to create the maximum attractiveness of the mix. The purpose of advertising and promotions is to make potential customers aware of the availability of the products and services. Finally, stage 4 is about evaluation of choices and implementation of the selected choice. A detailed evaluation of the various marketing approaches needs to be made, and after implementation, on-going monitoring is required.

Corporate planning is the planning activity most concerned with taking stock of the organisations's present situation, its longer term aspirations, its likely future environments and resource positions. This area of strategic planning is one from which major decisions flow and implies the need to choose competitive positions. Corporate planning seeks to anticipate and respond to change through strategic analysis and moves on to generation, choice and evaluation of strategic developments. In addition there is a need for effective, tactical planning systems which can deal with day-to-day operations. Operations planning is based

on the concept of the organisation comprising of a series of related tasks which can be allocated to specialist departments. In service organisations, co-operation between marketing and operations is vital. Customers of service organisations obtain benefits and satisfactions from the services themselves and how those services are delivered.

THE MARKETING APPROACH : ANALYSIS

Understanding the nature of the environment is a springboard for the creation and implementation of marketing strategies. Analysis of the structure of the environment builds on the insights already developed to establish opportunities and threats facing FE. In this way, better decisions, the most appropriate product/market/competitive developments and positionings for FE colleges should be possible. Management strategists have to decide what the ultimate objectives of the organisation are and who these objectives must serve. For FE, the discussion needs to focus upon the important stakeholders and how the college can cater for their needs. Stakeholders can include customers, governors, managers, lecturers, Government, society and the public at large.

THE MARKETING APPROACH : FORMULATION & DIRECTION

In a discussion on strategic analysis, the notion of stated and enacted objectives should also be examined, as it may act as a warning to those who might otherwise accept organisational

statements of intent at face value. It reminds us that what is stated is not always the same as what is enacted. Gap analysis is a technique to help decide whether the organisation is, or will be, in a position to satisfy important stakeholder demands.

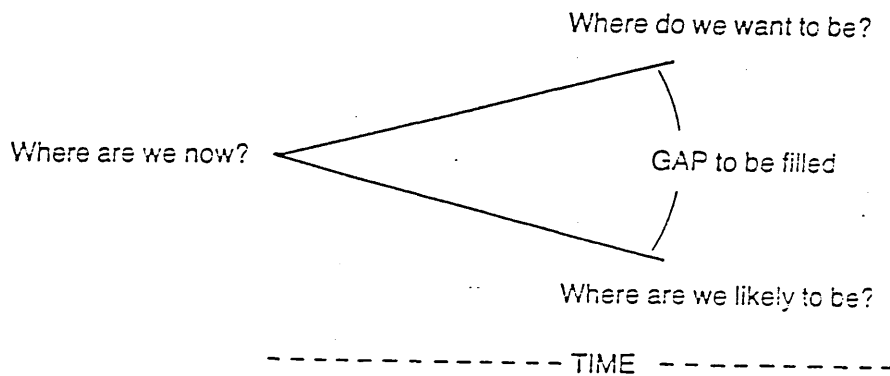


FIG 2.2 : FILLING THE STRATEGIC GAP

Source : Argenti, 1980

In Fig 2.2 , 'Where are we now' might refer to recently published accounts as an agreed base point. 'Where do we want to be' requires a target growth figure and a time scale to which it applies. 'Where are we likely to be' requires forecasting of likely performance levels. Any gap represents a shortfall which will have to be made good, and has to be filled through the success of pertinent new developments.

Following a discussion of strategic analysis and gap analysis, it is necessary to draw distinctions between marketing planning seen as an annual event, and strategic planning seen as being of a long-term nature. Greenley (1) highlights the distinctions as listed in the following table:

TABLE 2.1

STRATEGIC PLANNING	MARKETING PLANNING
Concerned with overall, long term organisation direction	Concerned with day-to-day performance and results
Provides the long-term framework for the organisation	Represents only one stage in the organisation's development
Overall orientation needed to match the organisation to its environment	Functional and professional orientation tends to predominate
Goals and strategies are evaluated from an overall perspective	Goals are subdivided into specific targets
Relevance of goals and strategies is only evident in the long term	Relevance of goals and strategies is immediately evident

These differences suggest that strategic planning logically precedes marketing planning by providing a framework within which marketing plans might be formulated. There is a strong interdependence of strategic and marketing planning. FE colleges should aim to build strength in those elements that are critical to achieving superiority in areas considered important by customers. In this way FE colleges should be able to challenge their competitors from a position in which it can use its relative strengths.

In organisations that lack strategic direction, there is a tendency to look inwards at times of competitive pressure and for management to shed labour. The focus is on efficiency ie the relationship between inputs and outputs in the short term, rather than on effectiveness which is concerned with the attainment of objectives of the organisation. Effectiveness highlights the links between the organisation and its environments.

The starting point for strategic planning is vision management which is based upon the articulation and communication of what and where the organisation is to be, in terms of its present and future market place positions. According to Richardson (2), 'effective visionaries are able to anticipate lucrative markets of the future and the needs of future stakeholders, particularly customers.' Consequently they are able to discern how their organisation might become social and profitable providers of

needs satisfaction. When vision is communicated effectively and supported by organisational activities such as reward and customer care, then it becomes part of the social fabric of the entire organisation.

After a discussion on vision management, it is logical to consider the mission statement of an FE college and where the college wants to be in the future. A mission statement is designed to provide employees and the public with a clear understanding of core corporate values. It is against the background of the mission statement that the strategist should set objectives at both the corporate and functional level. The mission statement should be capable of performing an integrating function and is the framework within which business units or schools in a college prepare their individual business plans. The mission statement should also be capable of providing personnel throughout the organisation with a shared sense of opportunity, direction, significance and achievement.

Having established the corporate mission, corporate management has to take the mission a stage further by developing a series of specific objectives for each level of management or school in the FE college. It is essential that the objectives established are realistic in terms of their magnitude and the time scale over which they are to be achieved. For FE colleges, like other organisations, the setting of objectives and strategies in

relation to services and markets, is a fundamental element of the marketing planning process. These marketing objectives represent performance commitments for the future and need to be stated both quantitatively and unambiguously so that they are capable of being measured.

Positioning is essentially a communications strategy and a basic element of the marketing planning process as decisions on positioning have implications for the marketing mix. The choice of position may prove to be difficult and the organisation could end up by pursuing the same position as others in the market, and as a result the costs of competition increase considerably. It may be that the FE college identifies and builds upon competitive advantages that appeal to the target market. The problems of positioning may be summarised in Fig 2.3.

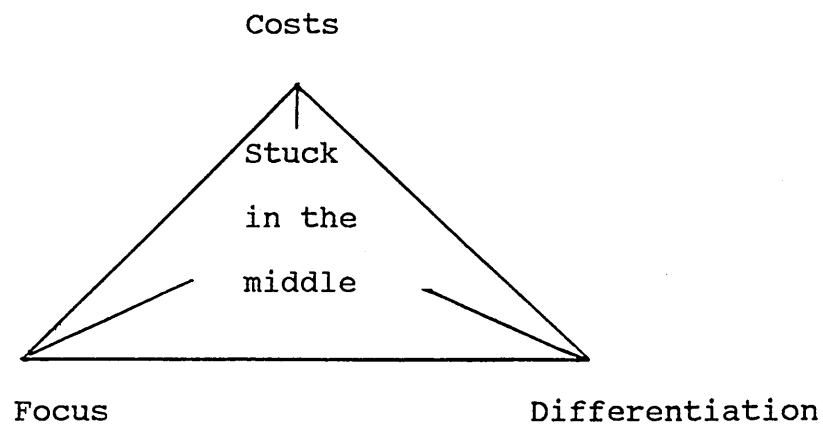


FIG 2.3 : PROBLEMS OF POSITIONING

FE colleges may have problems of positioning as they have to provide a range of courses and are unable to focus just on the profitable ones.

At corporate level, decisions are made concerning the corporate strategic plan and include decisions on the level of resources to be allocated to each business unit or each school of a college. It follows that each unit or school should develop its own strategic plan.

The marketing planning process has become an important component of the tasks of managers in the education service. Gray (3), explains 'the main purpose of such planning is to enable colleges to meet the needs of their students and other customers and the requirements of national legislation.' All this is to be achieved as cost-effectively as possible, making the most efficient and effective use of the available resources. Colleges must analyse their present and future environments and review their major resources to identify what they can accomplish in order to establish overall goals and specific objectives.

After an examination of strategic alternatives, establishing objectives at corporate level and positioning, the next stage of strategic planning is the college's mission statement which defines purpose and embodies educational philosophy. It is a reference point by which decisions can be made; it determines

implementation strategies and policy; it judges behaviour and evaluates performance. The elements of the plan will vary according to local circumstances, but in most institutions a comprehensive plan is likely to require the components indicated in Table 2.2

TABLE 2.2 : BASIC ELEMENTS OF AN INSTITUTIONAL PLAN
FOR AN EDUCATIONAL ORGANISATION

-
1. Mission statement and objectives: what the institution is trying to do and where it is going
 2. Situation analysis, detailing the strengths and weaknesses of the institution, and the opportunities and threats
 3. Planning elements:
 - resources
 - curriculum
 - staff deployment and training
 - marketing
 4. Management and organisation: management responsibilities and changes; operation of planning systems; internal structures and links with other organisations
 5. Monitoring and evaluation: financial controls; performance indicators and their uses; reporting procedures to governing bodies; teacher appraisal and student assessment systems.

Source : Gray 1991

The shift of responsibilities from LEAs to governing bodies emphasises the importance of institution-based planning. Some governors come from work environments in which they are familiar with the application of formalised corporate planning and can contribute usefully to these processes. The development of any institutional plan requires firm leadership and a commitment to a clearly articulated set of values which spell out the institutional mission. A helpful approach to defining mission is to establish the college's scope along three dimensions. The first is consumer groups, such as, who is to be served. The second is consumer needs, namely, what is to be satisfied. The third is technologies, namely, how consumer needs are to be satisfied. A college should strive for a mission that is feasible, motivating and distinctive, and avoid a "mission impossible".

THE MARKETING APPROACH : CHOICE

Following an examination of its strategic and marketing planning, an FE college should turn to consider the elements of its marketing mix. An FE college can expand or contract its product mix, alter existing services and trade up or down, but only over time. Because of many constraints, there is a lack of flexibility in many FE colleges. An essential element of any marketing strategy is the marketing mix. The process of mix formulation and balancing is unique to each organisation. Booms and Bitner (4) expanded the marketing mix for services to seven elements, see

Fig 2.3 below, and contains three additional elements; people, physical evidence and process. These seven elements are at the heart of many service organisation's marketing programmes.

<u>Product</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Promotion</u>	<u>People</u>	<u>Physical Evidence</u>	<u>Process</u>
Range	Level	Location	Advertising	Personnel	Environ- ment	Policy
Quality level	Discount	Access- ibility	Personal selling	Training	Furnish- ings	Proced- ures
Brand name	Allow- ances	Distri- bution	Sales Promotion	Discretion Commitment	Colour Layout	Mechan- isation
Service line	Payment terms	channels Disrib-	Publicity Public	Incentives Appearance	Noise level	Employee discret-
Warrenty	Percei-	ution	relations	Interper-	Facil-	ion
After sales service	ved value Price/ Quality differ- ention	cover- age		sonal beh- aviour Attitudes Customer contact	iting Goods Tang- ible clues	Custom- er dir- ection Flow of activit- ies

FIG 2.4 : THE MARKETING MIX FOR SERVICES

Source : Booms and Bitner, 1981

It is the function of marketing research to gather and interpret information to facilitate the decision-making process. Marketing research is firmly related to marketing planning and control. Essentially, research attempts to provide answers to questions. The preparation of marketing plans pose many questions, and so marketing research potentially has a significant role. Marketing research can identify new curriculum needs and ways in which the current curriculum provision should be improved. It should also identify market segments which could benefit from forms of educational provision not currently available to them. This is both strategic and tactical; strategic in the sense that decisions have to be made about the type of product/service and tactical in how it is run on a day-to-day basis. It is through the tactical plan that the marketing strategy is achieved in practice. Educational institutions realise that to attract students and other needed resources, they must offer programmes and other benefits that their publics desire in exchange.

THE MARKETING APPROACH : SATISFACTION AND MAIN BENEFITS

Kotler and Fox (5), observe that 'the responsive educational institution strives to create a high level of satisfaction, although not necessarily the maximum level.' Satisfaction can always be increased by accepting additional monetary or non-monetary costs. A college might build better facilities and lower the tuition to increase student satisfaction. But obviously a college must operate within a budget and can only provide the

satisfaction level it can afford, not necessarily the maximum level desired. The institution has to satisfy many publics. Increasing the satisfaction of one group might reduce the satisfaction of another. A college must balance the needs and expectations of all groups and provide acceptable levels of satisfaction within the constraints of the institution's total resources. Systematically measuring satisfaction provides a basis for assessing what each group expects and what level of satisfaction each is currently experiencing.

Each educational institution needs to identify the specific marketing-related problems it faces. An institution can systematically identify marketing problems and make an inventory which should include those situations that might suggest present or future difficulties with the college's publics. Kotler & Fox (6) observe that, 'marketing usually produces four main benefits:

1. Greater success in fulfilling the institution's mission. Marketing provides tools for comparing what the institution is actually doing with its stated mission and goals.
2. Improved satisfaction of the institution's publics. To succeed, institutions must satisfy consumer needs. If the institution fails to develop satisfactory programmes for its customers, the resulting bad word of mouth and client turnover will ultimately hurt it. By stressing the importance of measuring and satisfying consumer needs, marketing tends to produce an improved level of client services and satisfaction.

3. Improved attraction of marketing resources. In striving to satisfy their customers, institutions must attract various resources including students, employers, funds and other support.
4. Improved efficiency in marketing activities. Marketing emphasises the rational management and co-ordination of programme development, pricing, communication and distribution.'

Measuring performance, benefits and satisfaction may be difficult as they are often subjective. However, 'what gets measured gets done' is a modern management maxim. Concepts such as vision mission and zeal need to be operationalised through attention to detail. Performance standards help to ensure that people are striving in the right direction. McDonald's emphasis on quality, value and service is operationalised throughout its network by the use of very detailed operating manuals which must be followed to the letter.

THE MARKETING APPROACH : MARKETING ORIENTATION

An explicit marketing orientation suggests calls for major commitments to change in FE colleges. If enrolment or funds decline, or new competitors appear, or new consumer needs emerge, FE colleges become receptive to possible solutions such as

marketing. According to Davies & Scribbens (7), 'the particular characteristics of further education which must influence the application of marketing concepts are:

1. Multiple publics; colleges must work with both clients and funders and these two groups can be further sub-divided into students, their parents, employers and professional bodies.
2. Diversified control of the service provided; the nature of the courses offered by a college is usually the result of the interaction of a number of organisations, who do not necessarily work closely together in planning the end product.
3. Multiple objectives; compared with some business enterprises, FE institutions tend to have a larger range of objectives, most of which are not easily reduced to clear targets expressed in financial terms. Different members of staff will have different perceptions of the college's role. Key objectives are likely to be related to the quality of the education provided.
4. Who are the competitors?; FE colleges compete with other educational institutions for scarce resources and for students.
5. Wants and needs; colleges' objectives are often expressed in terms of a response to the perceived needs of the community. But such needs may differ significantly from wants expressed in the recruitment and day release policies of local employers and in the enrolment of students.
6. System constraints; certain features of the UK educational system may well counteract college objectives and marketing

plans which support them. There are financial disincentives for staff to re-allocate their efforts towards students of lower ability.

7. Public scrutiny; FE is under close public scrutiny in view of its claims on the tax and ratepayer. Colleges are likely to experience frequent political pressures and conflicting demands to serve a public interest which is sometimes vaguely defined or impossible to meet fully.'

The implications are felt in terms of the need for a tighter focus so that marketing can contribute in the form of a greater understanding of the market, a more obvious competitive stance, better value for money and greater public awareness.

THE MARKETING APPROACH: PROMOTIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING

A further stage in the marketing approach for FE colleges, at the operational level, is to consider promotions, public relations (PR) and advertising. Cowell (8) states that, 'the general purposes of promotion in service marketing are much as in other kinds of marketing:

1. to build awareness and interest in the service and the service organisation
2. to differentiate the service offer and the service organisation from competitors
3. to communicate and portray the benefits of the service

4. to persuade customers to buy or use the service.'

Ultimately, the purpose of any promotional effort is to sell the service through informing, persuading and reminding. These general objectives vary according to the nature of each service industry.

For FE colleges, the influence of careers advisers has been identified as particularly significant as 15 year-olds decide whether to stay on at school or go to college or to work. Friends and peer-group pressures help shape choices of school and college, and choices of options within the institution.

Effective promotion strategies are quite possible even with the very limited budgets. Course leaflets should include benefits for the potential customer, an attractive house-style, college logo and details of the course. The information should be persuasive and given in a straight forward way, including details of how, where and when to obtain further information, and how to enrol. From the viewpoint of the potential student, it is helpful to have information presented in convenient groupings - by age/ability range, career, full/part-time, and to provide cross references.

Institutions make decisions about who to admit to their courses by establishing admissions policies and entry qualifications. In practice, these are adjusted in response to demand, so that a popular course at a popular college may attract more applicants than there are places; the total number of places available is limited by staffing or physical resources, policies or government regulations. Promotional strategies in these circumstances may be to emphasise the stringent admission requirements and the GCSE or A level passes required by an institution. The purpose of promotion is to maintain the high reputation of a service based upon its exclusivity and to advertise its availability to sufficient potential customers to retain control of admissions in the hands of the providers.

At the operational level, marketers design advertising programmes to influence customers to behave in desired ways, for example, to buy a product the organisation sells. Advertising might be a valuable way of attracting the attention of potential customers to an adult education programme. 'Advertising for students is a relatively recent phenomenon' according to Gray (9). The main advertising vehicles available to colleges are the press, television, radio, cinema and spaces on buildings, buses, hoardings etc. Advertising is likely to be more effective in gaining awareness than in achieving action, but action may result directly from a successful advertising campaign.

Effective PR is only possible if the image to be projected is clearly identified and specified from the start. PR contributes to the objectives of building awareness and credibility. The responsive college has a strong interest in how its public see the college and its programmes and services, since people often respond to an institution's image, not necessarily reality. Tilling (10), draws attention to ways in which colleges can build up PR libraries with photographs and text on hand to support a continuous rather than spasmodic PR function. The objective of the public relations activity is to create and maintain a favourable environment in which a company can operate.

THE MARKETING APPROACH : EVALUATION & IMPLEMENTATION

Porter (11) provides a model for examining strategic alternatives and suggests that 'in order to compete successfully, the strategist needs to select a generic strategy and pursue it consistently.' The three generic strategies that he identifies are (a) cost leadership (b) differentiation and (c) focus. Porter continues the discussion and argues that problems arise when an organisation fails to pursue one of these and instead drifts into a 'middle of the road' position where the message to the market is confused and even lost.

Productivity is usually defined as the ratio of output of a production process to an aggregate value of inputs. The problems of measuring productivity in the service sector stem from the

continued use of traditional measures designed for goods contexts rather than service contexts. Markin (12) states that, 'as services account for over 50% of UK employment and because cost increases have been largely passed on as price increases, lower productivity in services may have contributed to give overall prices an inflationary push.' Services are generally more labour intensive and, therefore, to increase output requires even more labour.

STUDENTS AND STAFF

One feature of education as a service is its heavy dependence upon the active involvement of its customers in the educational process. Learning involves a partnership between teacher and learner. A further feature of the education service is its organisation into groups of customers, brought together for long periods of time for service delivery. Staff and students come together to form a learning community. Lively and busy classrooms in every sector of the education service are characterised by groups of students working together to solve problems. Education is a highly collaborative process which may be organised by the teacher but which is provided by a large number of contributors, including all the customers.

Guidance for students is one of the most important processes in post-16 education and training. Following incorporation, colleges in the new FE sector have developed comprehensive and effective

guidance systems in order to open up access, increase participation, improve retention and play a part in realising the National Education and Training Targets. In the past years, guidance has been treated as a marginal bolt-on activity and must now be truly integrated into the whole range of provision of post-16 education and training.

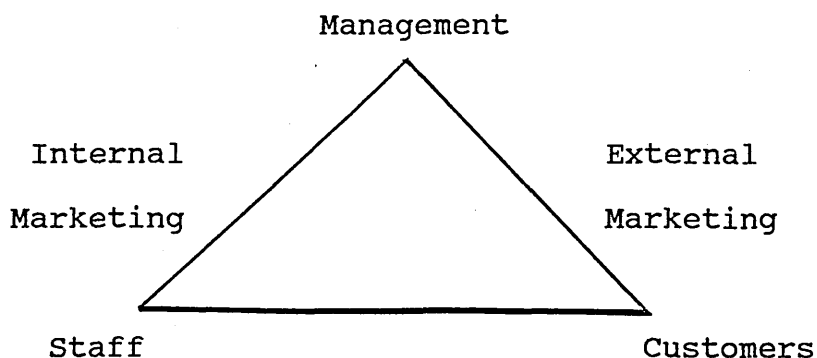
The Audit Commission Report (13), states that 'retention and outputs are equally important as increasing participation.' Careers guidance and guidance in general should:

- be student centred
- be unbiased and without pressure for opportunity planners and providers
- take full account of factors affecting labour markets
- be equally accessible to all students
- promote equality of opportunity
- be developed by skilled guidance staff who follow a nationally agreed code of practice

According to the Audit Commission Report (14), 'a problem in the past was the lack of objective guidance.' Too often, students felt they were on the wrong course and were unable to transfer, either because of the lack of an appropriate alternative, or the rigid time constraints of the course scheduling, or even more worrying the pressure put on them by the lecturer/course tutor.

George & Berry (15) observe that, 'when the performance of people is what customers buy, the advertiser needs to be concerned not with encouraging customers to buy, but also with encouraging employees to perform.' Guidance must be operated on an honest brokership basis. It must be impartial and objective, based on real needs of the individual, not the institutions. This becomes even more important as colleges increase their numbers of mature students who will require guidance, especially in the initial stages.

The importance of staff in all service organisations may be summarised as the principle that the job must be sold to employees before they can sell to customers. Employees are encouraged to adopt a philosophy that the service should be delivered as though the provider were at the receiving end. This is particularly important in services such as education, where virtually all the staff come into regular daily contact with the students. This philosophy may be summarised in the model below.



Interactive Marketing

FE colleges do need to practice internal marketing more effectively and internal communications need to be improved to keep everyone informed all the time. These tasks are not easy to achieve but the implications of failing to do so are numerous. Staff respond to positive leadership and information, and also to the lack of involvement.

PRICING EDUCATION

Cost-oriented pricing refers to setting prices on the basis of costs, either marginal or total costs including overheads. Breakeven analysis is widely used to determine, for any proposed price, how many units of an item would have to be sold to fully cover the costs. This may, for example, involve calculating the number of places on a training programme or at a conference which must be sold in order to cover costs at a given price level. The college estimates how much value consumers see in the market offer and fix the price accordingly. The premise of demand-based pricing is that price should reflect the perceived value of the offering in the consumer's mind. When an institution sets its prices mainly on the basis of what competitors are charging, its pricing policy can be described as competition-oriented. It may choose to charge the same as competition or a higher price or a lower price. The distinguishing characteristic is that the institution does not maintain a rigid relationship between its prices and its own costs or demand.

The introduction of formula-based financial schemes and the increase in fees to levels which approximate more closely to the real costs of providing the service have sharpened institutional anxieties. Concerns have focused upon the inequities of such crude assessments of per capita costs. The key tasks are, on the costing side, to seek as close a match as possible between institutional spending and customer benefits and, on the price side, to ensure that customers are charged sums in line with the institution's objectives.

Institutional managers need to know the real costs, measured in accountancy terms, of providing their basic educational services - their courses. They really need to know the effectiveness of expenditure in terms of customer benefits. Should benefits be measured in terms of receiving the service ie attending the course and, if so, should the level of student attendance be an indicator of effectiveness? Or should output measures be used to determine effectiveness? Is examination success or success in obtaining a job at the end of the course the most appropriate basis for calculating output costs and customer satisfaction? In addition, benefits may be measured in the short term or long term, by the student, parent and employer.

Marketing will be most successful when the resources in the marketing mix categories are balanced in the optimum way relevant to that service, as in Fig 2.5 below.

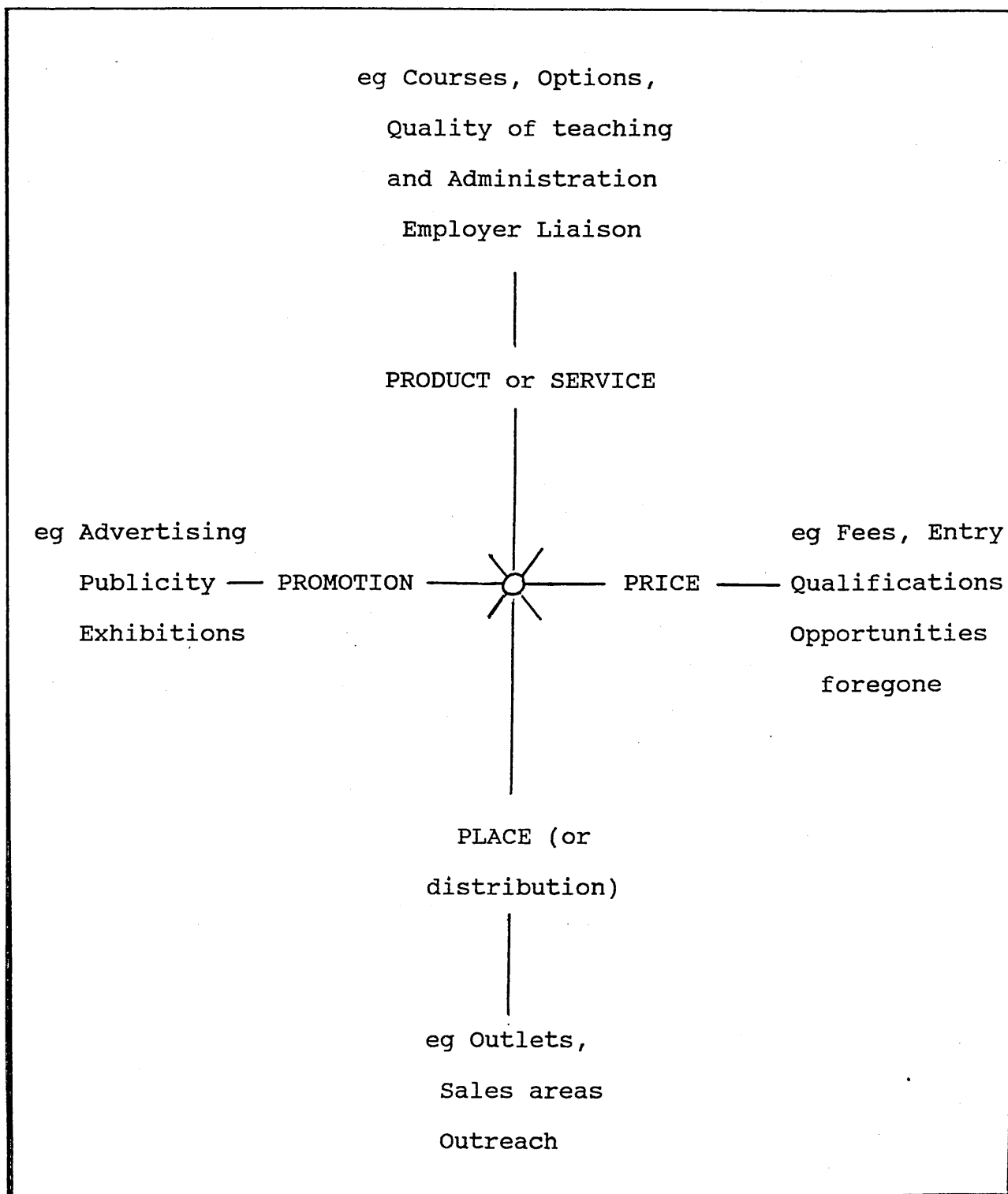


FIG 2.5: MARKETING MIX APPLIED TO EDUCATION

Source: Davies and Scribbens 1985

To summarise this section, it is clear that pricing is a policy-making task and requires a range of marketing skills. These include a clear understanding of the market and how it operates, and the effects of pricing decisions on customer perspectives of the service on offer. Pricing policies must be directly related to institutional mission and policies. The level of demand does influence pricing strategy. In the private education sector, the most eligible institutions charge very high fees for tuition, taking advantage of high levels of demand in excess of their limited capacity. In consequence, it would appear that further education is moving towards forms of demand-led pricing in areas such as management and business studies, where high levels of demand enable universities and colleges to enhance fees over a standard rate, particularly for postgraduate courses and vocational courses paid for by employers.

CONSTRAINTS WHICH AFFECT THE MARKETING APPROACH IN F E

A marketing audit can be a sound basis for the process of resource allocation to help meet an institution's objectives. Any organisation above the survival level always has a number of alternative directions from which it can select routes to each destination. Insufficient time may be devoted to long-term considerations because of the pressures of short-term problems and opportunities. Marketing managers develop their own rule of thumb for allocating the marketing budget. Management generally proceeds by breaking down complicated problems into manageable

sub-problems. Decisions in organisations tend to be made under conditions of "bounded rationality", that is, the solution has to satisfy a number of formal and informal constraints.

In post-school education, institutions are not completely free to decide their product range. Funding councils make some specification as to the courses which can be provided in return for the funds received. The approval of the major accreditation bodies such as BTEC, is needed before award-bearing programmes can be launched. This provision is regularly reviewed and revalidated. There is limited scope for adjusting institutional product ranges. Further and adult education have the capacity to close down courses instantly as student numbers fall below previously established minimum levels.

Marketing can be done at two levels, the overall college level and at department or college school level, and is usually co-ordinated centrally by the Marketing Manager. This system means that the activities of gathering, processing and utilisation of information takes place within the boundaries of college schools. The question arises whether individual schools have the time, resources or expertise required to give weight to marketing considerations even though they are close to the market. In addition the hierarchial structure makes the communication of marketing information which is available in the

educational establishment, much more difficult. Information may be much too slow and will be ineffective if reliance is placed on informal channels of communication to staff.

Another constraint is the range and variety of courses offered by further education which normally is likely to be far greater than in profitable private sector organisations. Now, at a time of severe financial constraints, colleges are having to focus far more upon the more profitable courses. A further constraint is the ability of FE to respond to changes in the external environment. The major constraint is on its funding. Cuts in grants from central government are resulting in loss of minority supported courses and redundancies for lecturers, and have cost LEAs millions of pounds in lost revenue. It was inevitable that FE colleges had to suffer cuts in revenue derived from the local authorities. Another effect of government policy is the extension of YTS to include all school leavers between the ages 16-18. This has led to increased power of TECs and increased funding from these sources.

The culture of an FE college may represent a constraint if it is reluctant to respond to the need for change. Institutions that have recognised the opportunities now available, are likely to succeed. Levels of expertise among staff, particularly in

management, marketing and technological skills, vary tremendously. Some staff are not prepared to up-date their skills and consequently become a liability.

The network of TECs provides a range of training and enterprise measures. As well as being employer led, TECs are locally based so they can identify clearly with the local areas they serve. They are charged with working in partnership with other important local interests - education, business organisations, voluntary groups and local authorities, many of whom are represented on TEC boards. The roles of TECs and Chambers of Commerce are closely linked; the TEC decides the training needs of the locality and the local Chambers are responsible for fostering business growth.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

The 1988 Education Reform Act established new ground rules for education in which effective marketing has become an important requirement for every educational organisation. These changes are important, requiring new skills from those charged with managing their implementation within the institutions and creating a changed institutional environment within which to work. All staff should receive training in information technology, marketing and management skills.

To succeed, an educational institution must deal effectively with its many publics and generate a high level of satisfaction. A responsive college must make every effort to sense, serve and satisfy the needs and wants of its consumers within the constraints of its mission and its budget. An educational institution needs to identify the specific marketing-related problems it faces.

Marketing research involves finding out who are the consumers, what are their training needs, who makes the buying decisions and on what basis, and what are the best ways of communicating with them.

The Careers Service has a major role to play. It must develop a wider remit embracing adults as well as the traditional case-load of 16-19 year olds. The service must work closely with colleges and the local TECs.

The introduction of formula-based financial schemes and the increase in fees to levels which approximate more closely to real costs of providing the service have sharpened institutional anxieties. Most educational institutions are constrained to increase prices to meet costs and maintain quality. Few have experimented by reducing prices to stimulate demand. Price reductions involve risk.

The Government's intention that education should be provided in a competitive market, is making competition an increasingly important aspect of pricing policies.

Consumer aspirations are key sources of opportunity for an organisation. For that reason, a great deal of an organisation's marketing research activity should be devoted to the discovery, recognition and analysis of consumer aspirations. These opportunities can affect planning and decision making across all elements of the marketing mix.

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CHAPTER 3 : THE CHANGING WORLD OF FURTHER EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

In chapter 2, some of the issues associated with marketing in FE in general were considered. Now it is logical to progress into an examination of the different aspects of the changing world of FE. According to Baker (1), 'change as a process exhibits distinct regularities or patterns with dimensions of direction, magnitude, pace and duration that can be seen and measured.' He argues that failure to recognise and use change leads to three common errors:

1. Believing yesterday's solutions will solve today's problems.
2. Assuming present trends will continue.
3. Neglecting the opportunities of future change.

The implications are that strategic drift may result. Once it is accepted that change is inevitable, then institutions can prepare to meet and deal with changes. It is for this reason that in successful organisations so much effort is devoted to environmental analysis in an attempt to define broad underlying trends and assess their implications in terms of future scenarios.

Authors such as Cowell (2) and Piercy(3), share Stanton's (4) view that 'the boom in the service economy in recent years has been accompanied by a significant increase in competition in many

service industries.' Stanton continues the argument further by adding that in the 1980s, the boom brought about a deterioration in the quality of many services. In general, service industries were plagued by poor management, inefficiency and low productivity.

Educational managers are not alone in facing major changes. The same kinds of pressure also affect business, industry and commerce. A discussion of educational change must consider how different groups have regarded their work and view the implications of change. It must examine how lecturers' view their work and their relationships with colleagues and how this has been affected by change.

The new basic structures of colleges and lecturing were established nearly a decade ago. Now, more and more is added on to existing structures and responsibilities of lecturers, in terms of curriculum, development of new programmes, more administration and little is taken away; and still less is completely restructured to fit the new and different expectations of, and demands upon, lecturing. Lecturer collaboration can provide a positive platform for improvement.

A keystone of the market-orientated philosophy of management is that companies survive and grow by proactively meeting the changing requirements of their customers while concurrently

overcoming new threats posed by changes in competitors' strategies. Organisations which stand still are unlikely to survive. At the interface between the organisation and the customer, it is the marketer who is most likely to identify new opportunities for increased market penetration and/or diversification.

THE NATURE OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

The main changes to affect educational institutions include the following:

- changing practices
- structural and process
- management policies
- management and management competences
- responsibilities of lecturers and behaviour

Change is about altering both practice and individuals' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities. A movement by senior staff from a strongly hierarchical and directive mode of working to one stressing consensus and participation involves major changes in the assumptions which every individual member of staff makes about their role and relationships with one another, and what counts as acceptable behaviour.

For change within FE colleges, the principal concern is product, policy and management. In this context, the task facing senior

management consists of two interrelated elements; firstly, the management of its existing range of products or programmes and courses, and secondly, the development of new or modified products or programmes and courses. As educational programmes or courses are at the heart of marketing strategy, the need to manage it well is the key to the college's financial performance and to the gaining and retaining of market share. For FE colleges, many in the midst of structural changes, this involves a careful balancing of costs, risks and returns. Colleges also need to consider changes that competitors are likely to make. The time scale is a critical dimension of change strategy and influences the marketing manager's freedom of movement.

Developing marketing orientation in context with change, is a long-term process and needs to be thought of as an investment. This investment must be shared throughout all college staff as it changes the organisation's culture and aims to improve service to customers. It is necessary to maintain the momentum of change by means of continuous monitoring of the marketing performances to ensure that inertia does not set in. Change management in FE colleges requires a focus on customers, competitors, college culture and particularly on staff.

As was manifested in previous chapters, there are a number of forces for change, such as Government pressure, competition and demographic changes. Since the late 1980s, college managements

have had to cope with a set of responsibilities and expectations which have been changing with increasing speed. In the UK, power has shifted from local authorities to central government and individual institutions. These changes are both structural alterations to the service and changes in culture and expectations. Colleges have become centrally funded corporations outside local authority control. These changes are important, requiring new skills from those charged with managing their implementation within the institutions and creating a changed institutional environment within which to work.

Change is a learning experience for all the adults involved. There is always a problem that the implementation of change might become assimilated into the existing practice, as in the example when the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) became assimilated into the existing curriculum rather than providing a catalyst for wider change. For this reason, although it increases the danger of spectacular failure, there is an argument for going for large-scale change so that those involved cannot assimilate new practices into old and so bury them in tradition. This increases the likelihood of resistance, and those involved in bringing in the changes, must address the thinking behind the resistance. Change is about both structure and process. The management of educational change is essentially a rational task of connecting the new with the old so that what is required is done, while the vision of the organisation and its

task held by those who lead it, is somehow sustained. Educational managers face many demands for change. They call into question traditional beliefs about the nature of the work of colleges and their relationships with parents, students and employers.

A major concern in the 1980/90s has been the development of management competences. Since the purpose of the study of management is to improve performance, it is not surprising that attention should be focused on an analysis of what abilities managers need in order to be effective. In the field of education, the growing recognition of the crucial importance of good management practices was dramatically strengthened by the impact of local management imposed by the 1988 ERA. Central government clearly regards management development as a key element in its declared strategy for ensuring improvement in the quality of education to meet the needs of industry and the economy. Important though these developments are, there is also a wider debate taking place about the nature of education, its relation to training, and the role and responsibilities of lecturers. Are they less autonomous agents now than when they operated essentially as free agents within the constraints of the public examination syllabus? What is the relationship between lecturer and employer over the nature of training? What is expected of them? Such changes are more difficult to identify and even harder to respond to and cope with, than the more specific structural developments created by government policy.

A combination of beliefs and values, derived from a variety of sources, shape what is considered proper behaviour for lecturers in colleges towards their students, towards parents or students' sponsors, and towards each other.

One of the key issues is that of identifying and actioning focus. In most colleges, they cannot focus just upon the profitable courses but are required instead, to offer a range of courses, some of which are unprofitable or break-even. In a commercial organisation, it would delete these.

Educational managers, who also have marketing responsibilities, need an extensive portfolio of skills and techniques if they are to work effectively. According to Gray (5), 'these include:

1. A knowledge of and the relevant skills in the main techniques of marketing research, information analysis and forecasting.
2. Recognition of the different perceptions of the education service and specific institutions within it by employers, employees, students and parents.
3. The marketing and management skills necessary to organise effective planning and promotional activities.
4. The ability to analyse an organisation in political terms, identifying power and influence and the objectives of key political actors.
5. The abilities needed to motivate colleagues, to develop marketing perspectives and philosophies, and to organise

appropriate forms of training and development.

6. Judgements and insights of sufficient quality to enable them to integrate marketing as both a philosophy and a management function throughout the organisation.'

Gray and Williams (6) state that 'marketing managers recognised that they were disadvantaged in the institutional power struggles which affected their work, but rarely had the resources to be able to act effectively in those struggles.'

A further factor is the changing culture in which colleges have to operate. As the quality movement extends into the commercial and public sectors, so expectations of all providers change. Parents will increasingly be working in Quality Assurance (QA) companies, therefore, school and college-leavers will be seeking employment in organisations managed according to quality criteria. There will inevitably be increasingly specific demands on colleges as suppliers. Some colleges, such as Sandwell, are having to seek BS 5750 in order to be able to deal with registered companies.

However there are a number of possible obstacles to Q A in the education service, especially colleges:

1. Professional autonomy; teaching is often perceived as an essentially solitary activity which creates a high degree of individual control. In the case of education, the delivery may be

largely individual but much of the support is not.

2. Management ; education is about preparing the individual to live and work in a democratic society. It may be argued that management is about conformity and on the other hand, Peters argues that good management encourages non-conformity.
3. The customer; there has always been a problem in defining whom education is for, is it the student, the employer, or the State?. The Q A response is to accept all claims to client status. It is the process that defines the customer and accountability and not a debate between alternative value systems. One of the problems in applying Q A to education is how potential tensions between these customers might be reconciled.
4. Outcomes; if education is viewed as a liberal, long term and heuristic process, then an objective driven approach such as Q A seems alien. However it could be argued that the educated person is as tangible a concept as the satisfied customer or the healthy patient. Ends are elusive but it is possible to identify specific processes and activities that contribute to the outcomes. It is these that are managed.

Quality problems are often perceptual: what an operator may consider to be quality work may not be so perceived by the customer. Sometimes this results from unrealistic customer expectations, perhaps stimulated by salespeople who promise too much or by optimistic advertising claims. On other occasions, customers may not realise just how good service execution really

is, unless operations personnel actually draw their attention to the quality of work performed.

RESPONSES TO CHANGE

Hard pressed societies, such as the UK, facing economic retrenchment and the welfare burdens of an ageing population, are divesting themselves of some of their direct financial commitment to education and expect colleges and their lecturers, through market competition and frugal self-management, to stand more on their own feet. Ideological compliance and financial self-reliance have, therefore, become twin realities of change for many of today's colleges. The effects of these realities are clearly visible in a multiplicity of reforms and innovations which lecturers are now having to deal with, and highlight the significant contribution that marketing can make.

In principle, college-based management may be a good thing or a bad thing. Where extensive decision-making powers are handed over to individual colleges, it can lead to diversity, innovation and lecturer empowerment. But when college-based management is implemented in a system where public funding is scarce and bureaucratic control over curriculum and assessment has been retained, this can lead to self-seeking competitiveness around narrowly defined goals of basic skills or academic success. Here, according to Caldwell & Spinks (7), 'college-based management can lead not to devolution of decision-making but displacement of

blame.' The benefits and drawbacks of college-based management for lecturers cannot therefore be evaluated properly in the abstract, but only in relation to parallel evaluation of college financing, and of curriculum and assessment control.

A simple diagram, Fig 3.1, may be used to indicate how organisations might respond to change. At one end of the scale, some organisations including medium size FE colleges, may choose to ignore change; at the other end of the scale, other organisations enter into change fully by way of restructuring, downsizing, one college merging with another and flatter management structures.

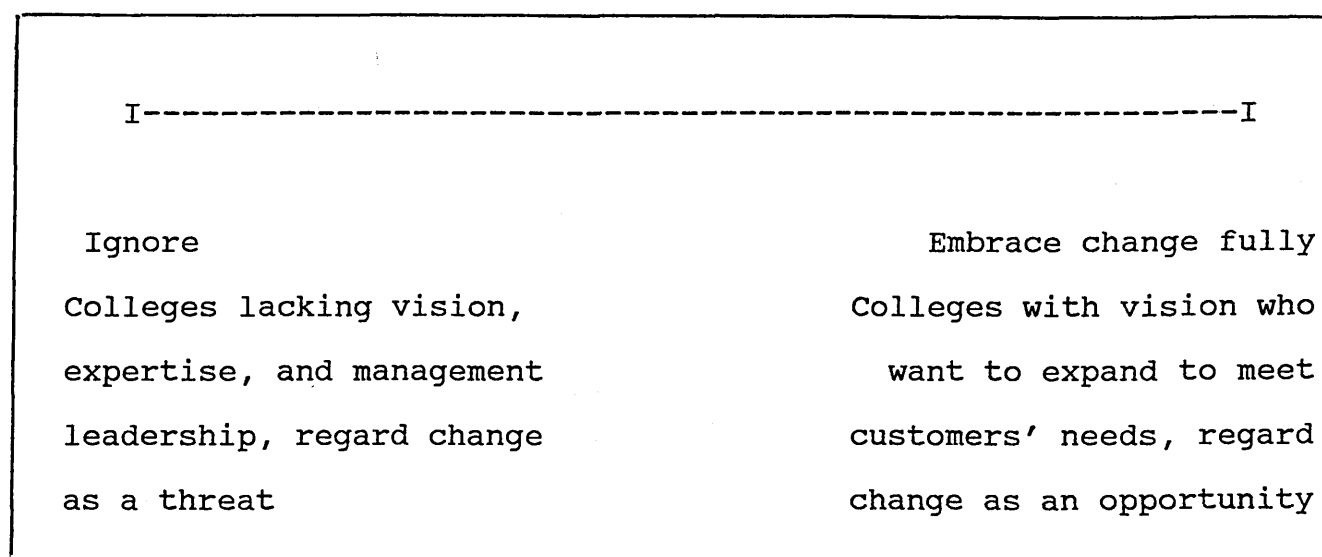


FIG 3.1 : RESPONSE TO CHANGE

At the heart of change for most lecturers is the issue of whether it is practical. Judging changes by their practicality seems to

amount to measuring abstract theories against the tough test of harsh reality. In recent years, there have been serious attempts to establish closer congruence between the devices and desires of change.

The involvement of lecturers in educational change is vital to its success, especially if the change is complex and is to affect many settings over long periods of time. If this involvement is to be meaningful and productive, it means more than lecturers acquiring new knowledge of curriculum content or new techniques of lecturing. If lecturers' own desires for change and for conservation are understood, along with the conditions that strengthen or weaken such desires, it is possible to get valuable insights from the grassroots of the profession about how change can be made most effectively, as well as what should be changed and what should be preserved.

Parts of the lecturer's work that extend beyond the classroom have become more complex, numerous and significant. For many lecturers, work with colleagues now means much more than structured staff meetings or casual conversations. It may also involve collaborative planning, being a mentor to a new lecturer, participating in shared staff development or sitting on review committees. Meetings with parents and employers now frequently extend beyond perfunctory parents' nights to more regular consultations, telephone calls and extended reports.

Collaboration is now widely proposed as an organisational solution, just as it is proposed as a flexible solution to rapid change and the need for greater responsiveness and productivity. Collaboration decision-making and problem-solving is a corner-stone of many organisations.

One of the key issues is that FE appears to be resistant to change and although it has responded, it has not necessarily embraced it. FE seems reluctant to make sweeping changes and instead appears to be taking fairly low-key action, spread over a long time scale. Many commercial organisations face far greater changes than FE and have grasped opportunities with enthusiasm.

FLEXIBILITY AND PLANNING

Flexibility implies the ability to respond rapidly to changing circumstances while the notion of planning suggests the formulation of a design which will lead to a sequence of specific changes over time. Flexibility is to be gained from incremental planning. Modifications to existing plans may be made rapidly as circumstances evolve without having to replan from scratch, alongside attempts to anticipate likely changes and to consider contingency plans without going into great detail. However, loss of coherence may result from short-term plans which are not connected to long-term aims. Day-to-day crisis management alone, while very flexible, is unlikely to prove cost-effective.

The emergent characteristics of postmodern organisations have been described in many ways by theorists of management and change. Kanter (8) states that the tidal wave model is becoming a universal model for organisations, especially large ones, and observes 'this model describes more flexible organisations, adaptable to change, with relatively few levels of formal hierarchy and loose boundaries among functions and units, sensitive and responsive to the environment; concerned with stakeholders of all sorts - employees, communities, customers, suppliers and shareholders. These organisations empower people to take action and be entrepreneurial, reward them for their contribution and help them gain in skill and employability.' The postmodern organisation is characterised by networks, alliances, tasks and projects, rather than by relatively stable roles and responsibilities which are assigned by function and department, and regulated through hierarchical supervision.

Through the working lives of a new and maturing white-collar generation, the emergence can be seen of new organisational structures in a new society. Created by economic crisis on the one hand, and demographic and cultural change on the other, these fluid, flexible and dynamic organisations hold their employees' loyalty only as long as is warranted by the fulfilment of the work, the rewards that it brings and the life-style that it offers. Toffler (9) uses the metaphor of the moving mosaic to describe these patterns. He outlines the movement of large

corporations 'from monolithic internal structures to mosaics made of scores of independently accounted units.'

Lecturers' suspicions that organisational flexibility and the loosening of their roles and responsibilities may be used against them, are not without foundation. Moving targets are hard to hit and the moving mosaic is no exception. While analysts of postmodern organisations see the emergence of flatter, less hierarchical structures and more collaborative work environments within each unit of the overall enterprise, critics have pointed to important limits which surround such collaboration and the forms it can take. For instance, 'collaboration often includes middle-level workers but excludes those below them, creating collaboration for some but subordination for the rest' according to Menzies (10).

Other aspects include one of the main issues of how to define core competencies of FE. It may be argued that it is that of course design and assessment of outcomes, not necessarily that of delivery. There is also an issue of whether the pressures for change will demand/lead to changes at the managerial level, or for more fundamental change.

The Labour Market & Skill Trends Report (11) states that 'education and training provision must be planned to meet future skill needs, as well as current demands.' Plans need to be firmly

based on long term trends. But some trends may change and not all future developments can be predicted, so it is important to aim for flexibility.

MANAGEMENT OF TIME

If senior staff are to continue to exercise academic leadership, in addition to new responsibilities, then the management of time becomes a crucial issue. The limitation of a finite amount of time is identified by many FE staff as one of the most serious constraints they face in attempting to meet the challenges presented by the changed managerial arena. The increasing use in education of techniques like cost-benefit analysis implies a hard-headed accounting of the cost elements of time.

Clear job specifications for staff, negotiated through processes of appraisal which relate to the aims and objectives of the college and the priorities identified, can be useful instruments in achieving more effective utilisation of the total bank of time available. More responsibilities deriving from the local management of colleges will demand more time. Local financial management is an example. Decision-making structures are required to determine financial priorities before arriving at the activities of budgeting and accounting. There are movements towards more participation in decision making at middle-management level but such democratic involvement consumes time. In the delegation process, it has become more acceptable

for the superior to present themselves as a co-ordinator or facilitator, managing a team of professional specialists.

Time is a fundamental dimension through which lecturers' work is constructed and interpreted by themselves, their colleagues and those who supervise them. Time for the lecturer is not an objective, oppressive constraint but a subjectively defined horizon of possibility. A lecturer's work has become increasingly intensified with lecturers expected to respond to greater pressures and comply with multiple innovations. According to Larson (12), 'intensification represents a sharp break with the leisurely direction that privileged non-manual workers use to expect as it compels the reduction of time within the working day.'

Accountability has also brought with it more form-filling and paperwork; more accounting for what is being done, has been done and is intended to be done, for the benefit of parents, employers, administrators and others. These rising demands on and expectations of lecturers certainly amount to strong support for the intensification theory, as does the combination of high expectations with reduced support.

SOME RECENT ACADEMIC CHANGES IN FURTHER EDUCATION

Separate to recent structural and process changes in FE and how these are affecting organisations, it is necessary to examine

some recent academic changes. Many young people want to study for vocational qualifications which prepare them for a range of related occupations but do not want to limit their choices too early. Some want to keep open the possibility of moving on to higher education. A range of general qualifications is now available within the NVQ framework to meet these needs.

Evans (13) observes that 'recent pronouncements indicate that this country has put FE and vocational qualifications at the top of the agenda.' Commencing 1995/96, it is the Government's intention to increase the full-time-equivalent student numbers by 25% over the next three years. In addition, the National Education and Training targets set the scene for a more qualified and more flexible work-force. Evans (14) continues and states that 'most of these targets are referenced to the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), see Table 3.1

TABLE 3.1 LEARNING TARGETS

Foundation Learning Targets

- 80% of young people to reach NVQ Level II (or equivalent) by 1997
- Training and education to NVQ Level II (or equivalent) to be available to all young people who can benefit
- 50% of young people to reach NVQ Level III (or equivalent) by 2000
- Education and training provision to develop self-reliance, flexibility and breadth

Lifetime Learning Targets

- All employers to take part in training or development activities by 1996
- 50% of the work-force to be aiming for NVQs (or units towards them) by 1996
- 50% of the work-force to be qualified to at least NVQ Level III (or equivalent) by 2000
- 50% of medium to large organisations to be investors in people by 1996

Although these targets may seem ambitious, they are well below those set by our main world competitors.'

The National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) was set up with one of its primary objectives being to rationalise and

simplify the qualification jungle. The resulting NCVQ framework is based on five levels, spanning from foundation to graduate/professional with assigned values to which all future vocational qualifications must be aligned, see Fig 3.1. A key feature of the framework is the assessment of performance as required in the work-place. This allows much greater flexibility in education and training.

General NVQs cover broad occupational areas, and offer opportunities to develop the relevant knowledge and understanding and to gain an appreciation of how to apply them at work. They should also offer a broad preparation for employment as well as an accepted route to higher level qualifications including higher education. GNVQs are considered of equal standing with academic qualifications at the same level.

GNVQs should widen access to post-16 education and encourage the participation and progression of those who left education at 16. In order to realise this aspiration and to achieve the National Education and Training targets, the GNVQ and NVQ frameworks must complement each other, see Fig 3.1 and Fig 3.2.

Level 4 Higher	First Degree	GNVQ4	NVQ4
	equivalent	(replacing HND)	equivalent Higher Tec/ Junior mgt
Level 3 Advanced	'A'Level'AS' Access to HE	GNVQ3	NVQ3
	equivalent	(replacing BTEC Nat)	equivalent (Tech/Adv Craft Super)
Level 2	4 GCSE(A-C)	GNVQ2	NVQ2
	equivalent	(replacing BTEC Intermediate)	equivalent (Craft)
Level 1 Foundation	Less than 4 GCSEs Access to FE	Foundation GNVQ1	NVQ1 Taster courses
	Academic	GNVQ	NVQ

FIG 3.1 : THE LEARNING LADDER

Source : The Sheffield College - A & AS Level Courses Handbook

NVQ Level

General NVQ		Occupationally specific NVQ	
Degree A/AS Level GCSE Nation- al Cur- riculum	Graduate qualifications	5	Middle management
	Voc-related degree/	4	Junior management
	Voc-related National Diploma, Advanced	3	Tecnician, Advanced Craft Supervisor
	Broad based crafts	2	Basic craft
	Pre-vocational	1	Semi-skilled

FIG 3.2 : GNVQs and Equivalents

Source:DES Report Education & Training for the 21st Century,1991

Universities and colleges seem to stand on the threshold of a learning revolution, which has everyone involved in post-14 education and training taking a fresh look at where they stand and what role they play. What are the key elements in this revolution? According to The Times Educational Supplement (15), the key elements are 'the continued pressures for expansion in

further and higher education; the rising status of vocational education and training; growing concern over standards; mounting support for a full-blown post-14 credit accumulation and transfer system'.

The Government is looking to greater involvement from the business community and more collaborative ventures with the Department for Education and Employment to provide the means for a broader, bigger and more flexible college and university sector. Funding is the basic nettle which the education teams of all political parties have yet to grasp. Funding figures announced in January 1995, by the FEFC show a real-terms reduction in money for teaching. According to the Times Educational Supplement (16), 'Money per student will only rise 1.7%, well below the rate of inflation, The number of new full-time undergraduate entrants appears to have fallen by about 1%, mainly because of under-recruitment in FE colleges. Recruitment of part-time students is, however, 19% above the 1993-94 level. Student numbers are expected to increase in 1995-96 by 2.3%, meaning a reduction in real resources per student of over 3%.'

A Research Report (17) observes that 'the GNVQ is seen very much as an educational award, not as a route into employment.' The Report is based on responses during 1993-94 from 86 schools, 51 FE colleges, 16 sixth form colleges and three specialist

institutions, all offering the initial GNVQs. One finding is that about two thirds of the GNVQ students intend to progress to higher education or to specialist training like nursing. The second finding is that GNVQs are being taken up by students who would not normally be considered suitable for an A level programme.

Almost all the universities have agreed to accept GNVQs at Advanced Level as equivalent to two A level subjects. One positive move is that the three awarding bodies - BTEC, City and Guilds, and RSA - have joined forces and realised that collaboration brings more muscle. But there is little evidence of GNVQ replacing A levels, which still remain the gold standard.

In March 1996, Dearing (18) submitted his Report to the Government on the review of qualifications for 16 - 19 year-olds. It contains 200 recommendations and includes:

- national awards framework, giving equal status to academic, applied and vocational qualifications
- emphasis on developing key skills of communications, numeracy and information technology in schools, colleges and work-place
- legislation to bring together the work of the two quangos responsible for education and training qualifications (SCAA and NCVQ)
- GNVQs to be renamed Applied A-Levels
- national traineeships to replace Youth Training.

Dearing (18) suggests 'young people should be allowed to follow broader sixth-form courses, mixing A-Levels with vocational subjects.' He goes on to suggest that courses should be more flexible and allow students to start them in the knowledge that they will get credit for one year's work and that they should be able to transfer to either an academic or vocational alternative. One of the main objectives is to bring vocational qualifications into alignment with A-Levels.

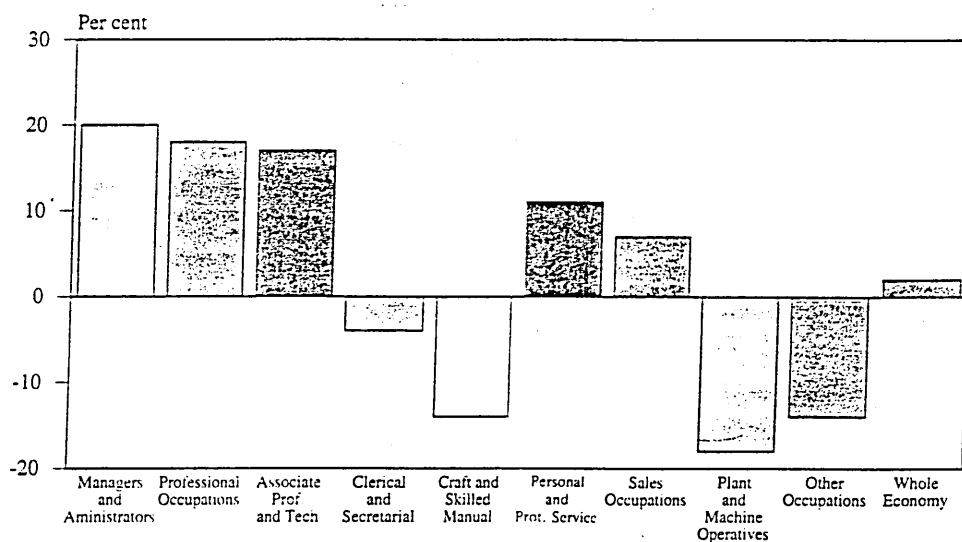


FIG 3.3 : CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION 1991 - 2000

Source : Institute for Employment Research, 1993

According to the Institute for Employment Research (19), 'between 1991 and 2000 almost 1.7 million extra jobs are expected to

appear in Managerial, Professional and Associate Professional and Technical Occupations', see Fig 3.3. Clearly this occupational change will need to be matched by an increase in higher level skills and qualifications.

Labour Market & Skills Trend Report (20) states, 'more young people are getting qualifications: 43% of 16 year olds in England got 4 or more good GCSEs in 1993 compared with 38% in 1989.' They may also get more experience of work situations within their compulsory education. Recent years have seen many changes in the labour market: the switch from manufacturing to service employment; more higher level jobs; more women working; more part-time work; more young people staying on in education.

The need to expand the numbers of students is putting enormous pressure on colleges. The bottom line is that only those who meet their growth targets will be rewarded financially. This is a world where the weak who cannot meet their targets may not survive. Where catchment areas have been squeezed to their capacity, many colleges are being forced to extend the recruitment net further.

In general terms, people are the economy's most important asset and the skills of the labour force will be crucial in an increasingly competitive world. Trends have important implications for the development of quality training and

enterprise services which are relevant to the needs of employers and individuals.

Franchising is one way of attracting more students. Franchising within further education takes two main forms. In the first an FE college runs a course under the auspices of a parent organisation such as a university. Staff teaching on the course are normally employed by the FE college, but the course is validated and the qualification is awarded by the university which is responsible for quality assurance. In the second type of arrangement the FE college franchises its own courses to organisations such as community groups.

THE CHARTER FOR FURTHER EDUCATION

In 1993, the then Secretary of State for Education, John Patten, introduced a national Charter For Further Education to explain what is being done to promote high standards of service for all who use colleges in the further education sector in England. Separate Charters cover Scotland and Wales. The Charter sets targets which all colleges, local authorities and others involved in further education are expected to meet. But achieving high standards is a responsibility of colleges themselves, because they know their customers best. It is expected that colleges will develop their own detailed charters within this national framework. The FEFC are to make sure that college charters are in place and that they are challenging and develop over time. The Secretary of State , John Patten, observes that 'everyone has the

right to expect good service from further education.'

External bodies encourage high quality. The FEFC provides independent inspectors and publishes reports and quality assessments. Colleges must explain how they will respond to these.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

All organisations are faced with the same constraints imposed by changes in the environment; these are the general influences which are political, economic, technological and social. The issue then is how they perceived and respond to these.

Many educational systems are currently seeing an expansion of bureaucratic control and standardisation in the development and delivery of their services. Control over curriculum, assessment and the teaching force is becoming more centralised and more detailed. This is creating a widening breach between administration and teaching, between policy and practice, between the broad process of curriculum development and the technical details of programme implementation. Driven by concerns for productivity, accountability and control, the administrative tendency is to exert tighter control over lecturers' work and lecturers' time, to regulate and break it down into small, discrete components with clearly designated objectives assigned to each one.

It appears to follow from this that the management of time may seem to be a solution to the problems of intensification and change. Intensification explains many of the changes in lecturers' work as time and space are compressed. Intensification is important but not the only source of problems within lecturers' work and preparation time is only partly a solution to it. In the fields of educational leadership, college effectiveness, college improvement and staff development it is an accepted wisdom that colleges should have a sense of mission. By building common goals together with a shared expectation that they can be met, missions strengthen lecturers' sense of efficacy, and their beliefs that they can improve the achievements of all their students.

After examining all the previous considerations, the key issues to emerge are as follows:

1. How is FE responding to the need for change, particularly the need for more effective marketing?
2. Have senior management the vision, enthusiasm, skills and expertises to action changes necessary for dynamic and realistic marketing?
3. Are lecturers collaborating or resisting change with regard to improving marketing activities?
4. Do the marketing activities in practice, match those perceived by senior management as in mission statements and strategic plans?

5. Is marketing really effective? What are the constraints related to the marketing activities?
6. How can marketing activities be improved and what are the recommendations?

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CHAPTER 4 : RESULTS OF RESEARCH AT THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the previous chapters was to conduct a literature review of UK and US authors, specifically related to marketing and changes in marketing, and to identify patterns of current thinking and perceptions of the role of marketing in FE, in order to support the aims of the research. During the literature review, various aspects of best marketing practice relevant to FE, were identified and have been incorporated into the final recommendations.

Movement is now made into the field research by considering the actual and espoused marketing practices at the two selected colleges which agreed to act as collaborative institutions. The purpose of this chapter and the next, is to consider the college literature made available, and the responses to the marketing questionnaire and to interviews with staff at the selected colleges.

THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE

The Sheffield College was formed on 1 September 1992 from the amalgamation of the six tertiary colleges existing within the control of the Sheffield Education Authority. Delivery is based on the six centres with much of the Adult/Community education delivered through the associated neighbourhood centres. As the

largest college in Europe, with 40,000 students and 2,000 experienced staff, the Sheffield College can offer the best choice of study opportunity, backed up by a wealth of extra benefits including Learning Resource Centres on all its main sites, childcare provision, extra support for students with particular needs and excellent links with other academic institutions and professional bodies.

THE COLLEGE

The College believes that the management processes and the people who develop them and pursue them are more important than the structure, and the structure must facilitate the processes and be subject to constant review and change when required. The success of the College will be measured and marked more by the ability to be flexible and responsive than the continuation of past practice. The task of the College is to maintain all the excellent features developed over years and to realign them so that appropriate measurement can take place and accountability identified. The College wants to continue to expand its services in Sheffield along the three axis of all ages, all abilities and all interests.

With six main centres Castle, Loxley, Norton, Parkwood, Parson Cross and Stradbroke and more than a hundred community education centres throughout the city, the College offers its students access to a wide range of education opportunities.

CONTROLLING THE QUALITY

The Sheffield College is determined to ensure that all its courses and programmes are of a consistently high quality. To maintain quality in such a large and diverse organisation requires effective management information systems as well as good internal communications, and the Sheffield College has established a small team which is responsible for the development and maintenance of quality control systems throughout the College.

NEIGHBOURHOOD EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Sheffield College is committed to the provision of education opportunities for adults, ranging from leisure and hobby courses, through to Access to HE programmes, aimed at people returning to study after a break.

WORKING WITH BUSINESS

The Sheffield College has excellent links with local business and industry, ranging from close co-operation on the Modern Apprenticeship schemes through to the provision of tailor-made training and development to meet individual company needs. The College is keen to play a part in the economic and social life of the city.

WORKING WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS

At fifteen or sixteen, making choices which will affect the rest

of one's life can seem a daunting task, but the Sheffield College's School Liaison Teams are well equipped to help students find their way through the many options. Experienced teams work closely with the city's schools, to help year 10 and 11 students find out what is available. The College arranges information and guidance sessions in schools, visits to the College and comprehensive taster programmes.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

The Sheffield College is committed to making sure students have everything they need to get the most from their College courses, and there is a wide range of support available.

METHODOLOGY

Specific aims and objectives of this research are detailed in Chapter 1; these are summarised as follows:

1. By means of a review of literature, to identify patterns of current thinking and perceptions of the role of marketing within FE, and to identify the principal dimensions of best marketing practice
2. To identify and evaluate the espoused and actual approaches to marketing within selected FE Colleges
3. To develop measures of marketing effectiveness and to identify good and bad marketing practices within selected FE Colleges
4. To develop recommendations for best marketing practice in FE.

Against the background of these aims and objectives, and the review of literature emerging from the first stage, a case study approach was developed and applied for the second stage. For the selected FE Colleges, it involved an analysis of objectives, stakeholder expectations, cultures and management practices. The study consisted of a mixture of marketing questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with the Principal, Vice Principal, Marketing Managers, senior managers and a sample of staff within each of the selected FE Colleges.

The marketing questionnaire was developed specifically for this research and is not based on any other questionnaire. The questions are listed to form natural blocks of information required and designed to use a combination of boxes to be ticked and space to add written views and comments. The marketing questionnaire was pilot tested for meaning and understanding.

MAIN POINTS ARISING FROM INTERVIEWS AND REPLIES TO THE MARKETING QUESTIONNAIRE

Marketing questionnaires, as detailed in Appendix 5, were sent to a range of staff and various semi-structured interviews were conducted. For the Sheffield College, distribution of the questionnaire was based on personal knowledge. Response was very high with 56 replies, or 86%, out of a total of 65 issued. Details of the comments, personal points and issues arising from the interviews and the replies to the Marketing

Questionnaire are recorded, classified into theme areas of the questions asked and are summarised below.

THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE : REPLIES TO MARKETING QUESTIONNAIRE

1 (a) Do you believe that marketing of its courses, benefits your college?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 52	80
No	= 4	6
Don't know	= 0	0
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state in what ways you believe that marketing benefits your college.

Reply details:

- it promotes the college and its courses, and attracts students
- it raises the profile of the college image locally & nationally
- it raises awareness to potential customers of programmes on offer, in light of increasing competition
- information to public of range of courses available (potential students, parents, employers etc)
- enables potential students to make informed choices and leads

to increased enrolment

- for the college, it identifies the market to target
- for the college, it influences the range of products/ programmes to offer
- it allows the college to identify and respond to local needs
- it helps employers to place employees on appropriate training programmes
- internally, it helps the college to meet its strategic objectives

(c) If NO, please briefly state why you believe to be so

Reply details:

- college's activities are publicity and promotion only rather than all marketing activities
- it is not properly resourced

BRIEF SUMMARY

There is considerable evidence that respondents clearly recognise the need, advantages and benefits of marketing for FE colleges, externally and internally.

2(a) Does the college's Mission Statement reflect marketing-driven aims and objectives?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 37	57
No	= 5	7
Don't know	= 14	22
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state in what ways.

Reply details:

- Mission Statement/Strategic Plan implies the need for marketing and to understand what people need, but it is not explicit
- marketing aims and objectives are included in Strategic Plans
- marketing activities reflect the Mission Statement
- Mission Statements are statements of aims and some are related to marketing
- to attract school leavers and to improve participation in F E
- it focuses on the needs of students and the community
- college must be responsive to the markets and potential students
- directed at target groups to increase participation of all sections of the community
- helps the college to provide quality education and to stimulate demand

(c) If NO, please briefly state why you believe this to be so

There were 5 No replies but no details were given

BRIEF SUMMARY

There appears to be some degree of conflict in the minds of some respondents, of what is in the Mission Statement/Strategic Plan. Most replies indicate a good understanding of the Mission Statement and Strategic Plan, and recognition that the documents do reflect marketing objectives. There are a number of references to the marketing strategies to help customers and maintain the close links with feeder schools, industry, business and the professions.

3 Are the college's marketing activities top driven by senior management?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 34	52
No	= 11	17
Don't know	= 11	17
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

BRIEF SUMMARY

Question 2 and 3, and replies to both, are closely linked. All

staff are committed to the marketing policies of the college and most believe that marketing activities are top driven. It is recognised that there is a need for target marketing, greater staff participation and growth. Teaching staff wish to be involved in the development of the Strategic Plan, to know their views are sought and to contribute to ownership.

4 In your opinion, which of these groups is most committed to the college's marketing policies?(please tick ONE box only)

Replies:	Actual	%
Managers	= 40	62
Lecturers	= 12	18
Admin staff	= 2	3
Reception staff	= 0	0
Don't know	= 2	3
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

BRIEF SUMMARY

A substantial majority of the replies believe managers are the most committed group, but many comments indicate the difficulty and fairness of having to decide between managers and lecturers. One interpretation is that both groups are seriously committed to marketing.

5 Would you say that the main directions of the college's marketing activities are:

Replies:	Actual	%
Too broad	= 10	15
About right	= 35	54
Too narrow	= 11	17
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

Reply details relate to "too narrow"

- centralised marketing does not provide resources/correct opportunities for subject specialists to get involved in marketing
- it only focuses on promotion
- a need to allow specialists to sell their specialisms

BRIEF SUMMARY

Over half of the replies believe that the main directions of marketing activities are about right. There is a natural concern with this reply and it raises the question, is this answer the too easy, middle-of-the road and non-political reply expected?

Other replies require more thought and time to explain.

Some comments placed strong emphasis on the need to involve subject specialists much more. Teaching staff feel disadvantaged by lack of information and marketing research.

6 What do you perceive to be the college's main marketing activities?

Replies:

- marketing research to clearly identify customer needs and location of programmes
- target marketing and developing different markets to meet needs
- niche marketing and new course developments; reaching these customers using professional publications
- marketing activities to be directed to target groups, and to identify ways of reaching these target groups cost effectively when inhibited by financial and resource constraints
- to promote FEFC funded programmes especially for 16-19 yr old, unemployed and women returners
- publicity about college's provisions - publicity materials, brochures, subject-focused leaflets, subject areas
- improve feeder Schools Liaison and Career Services, using a purpose-made college video
- better promotions, exhibitions, Open Days, post-16 Evenings at feeder schools
- specific liaison between curriculum areas and industry, commerce and employers
- improve promotions using local newspapers, local radio, advertising, billboards and buses, etc
- increase awareness, profile of college and better community relations

- gutsy promotions using press releases, good news articles of student achievements
- involve specialist staff for specialist subjects in all marketing activities
- improve inadequate information related to markets, potential students and careers
- need for marketing intelligence gathering for MIS database related to past, present and potential students, employers, etc
- collaboration with other local colleges and TECs, leading to joint ventures
- very clear division between what programme managers want from central marketing and what central Marketing Unit perceive as their role

BRIEF SUMMARY

The range of replies to this question is interesting and indicates the wide range of perceptions of staff. Some replies deal with main marketing activities in a broad academic sense and others wish to emphasise specific areas they consider to be main activities. Staff believe most marketing activities are concerned with publicity and promotion. Many replies emphasise the importance for basic marketing to identify specific customer needs, specific target marketing, to improve feeder Schools Liaison and Industry Liaison, a video of the college, MIS data-base related to students and industry.

Another dominating reply is the serious problem of how to achieve

a positive focus with the central Marketing Unit in a co-ordinating role; and the need for specialist subject staff, middle and senior management to be much more involved. There is a need for a clearer understanding of what programme managers want from central marketing and the role of the central Marketing Unit.

It is important for the college to direct its marketing activities towards target groups especially when there are financial and resource constraints. Colleges have to take into account the guidelines of FEFC. There is a serious problem of balancing these constraints with customer needs.

7 Which group of staff is responsible for the conduct of the college's marketing activities?

Replies:	Actual	%
Marketing trained staff	= 26	40
Lecturers who have acquired some marketing knowledge	= 25	39
Others, please briefly specify	= 5	7
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

Reply details:

- Marketing manager and innovative back-up team

- centrally-located marketing staff
- some specialists ie professional photographers are brought in for special needs
- some neighbourhood staff make positive inputs

8 Should staff concerned with marketing the college's courses be:

Replies:	Actual	%
Full time	= 35	54
Part time with more hours remission	= 17	26
Others, please briefly specify	= 4	6
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

Reply details:

- a mix is required of full time staff at central HQ and part time involvement at the centres, plus bought-in expertise for specific projects ie artists, actors and photographers
- all staff practice 'marketing' when they present themselves and the college to the public
- many staff practice marketing functions in different ways
- marketing should not be restricted to full time marketing staff; there is a real need to include specialist subject lecturers with remission to market programme areas

9(a) Have staff marketing the college's courses undertaken any special marketing courses, staff development, etc?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 18	28
No	= 6	9
Don't know	= 32	49
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state reasons.

Reply details:

- need to inform/reinforce all staff of the college's marketing strategies
- need for subject tutors to receive staff development time for appropriate training in marketing activities
- need for staff development to add marketing to existing skills
- subject tutors need to be aware of, and use latest marketing techniques

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons

Reply details:

- no requests received for staff development training in marketing activities
- need to balance staff development for marketing with other areas of staff development

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most responses to Questions 7 - 9 incl, beg a further question ie if directors and senior management really believe marketing activities and techniques enhance the college and result in benefits, why do they not place a stronger emphasis on the need for involvement by all staff and make resources available for this to be carried out more systematically?

At the moment, subject tutors want to get involved but are unable do so until remission is granted, and that there are opportunities for suitable training, and agreed involvement with the central the Marketing Unit and College Schools marketing.

There is a clear need for an overall review and positive direction to be given from the top.

10 What do you think are the best features of your college's marketing activities?

Reply details:

- targeting and segmentation ie 16 year old school leavers
- links with potential students via school liaison teams, regarding courses available, post-16 Evenings etc
- good quality, eye catching, glossy materials produced centrally
- 'Choices' booklet containing all courses available
- good corporate image portrayed

- Open Days
- after care and assistance received by students from lecturers, Personal Tutors and Student Services

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most respondents firmly believe targeting and segmentation are the best features.

11 What do you think are the worst features of your college's marketing activities?

Reply details:

- inadequate dialogue between central Marketing Unit and subject tutors
- remoteness, need for central marketing to work with Centres/ College Schools
- central marketing is too far removed from work at the Centres/ College Schools; no direct communication between central marketing and curriculum teams
- lack of contact by central marketing with industry, commerce and potential students
- inaccurate, out of date information and general lack of marketing information such as demographic trends, competition, customer needs, from central marketing
- central marketing does not carry out any internal marketing at

College Schools to inform staff of various activities programmed

- many staff do not know what are the marketing strategies
- failure by central marketing to carry out market research related to customer needs, design and delivery of programmes
- central marketing do not identify gaps in the market for new programmes
- central marketing fails to involve many people who want to be involved
- College School staff believe marketing only equates to publicity and promotion
- lack of awareness of the need for marketing in its broadest sense; the college is not market oriented
- central marketing is not pro active
- corporate marketing image is very poor ie 'sinking S' Sheffield logo is typical

BRIEF SUMMARY

Overwhelming response indicates a distinct feeling of remoteness of the Central Marketing Unit away from College Schools who need the support of marketing. Respondents firmly believe there is an inadequate dialogue and a lack of co-ordination of various teams at the College Schools and central marketing.

12(a) Could marketing research be improved to enable your college provide more suitable full-time courses and recruitment from schools?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 45	69
No	= 2	3
Don't know	= 9	14
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state details.

Reply details:

- interpretations of local schools and labour markets are inexact sciences, therefore colleges need marketing research information to identify what potential students at schools need rather than simply telling them what colleges can offer
- more time to allocate to Schools Liaison to develop and interface with potential customers
- improve time with feeder schools to focus on courses, academic and vocational to be offered by colleges
- to identify the range and scope of provisions which should influence the programmes which the college offers
- to establish perceptions of college held by 15/16 year old and their parents

- need for primary and secondary research data to develop course profile, customer expectations and satisfaction
- to get subject specialists in contact with students who indicate interest; this requires Remission of Class Contact Hours (RCCH) for it to be done properly
- to ensure there is a feed back of recruitment from schools
- to identify specific customer needs
- to find out why potential students go elsewhere
- need to spend more money in the whole area of marketing research
- marketing research is almost non-existent; lack of will and resources
- need for community research
- need for a specific team of marketing personnel dedicated to research
- more imaginative targeting to increase uptake of under represented groups
- to provide better understanding of all segments ie age, geographic areas, social status etc
- courses on offer are restricted by FEFC funding and what it approves

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons.

No details were given.

BRIEF SUMMARY

The majority of respondents believe marketing research could and should improve the courses currently on offer. Many think Schools Liaison could be improved and making subject tutor time available is perceived to be the key. Some commented on the restrictions imposed by FEFC.

Recent marketing research carried out and subsequent action taken is not well known by staff, therefore communications need to be improved. There is a need for active internal marketing. The teaching staff feel disadvantaged by lack of information, lack of co-ordination and contacts with industry and commerce, and marketing research in general.

Clearly more and better focused marketing research is required. In addition there has to be a balance of customer needs and funding, and viable costs related to say class size, locations etc.

13(a) Could marketing research be improved to enable your college to provide more suitable part-time courses and recruitment of adults for vocational courses?

Replies	Actual	%
Yes	= 49	75
No	= 0	0
Don't know	= 7	11

No returns	=	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	=	65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state reasons.

Reply details:

- need to target employers more with an industry-needs perspective
- college is not very close to industry and commerce
- little marketing intelligence is available; need for an in-depth study of real needs of industry
- we do not know much about the structure and composition of this market; marketing research must be the first stage
- need to target the unemployed
- changing trends of employment and benefits legislation are examples of marketing needs
- there must be many potential adult returners but recruitment on current courses does not reflect this; college must find out why
- wider recruitment must be helpful as many students attend as a result of word of mouth recommendations
- target specific courses with the help of community workers
- need for dedicated researchers
- college does not seem bothered with this sector as outreach and development work has been reduced dramatically

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons.

BRIEF SUMMARY

Respondents suggest this is a grey area which would benefit greatly from the application of marketing research. It is perceived that the college is not very close to industry and commerce, and it needs to target employers better.

Liaison with local community workers would be beneficial.

14(a) Could marketing research be improved to enable your college provide more suitable courses for, and recruitment of non-vocational students?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 41	63
No	= 2	3
Don't know	= 13	20
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state reasons.

Reply details:

- needs to be directed towards adult students to find the most effective ways of getting in contact with them
- need to target markets that attract finance
- need to target this market with the help of community workers and consultative committees

- need to target unemployed potential customers
- need for database of community profile in a changing world
- college needs to know about school leavers who drop out from education and employment
- college may be able to offer distance learning
- better informed staff would allow work to be developed for this specific group

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons.

No reply details were given.

BRIEF SUMMARY

Respondents thought marketing research should address the needs of potential adult students and identify the most effective way of getting in contact with them. There is an obvious difficulty of getting a balance of providing programmes to meet customer needs, class sizes and funding available.

15 If your college has carried out marketing research in the last 4 years, please briefly describe changes that have emanated from that research.

Reply details:

- better monitoring patterns of school Yrs 10 and 11 curriculum and resulting patterns of A level courses

- need for more effective liaison with feeder schools and their students
- need to distribute more widely information from Schools Liaison teams and from the central Marketing Unit
- feeder schools need to be informed of college curriculum developments ie new programmes, modularisation of A level subjects
- new specialist courses now available at colleges
- target marketing
- better college profile; publicity materials and promotional activities have improved
- higher quality brochures and leaflets which were not in evidence a few years ago
- greater focus on adult provision
- accommodation strategy resulting in new college buildings after long discussions related to needs and location of programmes

BRIEF SUMMARY

Any marketing research carried out is not well known by staff. The lack of information and details of any marketing research is apparent from conflicting responses; it indicates a need for better internal communications.

Awareness of research into accommodation requirements and resulting announcements of new buildings/closure of some existing units is due to high profile led by the Principal.

16(a) Do students, actual and potential, benefit from the marketing activities of the college?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	44	68
No	=	0	0
Don't know	=	12	18
No returns	=	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	=	65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons

Reply details:

- marketing activities make all students and the community aware of choices and opportunities available, but there may be barriers such as finance, social and ability
- wider range of courses matching specific needs
- better awareness of nature and location of courses on offer
- publicity of the provisions of the college
- they provide an opportunity for individuals to contact the college by phone, by a visit and on Open Days
- they enable a student to select the most suitable courses
- they provide course information to help students to make correct decisions
- they provide information on entry points and progression routes
- they indicate the range, quality and relevance of courses

- potential students are better targeted
- without marketing, potential students may not be reached

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons.

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most replies believe marketing activities are based on the use of publicity and promotional materials and events. These are most informative for potential students to start a dialogue related to the most suitable choice of subject, programme and progression route.

There are no wider ranging responses such as possible application of marketing research for student catchment, database Information Systems, guidance and counselling whilst at college.

17(a) Do employers &/or parents, benefit from the marketing activities of the college?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	41	62
No	=	2	3
Don't know	=	13	21
No returns	=	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	=	65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- marketing activities allow parents and employers to be made aware of choices and opportunities available
- Parent Evenings help them to be better informed, but there are few links with parents after recruitment
- they provide an opportunity to give parents and employers a better and complete understanding of the programmes on offer
- may be some benefit to parents, but little benefit to employers
- clearer indication of what the college has to offer to specific groups
- parents and employers receive basic information, but more personal contacts are required
- partnerships with employers can develop
- college links with parents and employers need to improve; need to be more regular to provide update of programmes available, changes in qualifications and admission to HE
- need for better liaison with TECs

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons

No detailed reasons were given

BRIEF SUMMARY

Colleges provide opportunities to exchange with parents and employers before recruitment and so benefit students, but there

is a distinct impression that not enough is done after recruitment. Personal contacts and liaison in general needs to improve for the overall benefit of students and college.

18(a) In your college budget, is there a specific amount designated for marketing activities?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 50	77
No	= 0	0
Don't know	= 5	8
No returns	= <u>10</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	= 65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- single main budget is held by central Marketing Unit
- individual budget holders are invited to bid for specific items of expenditure on marketing and publicity
- central Marketing Unit has its own main budget and each programme area has a marketing line in its budget
- there are separate and specific budgets for advertising, for publicity, for Schools Liaison etc
- it is important that central marketing is not part of any budget that may come and go. Marketing budgets maybe a short term investment with long term benefit; it should not be

- related to indicators such as student numbers
- to attribute expenditure to appropriate activity
- need to have more specialist subject staff involved in College Schools. A central budget is not sufficient
- each area of college activity is allocated a budget
- for press and publicity materials

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons

BRIEF SUMMARY

Although there is an overwhelming majority believing there is a specific amount designated for marketing, the evidence by way of comments made, indicate a lack of understanding of how it operates in practice.

19(a) In the college budget, what are the main marketing activities?

Respondents ticked more than one box: multiple answers include :-

Replies:

Publicity	= 37
P R	= 18
Open Days	= 22
Leaflets/literature related to courses	= 35

Others, please briefly specify

Others include - marketing research

- Schools Liaison involving subject specialists
- Open Evenings
- media in general, local radio, local press,
college newsletter and public transport

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most respondents indicate more than one activity. However the top two activities are publicity and leaflet/literature related to courses. There is support for Schools Liaison for full time students but very few suggest marketing activities for part time students, say employed but requiring part time, day release.

Again there are requests for the need to get greater staff involvement which may be achieved by better liaison of central Marketing Unit with subject and marketing tutors in the College Schools, and more realistic incentives and remission.

20 How is your college's marketing budget developed each year?

Replies:	Actual	%
Allocated by senior management	= 13	20
Repeat of last year's amount	= 1	2
Last year's amount plus or minus x%	= 1	2
Do not know how it is developed	= 35	53

Other ways, please briefly specify	=	4	6
No returns	=	<u>11</u>	<u>17</u>
Total	=	65	100

Reply details:

- based on Business Plan submitted by Marketing Manager
- based on Activity Plans developed by Marketing Team
- allocated according to bids from programme areas based on needs and resources available

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most respondents do not know how the marketing budget is developed. Clearly the correct methods are not communicated top downwards.

21 In your college's budget, if the amount for marketing was to be increased by 20%, on what activities would you envisage the increase being spent? Please briefly state reasons

Reply details:

- marketing research would highlight areas conducive to marketing activity required to inform and drive other marketing aspects
- marketing research by a specific team dedicated to research only to improve links with feeder schools industry and commerce and to publicise widely all the results
- more activities with years 9, 10 and 11 school students to pro-

mote programmes and progression at college

- staff development and publicity of this development ie remis-
sion and cover for staff to acquire and develop methods and
specific projects related to all marketing activities
- need for a college video
- mobile publicity to travel around schools, industry and
shopping areas for the community
- information data base
- customer information, MIS, as a central database related to
students, industries and course information
- methods to attract unemployed and women returners as main areas
of new recruitment
- more Open Days, Evening Activities
- improve delivery of marketing information well in advance of
events; need to be pro active
- more advertising using local radio, local press, hoardings etc
- improve administration and technical support
- provide more text books for full time students
- sponsor events

BRIEF SUMMARY

There is a strong emphasis on the need for marketing research, especially using specific teams which include specialist subject tutors to improve links with feeder school, industry and commerce.

There is a need for a comprehensive data base information system

related to students, employers and course information.

22(a) If you are a budget-holder within your college, is there a specific amount designated for marketing in your personal budget?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	21	32
No	=	30	46
No returns	=	<u>14</u>	<u>22</u>
Total	=	65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- innovative marketing activities ie development of better links between central Marketing Unit and College Schools
- more demands are made on the central Marketing Unit
- at the moment, some budget holders feel excluded from central Marketing Unit
- to enable specific programme areas to be marketed individually rather than being a part of the college's general marketing activities

(c) If NO, in what ways would it be helpful to you, if part of

the budget was designated for marketing?

Reply details:

- for programme areas to have better known access to central funds, then small discrete budgets are not required
- internal marketing of training and development courses
- support for staff involved in marketing at College Schools
- course leaflets and literature for specific subjects and programmes
- specific marketing events to attract students

BRIEF SUMMARY

The evidence indicates a conflict of opinions. Over half of respondents say no - there is no specific amount designated for marketing; and about 40% say yes and list the application. Again it suggests lack of accurate information and communication from top down related to the general area of budgets and marketing activities.

23(a) In your personal budget, what are the main marketing activities?

Replies:	Actual	%
Publicity	= 22	34
P R	= 0	0

Open Days	=	3	5
Leaflets/literature related to courses	=	25	38
Others, please briefly specify	=	5	8
No returns	=	<u>10</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	=	65	100

Reply details:

- in-depth liaison with particular customer groups is required to identify needs and develop links
- to update staff of technological and educational developments
- staff training is required to analyse, evaluate and respond to specific needs
- it is necessary to be able to identify and inform potential students of college programmes on offer
- press advertising

BRIEF SUMMARY

Evidence indicates respondents believe main activities are publicity and leaflets. Other replies suggest wider ranging activities related to marketing research, and once more, the need for staff training and development.

24 How is your personal budget developed each year?

Replies:	Actual	%
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Allocated by senior management	= 27	42
Repeat of last year's amount	= 2	3
Last year's amount plus or minus x%	= 10	15
Do not know how it is developed	= 5	8
Other ways, please briefly specify	= 11	17
No returns	= <u>10</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	= 65	100

Reply details:

- in theory it is based on proven need but in practice it is developed around last year's amount
- submission and justification based on anticipated needs in context of new or reducing work in the future
- a mixture of bids developed by budget holders and submitted to Marketing Unit for approval
- also to include bids for new courses and developments, therefore bids maybe higher than previous year
- developed on basis of predicted income

BRIEF SUMMARY

By far most respondents believe budgets are allocated by senior management, based in theory, on a proven need, but in practice, they are developed around the previous year's amount. Others believe they are developed from a submission and justification of anticipated needs.

25 In your personal budget, if the amount for marketing was to be increased by 20%, on what activities would you envisage the increase being spent? Please briefly state reasons.

Reply details:

- improving feeder schools links to ensure maximum transfer of students from schools to college
- RCCH to develop strategic planning by College Schools
- to enable subject specialists time to get into feeder schools and industry
- to improve employer understanding, particularly of GNVQ and core and skills
- better quality of subject specific information
- developing marketing materials for new courses
- marketing activities to be targeted to specific feeder schools
- developing College School prospectus
- computer data base of appropriate information

BRIEF SUMMARY

Replies give clear evidence of the need to improve links with feeder schools and industry, especially by using subject specialists. To enable this to happen, there is an urgent need for realistic RCCH be given to subject specialists

to do the job and to do it properly.

26(a) How do the marketing activities of your college compare with those of other FE colleges?

Replies:	Actual	%
Better	= 11	17
About the same	= 7	11
Inferior	= 5	8
Don't know	= 32	49
No returns	= <u>10</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	= 65	100

(b) Please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- corporate publicity is better; links with feeder schools are good, but links with employers and identifying their training needs are poor
- poor profile and image because little information is circulated
- main difference is target marketing
- competition with local schools and colleges enhance the budget of local media empires more than increasing student choices

BRIEF SUMMARY

The majority of respondents do not know how the marketing acti-

vities of their college compares with those of other FE colleges. This may be considered a surprising admission when it is relatively easy to check. Others make comments on the lack of marketing information and programmed activities currently circulated, and inadequate links with employers.

27(a) How do the marketing activities of your college compare with other private or public training institutions?

Replies:	Actual	%
Better	= 1	1
About the same	= 7	11
Inferior	= 27	42
Don't know	= 20	31
No returns	= <u>10</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	= 65	100

(b) Please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- FE are only beginners in this field; others with narrower product focus can target better
- some course leaflets are inferior, less professional
- staff in other institutions are given more time to develop courses and market them

- lack of funds; it appears the college spends less on marketing compared with other institutions
- college image is one of low cost, low quality appearance
- centralised marketing staff do not have detailed subject knowledge
- centralised marketing is too remote
- marketing should be carried out by combining central marketing and individual subject expertise
- collaboration is needed to provide professional college image and to meet College School requirements
- College Schools need to respond to their own needs in addition to corporate marketing

BRIEF SUMMARY

Nearly half of the respondents believe marketing of the college is inferior when compared with similar institutions, and a further 31% do not know. These replies indicate a very low opinion of the marketing activities being carried out.

Here are very clear messages, such as how to achieve a College School focus with central marketing in a co-ordinating role, and the need for College School staff to be much more involved if remission is made available. These messages should not be ignored or dismissed as staff who do not know all the implications, but should be accepted as detailed explanations offered as constructive advice.

28(a) In your opinion, should your college's marketing activities be carried out:

Replies:	Actual	%
100% centrally	= 7	11
Part centrally, part by each school/department	= 44	68
100% by each school/department	= 4	6
No returns	= <u>10</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	= 65	100

(b) Please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- College Schools should be able to choose the activities they require ; central marketing to co-ordinate ie house style, and to obtain resources
- development leads to ownership which leads to commitment; if centrally controlled there is no ownership and College Schools do not get deeply involved
- College Schools have specific subject expertise and to ensure quality of materials; needs a combination of both
- central for co-ordination but each School/Faculty knows its own needs
- a College School focus is needed, however marketing should benefit from centralised approach
- better practical links are required between central Marketing

Unit and curriculum areas in College Schools

- lack of College School responsiveness if marketing is centrally controlled; College Schools need to be kept in touch and know what is needed by central marketing
- College Schools need to generate ideas and basic materials which central Marketing Unit put into college format
- 100% central to maximise cost/opportunity benefits, and corporate goals are not necessarily those of Schools. An overview of college needs is always required
- needs to be organised/co-ordinated centrally for economies of scale of production.

BRIEF SUMMARY

A substantial majority of respondents, 80%, believe the marketing activities should be carried out in part centrally and in part at each College School. There are many returns which indicate the existing practice is far from satisfactory. Many believe College School staff are not being involved and much subject expertise is not being utilised; there is clear evidence of frustration, lack of ownership/involvement by subject tutors. The key question is how to achieve a College School focus with central Marketing co-ordination.

29(a) Please describe the main ways in which quality is monitored in your college.

Reply details:

- quality review procedures in teams and course review system which should lead to Action Plans, but action does not result
- student surveys and questionnaires
- external FEFC inspection and moderators visits
- through course team reviews
- through performance indicators agreed in relation to specific staff development activities
- through one to one tutorial sessions
- retention rates
- examination results
- monitoring examination results
- subject review meetings
- Quality Assurance process
- external moderation of programmes
- substantial Quality Strategy
- ineffective quality co-ordinators

(b) Is quality monitored really effectively, for curriculum, programmes, outcomes, etc?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	10	15
No	=	33	51

Don't know	=	13	20
No returns	=	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	=	65	100

(c) Is quality not really monitored effectively?

Reply details:

- no support for staff from management
- no real follow up of issues raised ie staffing difficulties and lack of resources
- actions only taken to get working blackboards and OHPs if there are external pressures ie FEFC
- quality is poor in areas of outcomes and management information system activities; it is not driven by management
- lacks drive to respond to issues, and lack of communication cross college
- student surveys tell a lot, where as review teams tend to blame others for deficiencies; we do not monitor our effectiveness as deliverers
- action plans are not effectively reviewed; there is no mechanism for forcing management to respond
- poor management which does not really take actions necessary
- quality reviews are not taken seriously; lack of follow through on quality issues
- failure of quality co-ordinators to facilitate setting of standards
- lack of cross college dimensions; not linked into curriculum

development activities

- effective monitoring and overall co-ordination needs to be improved
- inspectors do not think so
- college never has a consumer review, only what we offer is reviewed
- needs more student involvement
- no quality review related to internal verification requirements of GNVQ

BRIEF SUMMARY

Half of the respondents believe quality is not monitored effectively. Many believe quality is poor in terms of outcomes, management information systems and claim it is not driven by management. The teaching staff believe they receive little or no support from management. Staff believe that there is little follow-up of issues raised. There is a serious concern about the role of quality co-ordinators and apparent lack of action taken.

30(a) In your opinion, would your college gain benefits/status if it had B S 5750 accreditation?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	16	25
No	=	22	34

Don't know	=	13	20
No returns	=	<u>14</u>	<u>21</u>
Total	=	65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- it would provide consistency
- it would perhaps be good for vocational courses and indicate a benchmark standard for employers, but would not be suitable for a complete college
- it could be a useful standard as no serious quality provision takes place in the college
- it is a national quality standard and would bring extra status for the institution
- it is a recognised business standard and status
- accreditation would attract potential customers
- it would provide a focus for improvement

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons

Reply details:

- to really find out, there is need for research and evaluation of influences on feeder schools and employers, by Schools Liaison and Industry teams
- an inappropriate system for an education process as an outcome is dependent upon supplier (college) and customer (student); it is too mechanistic

- no, because it is a bureaucratic system and not a process system; it would add even more admin to an overloaded system
- systems need to be owned by staff and not imposed
- BS 5750 is essentially an admin system but it does not necessarily improve quality
- scepticism about benefits of BS 5750 against time taken to establish procedures; it is thought that the college's own quality procedures, if properly managed and implemented, would be better
- doubtful if the college has the will to motivate and implement BS 5750 in order to gain benefit
- to many people, staff and customers, it would mean very little
- it would introduce even more paperwork and bring very few positive outcomes
- it would need committed staff and competent managers, and could create chaos

BRIEF SUMMARY

There are many mixed feelings on the benefits or otherwise, ranging from some who believe BS 5750 accreditation would improve status and quality standards, and a greater percentage who believe it would be an inappropriate system to apply to an FE college that has a wide range of programmes and products.

Some believe that quality standards are poor and any action, rather than paper talk only, would be an improvement. To really find out, there is a need for research to address this ques-

tion, and also to evaluate what does influence feeder schools and particularly employers.

31(a) Has your college benefited from specific marketing activities during the past 4 years?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 39	60
No	= 2	3
Don't know	= 15	23
No returns	= <u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	= 65	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- better corporate style with standard format and cost effective publicity, and improved brochures and leaflets from central marketing
- has now developed a corporate image after replacing six separate institutions
- improved awareness; profile and image has increased
- increase in 16 - 19 year old age group recruited and more women returners
- pricing policy of 10% discount for early enrolment in 1995/96
- direct mailshot to 27000 householders via Royal Mail

- college filofax to every school leaver in catchment area, approx. 5500
- news shots to internal audience, showing positive stories and successes
- accommodation strategy; an in-depth and wide ranging study of existing and future accommodation, and need for new locations
- increase in total number of students; the previous decline in student numbers has slowed down and is now being reversed
- increase in FT school leavers and significant increase in part time provision

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons

Reply details:

- too many changes confuse the public

BRIEF SUMMARY

A substantial majority, 70%, of respondents believe the college had gained benefit in the past four years, mainly from promotional activities. There is an improved awareness and corporate image is better. Central marketing has resulted in better corporate style and improved quality of brochures and leaflets. A pricing policy decision of a 10% discount for early enrolment has improved the previous peak time activity in early September. By targeting marketing activities, there has been an increase in student numbers enrolled.

32 Please briefly state your thoughts on what changes in marketing activities would benefit your college in the immediate future.

Reply details:

- better linkage between central Marketing Unit and Schools, and feeder schools and employer liaison teams
- central Marketing Unit should use in-house expertise much more
- less centralisation
- resources should be shifted down to College Schools
- marketing activities are being overshadowed by new contracts of employment; real danger of collapse from support staff
- more subject based schools liaison, and more time/resources need to be made available to do this
- need for much more specific marketing research and follow-up marketing
- need to bring marketing to all staff; let all staff get involved and recognise their time and effort in doing so
- need to involve everyone, all staff and all students
- need for substantial links between central Marketing Unit and Programme Areas
- need for total involvement of all staff in course areas to give ownership and remission to achieve it
- to incorporate quality into marketing practices more and more

- internal marketing to boost sales efforts to establish new products using existing expertise
- create a network of admin support for teaching staff
- boost marketing links with potential students/TECS/employers
- need for staff training for specialised marketing input
- more emphasis on adult population where much potential growth lies
- better, brighter and more appealing logo for college
- dedicated marketing teams to research and identify growth areas
ie improve links with feeder schools for GCSE programmes

BRIEF SUMMARY

Respondents indicate a very wide range of ideas and changes to benefit the college, but dominating all is a very clear perception of the need to improve links and liaison between central Marketing Unit and the College Schools. Central Marketing should use subject and in-house expertise. There should be less centralisation and more resources should be shifted to College Schools.

The corporate image, the sinking 'S', is considered to be poor, uninspiring and needs to be changed urgently.

33 Please attach any further comments you may think are of relevance to your college's marketing activities, which have not been covered by this questionnaire.

Reply details:

- most staff are unaware of the work of the Marketing Unit and what is central marketing strategy. How do staff find out?
- ownership of marketing has to be developed throughout the college
- need to channel and maximise existing expertise
- college marketing strategy and targets need to be understood and owned by all staff
- important to maintain market penetration which means aggressive marketing
- competitors may sometimes be collaborators and partners for joint ventures
- importance of line management structure which links Marketing Manager direct to the Principal. College strategy is primary goal and direct line structure gives a complete overview
- it would be useful to have a calendar summary of all marketing activities throughout the year. Subject staff could add positive and constructive comments regarding additional activities
- important to control publicity materials generated by subject staff who have access to technology and through enthusiasm produce poor quality and non-targeted materials
- greater access to all school leavers including 6th formers
- more investment is needed in staff development in College Schools and less in command/central management

BRIEF SUMMARY

Many responses continue the theme of more investment and marketing activity within College Schools and less with central Marketing Unit. Indeed a number indicate the lack of information and detailed knowledge of central marketing policies. There is a widespread need to channel and maximise existing expertise and for more investment in staff development.

A simple and practical example is the need for a college calendar listing a summary of all marketing activities. The line management structure linking Marketing Manager direct to the Principal is clearly of great benefit and this should help information to cascade down to all staff. Unfortunately many staff believe this does not happen now.

CHAPTER 5 : RESULTS OF RESEARCH AT SHREWSBURY COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the field research continues, this time at Shrewsbury College which is a smaller institution than the Sheffield College when compared in terms of staff and students. The sample size for the marketing questionnaire was therefore reduced accordingly, but the methodology was exactly the same. As for the Sheffield College, the research consists of a combination of marketing questionnaires, interviews with various members of staff and examining college literature made available.

SHREWSBURY COLLEGE

Shrewsbury College provides the widest choice of full-time courses for school leavers and mature students. In addition to GCSE and A Level programmes, the college offers a comprehensive range of vocational courses which combine traditional learning with work and business skills and lead to qualifications that prepare for further qualifications, university or a worthwhile job. Shrewsbury College is committed to all students in support of its Mission Statement and College Charter.

Shrewsbury College consists of the Main Campus situated on London Road, the largest site and the principal administrative centre, and offers a wide range of vocational courses alongside GCSE and A Level programmes. It also has excellent sports facilities.

Radbroke College which is a centre of excellence for education and training in hotel management and catering, has its own industry standard of training kitchens and restaurant. In addition, it offers a range of caring courses for students to prepare for careers in social care and nursery nursing. Bridgnorth College offers a varied curriculum with courses in Business Administration, Information Technology, Nursery Nursing, Social Care, Leisure and Tourism, as well as GCSEs and A Levels.

There is a College Advice Shop, Prospects, open in the Darwin shopping centre throughout the summer months and a College Advice Shop in the adult education centre, is located in Bridgnorth town centre. There are Learning Resource Centres on each site with a friendly working environment for all students. Modern, generously equipped libraries are part of each Learning Resource Centre. Facilities are constantly being upgraded to keep pace with changes in curriculum and methods of learning.

Shrewsbury provide excellent guidance and counselling services on each site, and staff are committed to look after student interests. College staff are sensitive to the personal as well as the academic needs of students as they progress through their studies and facilities are available to provide students with support and advice. Student Services provide guidance to prospective students and on a continuing basis throughout their time at college.

Shrewsbury College is committed to extending the range of full-time educational opportunities available to adults over 21 who want to take a degree or some other advanced qualification but lack the necessary academic entry requirements. Shrewsbury College offers a number of options which enables the student to choose the Access course best suited. Access to HE courses are specially designed for adults over 21 who lack the necessary academic entry requirements. Access is a challenging and stimulating experience.

In addition to the Drop-in Clerical and Computer Centre based at Radbrook, there are opportunities at Bridgnorth and Main Campus to benefit from flexible learning arrangements. It is possible to tailor learning programmes to meet individual needs.

Shrewsbury College is an integral part of the business community. A large and diverse programme of vocational courses have made a significant contribution to the local economy, particularly in areas such as construction and catering for which the college has a virtual training monopoly. Shrewsbury is committed to extending the range of educational and lifelong opportunities for adults. Each year, around 3,000 people enrol on part-time vocational courses to learn new skills or update old ones. All full-time students and the Principal, on behalf of the college, sign a Student Learning Contract which clearly sets out rights and

responsibilities.

MAIN POINTS ARISING FROM INTERVIEWS

AND REPLIES TO THE MARKETING QUESTIONNAIRE

Marketing questionnaires were sent to a range of staff and various semi-structured interviews were conducted. Distribution was made by the Vice Principal. Details of the comments, personal points and issues arising from the interviews, the replies to the Marketing Questionnaire and examination of college literature, are recorded and summarised below.

Response was very good with 21 replies (75%) out of a total of 28 issued. Respondents to the questionnaire and interviewees, again offered their full co-operation most willingly, by way of time and constructive comments.

SHREWSBURY COLLEGE : REPLIES TO MARKETING QUESTIONNAIRE

1(a) Do you believe that marketing of its courses, benefits your college?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	19	68
No	=	2	7
Don't know	=	0	0
No returns	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>

Total = 28 100

(b) If YES, please briefly state in what ways you believe that marketing benefits your college.

Reply details:

- to inform potential clients and to attract new students
- improves image
- college needs to maintain a high profile to beat off competition from a sixth form college and other colleges serving a small county population
- others in competition do it; if college didn't it would lose out
- self evident to anyone supplying a 'product'. People have got to know what you have on offer
- in a competitive market, it is essential to go out into the market place
- informs; brings down barriers and raises level of understanding about the college
- increases student numbers
- keeps college in public eye
- brings in students
- becomes more responsive to local/national industry and student needs
- strategic positioning to maximise funding

(c) If NO, please briefly state why you believe this to be so

No reply details were given

BRIEF SUMMARY

Overwhelming Yes reply provides evidence of the advantages and benefits of marketing. Respondents clearly believe that all customers, actual and potential, need to be informed, especially when there is considerable competition, and the college must always be kept in the public eye.

2(a) Does the college's Mission Statement reflect marketing-driven aims and objectives?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	15	54
No	=	2	7
Don't know	=	4	14
No returns	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	=	28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state in what ways.

Reply details:

- Mission Statement is quite brief; College Charter outlines the need to provide a high standard of education linked to industry, delivered professionally and free from bias and discrimination

- presentation reflects mission
- partnerships with outside bodies/ European links with schools, colleges etc.
- detailed market research and implementation of strategies for recruitment and income generation
- equal opportunities are mentioned

(c) If NO, please briefly state why you believe this to be so

Reply details:

- college does not have a specific Mission Statement
- because it does not deal with the process

BRIEF SUMMARY

Majority Yes replies. Although the Mission Statement is brief, the College Charter outlines the objectives to provide a high standard of education and to link these to customer's needs. Replies also indicate the need for more market research.

3 Are the college's marketing activities top driven by senior management?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 12	43
No	= 7	25

Don't know	=	2	7
No returns	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	=	28	100

BRIEF SUMMARY

Majority of respondents believe the marketing activities are top driven but on a limited time basis. Surprisingly approx 43% replies are No or Don't Know.

- 4 In your opinion, which of these groups is most committed to the college's marketing policies? (please tick ONE box only)

Replies:		Actual	%
Managers	=	13	46
Lecturers	=	7	25
Admin staff	=	1	4
Reception staff	=	0	0
No returns	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	=	28	100

BRIEF SUMMARY

The majority of replies indicate that marketing activities are top-driven; however, it is recognised that all staff are involved to some extent. The degree of involvement is limited for some

staff by the time available for marketing activities and not one of attitude.

5 Would you say that the main directions of the college's marketing activities are:

Replies:		Actual	%
Too broad	=	3	11
About right	=	12	43
Too narrow	=	6	21
No returns	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	=	28	100

BRIEF SUMMARY

Over 57% of replies believe the marketing activities are about right, but they have may given an easy, politically correct answer. Respondents with this belief, may be staff already involved and others who believe they are 'too broad' or 'too narrow' may be staff with little or no involvement.

6 What do you perceive to be the college's main marketing activities?

Reply details:

- marketing research
- needs research, analysis, curriculum design, promotion, customer care
- 'Prospects Shop' based in local shopping centre for adults/16 year old guidance service, which operates throughout July and August; information stands at supermarkets, shows, etc
- promotions aimed at target markets
- Schools Liaison; Employer Liaison
- product development
- to enrol 16-19 year olds to increase numbers, but Marketing Unit do not think about corporate image and public perceptions
- newspaper adverts; local radio and other forms of advertising
- Open Days, Open Evenings
- individuals and discipline areas trying to 'sell' their own special courses; there seems to be no college motivated activity or co-ordination
- involvement in events such as Adult Learners Week
- brochures, prospectus, leaflets, etc
- video of the college
- representation at events such as County Show

BRIEF SUMMARY

There is evidence of very clear and precise thinking in the replies to this question. Most respondents believe in the need for marketing research to actually establish the needs of

customers, and then to target the markets selected. Many believe the Prospects Shop is successful and effective; and that the theme could be developed even more to other areas. All recognise the aim to persuade potential customers of the many attractions that the college has to offer, and as expected, there are different ideas about which methods should be used. Schools Liaison, Employer Liaison, appropriate forms of advertising, and making and using a video of the college are among the popular ideas.

7 Which group of staff is responsible for the conduct of the college's marketing activities?

Replies:	Actual	%
Marketing trained staff	= 9	32
Lecturers who have acquired some marketing knowledge	= 10	36
Others, please briefly specify	= 2	7
No returns	= <u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	= 28	100

Reply details:

- a combination of market trained staff plus senior managers
- student service staff are well informed but do not have specialist marketing expertise
- all staff must be involved

- a balanced team consisting of Marketing Unit plus subject specialists is required
- central Marketing Unit

8 Should staff concerned with marketing the college's courses be:

Replies:	Actual	%
Full time	= 9	32
Part time with more hours remission	= 12	43
Others, please briefly specify	= 0	0
No returns	= <u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	= 28	100

Reply details:

- room for both full-time and part-time marketers, with more hours remission
- should be all staff
- should not matter as long as they are dedicated to the job
- need for subject specialists to gain marketing skills
- subject specialists need to be aware of, and actually use marketing skills

9(a) Have staff marketing the college's courses undertaken any

special marketing courses, staff development, etc?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	13	46
No	=	3	11
Don't know	=	5	18
No returns	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	=	28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state reasons.

Reply details:

- employed in specific role
- they teach marketing as part of their job
- one day seminars
- must understand the difference between marketing and selling
- to improve effectiveness
- all staff should be customer orientated
- need for all staff to be informed of the college's current marketing strategies

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons

Reply details:

- very limited staff development
- subject tutors need to be given staff development time to gain

marketing skills

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most replies to Q7-9 emphasise that there should be room for both full-time marketing staff and lecturers involved in marketing as a part-time activity when granted remission hours. There is room for everyone. The replies clearly show that specialist staff feel they cannot participate as much as they would want to because of the lack of remission hours. There is also a feeling of a lack of staff development in this area.

10 What do you think are the best features of your college's marketing activities?

Reply details:

- analysis of student needs and what the college offers
- School Liaison
- visits by lecturers familiar with industry, and discussions with industrialists responsible for training
- specialist staff using knowledge of their courses
- personal contacts
- should have a variety of activities
- promoting quality and caring aspects within a tight budget
- quality, as great care is taken to give a very professional image ie to ensure that display material is good, literature is

accurate, up-to-date and well presented; staff are well briefed

BRIEF SUMMARY

Respondents believe that market research identifies needs, and so allows the college to target the appropriate segments. Schools Liaison and Industrial Liaison performed by teams combining the central Marketing Unit and subject specialists are considered the most effective.

The college must promote the variety of courses available, and the quality and caring aspects at all times.

11 What do you think are the worst features of your college's marketing activities?

Reply details:

- inadequate budget
- staff in general are untrained and unaware of the true marketing issues
- marketing is frequently perceived as a curse, something that is carried out by others but not as an integral part of everyone's role
- a seemingly total reliance on past glory; reluctance to grasp modern concepts of the market place
- short of time for more marketing activities by lecturers
- Marketing Unit is not interested in a whole PR package;

- they concentrate on post-school recruitment
- lack of curriculum development which needs to be related to needs analysis
 - lack of direction
 - reactive and slow; a clear overall co-ordinated approach not yet developed
 - inconsistent and needs keeping up-to-date

BRIEF SUMMARY

Replies are brutally frank and honest. Perhaps the condemnatory replies stems from an inadequate budget, and as a result many damning perceptions emerge. Respondents clearly believe that the Marketing Unit is under-funded and under-staffed to perform effectively in a most important and sensitive area.

Replies suggest that there is a lack of co-ordination and many issues need to be addressed urgently. There is a need for active internal marketing, a critical review of the budget, of staffing levels, of variety, frequency and quality of external contacts with potential customers.

Clearly there is an urgent need for market research to establish direction and the thrust required by the college.

12(a) Could marketing research be improved to enable your college

provide more suitable full-time courses and recruitment from schools?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	19	68
No	=	0	0
Don't know	=	2	7
No return	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	=	28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state details.

Reply details:

- should distinguish patterns and trends more accurately and plan more programmes in popular areas of study, and reducing the provision elsewhere
- target needs more accurately
- little marketing research is carried out
- to obtain feedback from customers
- should be actually doing it with some aim and conviction
- need to talk more to Years 10 and 11 about what they want from the college
- better advertising; schools visits to college
- to improve recruitment
- need to raise profile of not-so-popular courses to increase interest and to reshape courses to make them more effective

and appealing

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons

BRIEF SUMMARY

Respondents believe there is a serious need for much greater commitment from senior managers, and for an increased budget to improve the marketing activities. Whilst it is recognised that the fashionable answer to a problem is to direct more money at it, there does seem to be a strong case to increase the marketing budget. The Marketing Unit is seen as under-funded and under-staffed, but trying very hard to perform most of the obvious marketing activities required by the college.

The involvement of all staff must be encouraged and lecturers firmly believe the best way forward is by staff training in marketing techniques and adequate RCCH to encourage subject specialists. More direct contact must be made and maintained, especially by senior managers 'to sell' the college to feeder schools, employers, TECs and parents. There is a need to raise the college corporate image and profile.

13(a) Could marketing research be improved to enable your college provide more suitable part-time courses and recruitment of adults for vocational courses?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 18	64

No	=	0	0
Don't know	=	3	11
No returns	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	=	28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state reasons.

Reply details:

- more direct contact with employers, but many small employers
- adult market still has considerable growth potential
- more liaison with firms
- need to have a clear understanding of the barriers adults face in order to put on programmes that accommodate these problems ie new Jobseekers allowance regulations
- not enough time and commitment for necessary work to be carried out by teaching staff
- actually doing some marketing research, and carried out to achieve specific aims and with real conviction that will benefit the college

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons

BRIEF SUMMARY

Many replies believe there is a need for more positive liaison, direct contact with employers, even though many are small firms. The adult market has considerable growth potential. On the other

hand, budgets are tight and specialist subject tutors do not receive adequate remission hours to enable this necessary work to be carried out satisfactorily.

14(a) Could marketing research be improved to enable your college provide more suitable courses for, and recruitment of non-vocational students?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	16	57
No	=	0	0
Don't know	=	4	14
No returns	=	<u>8</u>	<u>29</u>
Total	=	28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state reasons.

Reply details:

- definite need for marketing research into specific topics
- strong competition from sixth form colleges
- how to improve corporate image of FE college
- college needs feed back from customers, schools, parents and employers
- there is a lot of ignorance and bias at feeder schools of what

is on offer at FE college

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons

BRIEF SUMMARY

There is strong competition from local sixth form college, therefore marketing research is vitally important to establish why potential students are or are not attracted to the FE college. Respondents believe there is much ignorance and bias at feeder schools as to what the FE college can actually offer. There is a need to build up the image and profile of the FE college.

15 If your college has carried out marketing research in the last 4 years, please briefly describe changes that have emanated from that research.

Reply details:

- strategic planning decisions as required by FEFC
- new and improved courses
- not sure
- none; none structured
- unaware of any change

BRIEF SUMMARY

Surprisingly replies are non-committal as most seem unaware of

of any recent marketing research carried out. Perhaps communications with all staff needs to be improved.

16(a) Do students, actual and potential, benefit from the marketing activities of the college?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	18	64
No	=	0	0
Don't know	=	3	11
No returns	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	=	28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons

Reply details:

- brings products and services to attention of students
- more information to facilitate choice
- to provide basic information to help students
- students are impressed when they find out what college can really offer
- with information, students can make informed choices
- marketing activities raise the college profile
- improvement and better availability of courses
- they gain access to courses

- needs are highlighted with an aim to provide new/modified courses to fulfil them
- parents and students often have little idea of the range of courses available at college
- they know what is on offer to make informed choices

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons

BRIEF SUMMARY

Replies suggest students benefit by having accurate and up-to-date information to help them in their decision-making. Often the public are not aware of the range of courses available at college and promotions/ publicity informs. All marketing activities should help to raise the college profile.

17(a) Do employers &/or parents, benefit from the marketing activities of the college?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 18	64
No	= 0	0
Don't know	= 3	11
No returns	= <u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	= 28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- accurate and up-to-date information
- better understanding of what is on offer
- parents do not know what FE colleges can offer; many are brain-washed by biased schools not to go to sixth form colleges
- can obtain information in prospectus about relevant courses
- higher college profile
- may lead to the college providing new/modified courses according to demand and costs involved
- dialogue has many benefits

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons

BRIEF SUMMARY

Employers and parents benefit from publicity, advertising and promotions; they are better informed to allow them to make informed choices. Dialogue between college and employers/parents helps to establish needs more accurately and may lead to college providing new or modified courses.

18(a) In your college budget, is there a specific amount designated for marketing activities?

Replies:	Actual	%
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Yes	=	16	57
No	=	0	0
Don't know	=	3	11
No returns	=	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>
Total	=	28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- main budget is held by the Marketing Unit
- for promotion and publicity materials
- expenditure must be linked to appropriate marketing activity
- central Marketing Unit has a budget
- each college School has its own budget

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most replies indicate a belief that there is a specific amount in the college budget designated for marketing activities; there is a lack of understanding of how it actually works in practice.

19(a) In the college budget, what are the main marketing activities?

Some respondents ticked more than one box; multiple answers

include :-

Publicity	= 11
P R	= 7
Open Days	= 9
Leaflets/literature related to courses	= 13
Others, please briefly specify	

Others include - marketing research

- some staff are always willing and able to promote courses available and systems in use
- Prospects Shop is mentioned frequently

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most replies indicate more than one activity. There is a fairly equal spread across the various promotional aspects. The Prospect Shop is mentioned frequently.

20 How is your college's marketing budget developed each year?

Replies:	Actual	%
Allocated by senior management	= 6	21
Repeat of last year's amount	= 0	0
Last year's amount plus or minus x%	= 0	0
Do not know how it is developed	= 15	53
Other ways, please briefly specify	= 5	18
No returns	= <u>2</u>	<u>8</u>

Total

=

28

100

Reply details:

- budget is developed according to needs
- marketing budget is allocated by senior managers
- allocated by senior managers developed from last year's budget

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most staff do not know how the marketing budget is developed.
Communications need to be improved to inform all staff.

21 In your college's budget, if the amount for marketing was to be increased by 20%, on what activities would you envisage the increase being spent? Please briefly state reasons

Reply details:

- more research on needs of immediate community
- nominated members of staff led by a management grade to develop an effective marketing cross-college team
- more direct contact with specific client groups
- more visits by feeder schools to college
- increase in staffing
- improve college image; logo needs updating
- to be spent by College Schools on promoting its own courses
- to improve Prospects Shop facility

- Open Days, probably the most effective method of recruitment
- advertising to research a broad range of people
- greater differentiation in literature and activities for promotion

BRIEF SUMMARY

Many respondents believe that more research is required by the college to establish accurately the needs of community. Effective marketing teams consisting of cross-college subject specialists led by a management grade should be established to action more marketing activities. There needs to be much more direct contact with specific client groups. The Marketing Unit needs more full-time staff and improved budget to be truly effective.

22(a) If you are a budget-holder within your college, is there a specific amount designated for marketing in your personal budget?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 9	36
No	= 3	11
Don't Know	= 4	14
No returns	= <u>12</u>	<u>39</u>
Total	= 28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- this will actually start soon
- need for specific marketing activities to attract more students
- need for each College School to action particular activities
- better co-operation with central Marketing Unit

(c) If NO, in what ways would it be helpful to you, if part of the budget was designated for marketing?

No detailed replies were given

BRIEF SUMMARY

Respondents are divided over this question. It suggests lack of information communicated from budget holders.

23(a) In your personal budget, what are the main marketing activities?

Replies:	Actual	%
Publicity	= 7	25
P R	= 4	14
Open Days	= 0	0

Leaflets/literature related to courses	=	8	29
Others, please briefly specify	=	0	0
No returns	=	<u>9</u>	<u>32</u>
Total	=	28	100

Reply details:

- advertising and publicity
- to contact potential customers
- to identify particular customer groups and to develop links
- prospectus and brochures

BRIEF SUMMARY

Respondents believe main marketing activities are those related to promotions. Wide ranging activities, say staff development in marketing and market research are not mentioned.

24 How is your personal budget developed each year?

Replies:		Actual	%
Allocated by senior management	=	15	54
Repeat of last year's amount	=	0	0
Last year's amount plus or minus x%	=	2	7
Do not know how it is developed	=	4	14
Other ways, please briefly specify	=	0	0
No returns	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>

Total

= 28

100

Reply details:

- based on forecasted income
- an estimate of needs
- bids for new or improved programmes
- requirements for all course materials

BRIEF SUMMARY

Staff believe budgets are allocated by senior management, even Governors. Some think the system will change soon to reflect income, depending on funding from FEFC.

25 In your personal budget, if the amount for marketing was to be increased by 20%, on what activities would you envisage the increase being spent? Please briefly state reasons.

Reply details:

- more research on the needs of the community
- visits to targeted companies to forge links with industry and with feeder schools
- to improve long-term prospects of providing suitable training
- better quality
- new materials for new courses
- to improve Schools Liaison

BRIEF SUMMARY

Some replies express the desire to serve the community better and to use research in order to establish actual needs. Other replies place more emphasis on improving Schools and Industry Liaison.

26(a) How do the marketing activities of your college compare with those of other FE colleges?

Replies:	Actual	%
Better	= 2	7
About the same	= 7	25
Inferior	= 5	18
Don't know	= 7	25
No returns	= <u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	= 28	100

(b) Please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- evidence in the media
- reactive and slow
- good literature and School Liaison
- publicity materials are better in other colleges

- poor college profile and corporate image
- FE college does target selected markets

BRIEF SUMMARY

Surprisingly only two replies think the marketing activities of the college are better than other FE colleges; the rest are evenly distributed across About the Same , Inferior and Don't Know.

27(a) How do the marketing activities of your college compare with other private or public training institutions?

Replies:	Actual	%
Better	= 3	11
About the same	= 1	3
Inferior	= 10	36
Don't know	= 6	21
No returns	= <u>8</u>	<u>29</u>
Total	= 28	100

(b) Please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- a realisation of obvious benefits
- seem more to do with the designated Marketing Unit and with the

School Liaison Team

- reactive and slow
- FE college leaflets and brochures are inferior
- lack of budget as others seem to spend more
- other institutions market their courses more professionally

BRIEF SUMMARY

Again only a small number, 3, consider the marketing activities of the college are better than other institutions. One obvious conclusion is that staff are not too familiar with the marketing activities carried out by their college, and they may not be well informed about other institutions.

28(a) In your opinion, should your college's marketing activities be carried out:

Replies:	Actual	%
100% centrally	= 7	25
Part centrally, part by each school/department	= 14	50
100% by each school/department	= 0	0
No returns	= <u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	= 28	100

(b) Please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- it must be a co-ordinated effort
- promote college centrally
- common corporate image
- promote courses within College Schools
- for consistency of quality
- more efficient
- a single cross college team comprising of all disciplines, may be more motivated
- to maintain a corporate identity and to ensure quality

BRIEF SUMMARY

About 70% of respondents believe the marketing activities should be carried out part central and part by each School. Most believe this method to be more efficient and effective, and would result in a co-ordinated effort of all involved. It would help to promote the college centrally and also to promote courses within the College Schools.

29(a) Please describe the main ways in which quality is monitored in your college.

Reply details:

- Quality Management and Improvement System (QMIS)
- quality control policy and Quality Managers

- internal verification
- external verification
- by quality control manager

(b) Is quality monitored really effectively, for curriculum, programmes, outcomes, etc?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	10	36
No	=	9	32
Don't know	=	2	7
No returns	=	<u>7</u>	<u>25</u>
Total	=	28	100

Reply details:

- well organised, quality orientated programmes
- recent developments in monitoring have yielded good results
- by FEFC Inspectors and also by Moderators
- student questionnaires
- subject review at the end of a programme

(c) Is quality not really monitored effectively?

Reply details

- internal verification is based heavily on box ticking to show that a procedure has been carried out and not nearly enough

attention or emphasis is given to the actual quality produced
- obsession with costs

BRIEF SUMMARY

Respondents are equally divided between those who believe quality is monitored effectively and those who believe it is not. Some believe Quality Management and Improvement System (QMIS) is an effective system when supported by external verification. However others believe it is too reliant on box ticking which is probably too easy to complete without the necessary depth of thought.

30(a) In your opinion, would your college gain benefits/status if it had B S 5750 accreditation?

Replies:		Actual	%
Yes	=	2	7
No	=	13	46
Don't know	=	5	18
No returns	=	<u>8</u>	<u>29</u>
Total	=	28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

No detailed replies were given

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons

Reply details:

- feeling that it would be more procedural than effective
- it is a paperwork system and does not necessarily improve quality
- not sure how highly regarded BS 5750 or ISO 9000 are now
- meaningless paperwork
- BS 5750 is difficult to achieve and maintain in a large service driven organisation

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most replies indicate that the college would not benefit from BS 5750 or ISO 9000. They perceive the standard to be meaningless paperwork, more procedural than effective and any benefits would not be in proportion to the effort or cost necessary to gain the standard. There is no mention of how employers, TECs, parents, feeder schools might feel about the possible accreditation, so the question needs to be asked, are the respondents trying to keep administration to a minimum?

31(a) Has your college benefited from specific marketing activities during the past 4 years?

Replies:	Actual	%
Yes	= 13	46
No	= 3	11
Don't know	= 4	14

No returns	=	<u>8</u>	<u>29</u>
Total	=	28	100

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

Reply details:

- facing increasing competition, therefore must fight in the market place
- without a dedicated team to maintain a good college profile and image, numbers would have declined
- students have started courses due to visits to industry and feeder schools
- has helped to maintain student levels
- more courses
- Prospects Shop in summer, well used and proven cost effective; also Bridgenorth shop unit, permanent and well used
- new prospectus
- management horizons have increased numbers, but rest of the college has had limited success
- new programmes established

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons

No detailed reasons were given

BRIEF SUMMARY

Most respondents believe the college has benefited from specific

marketing activities. There is a realisation of the importance of increasing competition and the college has to fight hard in the market place. Without specific events and dedicated marketing, numbers would have declined. Instead, student levels have been maintained and there are new courses, new opportunities, new college prospectus, new Prospects Shop, etc.

32 Please briefly state your thoughts on what changes in marketing activities would benefit your college in the immediate future.

Reply details:

- a specialist team, well motivated and trained to 'sell' the college and all the courses, especially the new, high tec ones and those with innovation, and perhaps using open learning and distance learning
- college is competing against good 6th form colleges who have a better reputation and much better understanding of marketing
- marketing must be taken seriously by all staff, an essential part of college survival
- closer focus on all aspects of marketing from research to customer follow up
- more money and staff time ie remission for subject specialists to be involved in more marketing activities
- senior marketing managers to be actively involved

- need for a more structured approach
- more commitment
- distinction between marketing and cold selling must be understood
- must move out into the community
- more positive focus; all staff should be made aware of what is going on
- better PR/image building
- more staffing for Marketing Unit
- marketing activities bring in more students, therefore bring in more money from FEFC

BRIEF SUMMARY

Replies indicate a wide variety of ideas and suggested changes. There is a strong emphasis on the need for specialist subject lecturers to be involved in specific marketing activities; this means more staff development/training and realistic RCCH to allow them to get involved regularly. There is a need for senior managers of all disciplines of the college to be meeting senior managers of employers, TECs and feeder schools to raise the contact level, to improve college profile and image, and to gain knowledge of actual needs, first hand from potential customers.

33 Please attach any further comments you may think are of relevance to your college's marketing activities, which

have not been covered by this questionnaire.

Reply details:

- theoretical work has been done; it now needs a culture change which takes a long time
- needs publication of good practice and its dissemination
- need for college policies on marketing to be circulated to all staff
- subject specialists to input details for brochures and publicity materials, and central Marketing Unit to overview final products for better corporate image
- increased budget allocation is vital for any improvement
- need for more aggressive marketing to offset increasing competition

BRIEF SUMMARY

Surprisingly few respondents addressed this question. Perhaps they thought they had covered most of the ground in answering previous questions. Some took the opportunity to repeat the argument for more marketing activities within each college School and less to be carried out centrally, but they also recognise the difficulty of a central focus and limited finance.

CHAPTER 6: COMPARISON OF RESULTS OF RESEARCH AT SELECTED COLLEGES

INTRODUCTION

The Sheffield College representing a very large FE institution, and Shrewsbury College as a medium size FE institution, were deliberately chosen to enable useful comparisons to be made. Details of the information arising from college literature, interviews and replies to the marketing questionnaires, are given in Chapter 4 for the Sheffield College, and in Chapter 5 for the Shrewsbury College. From these and the brief intermediate summaries, detailed comparisons are made below using appropriate theme areas of questions asked.

MISSION STATEMENT/STRATEGIC PLAN/COLLEGE CHARTER AND MARKETING

In this area, there is little or no difference between the two institutions. Staff throughout the organisation at both colleges appear to recognise the advantages and benefits of marketing. This is formally acknowledged in Mission Statements, Strategic Plans and College Charters. However, it is also recognised that marketing activities are often limited to publicity and promotion events rather than the full range of marketing activities. There is little evidence of detailed marketing research, although the Accommodation Strategy research of the Sheffield College, is a powerful exception as it produced a factual record and allowed major decisions to be made. Many staff believe

adequate budget is not available for research; but with increasing pressure from already strong competition, actual research evidence is vital to enable the correct decisions to be made.

The College Charters are both excellent documents and should go a long way to assist and convince students and all other groups of the serious intentions of the institutions. The best intended documents always need regular monitoring to ensure all staff are following these best practices all the time.

The Mission Statement/ Strategic Plan and College Charter of both colleges define aims, objectives, purpose and broad educational philosophy. They are widely circulated, but unfortunately do not appear to be widely read. However, colleges provide excellent booklets to inform everyone, including staff and students, and outline the aims and objectives of providing a high standard of education linked to the needs of all customers. The needs of minority groups and the local communities are also well covered.

The colleges refer to a coherent marketing strategy which includes helping customers to articulate their needs, and they intend to achieve these goals by close links with all customer groups. The Sheffield College believes that the management processes and the people who develop them and pursue them, are more important than the structure. The structure must facilitate the processes and be subject to constant review and change when required; this is vitally important to emphasise and to practice. The Strategic Plan 1995-98 of the Sheffield College is excellent. It is well explained, easy to understand and includes a

frank and detailed SWOT analysis. It could be held as a model for other colleges.

The newly issued College Charters are user-friendly, informative and cover not only students, but also employers, local communities, professional services and complaints procedures. Perhaps a summary of the College Charter should be included in Student Handbooks, particularly for full-time students.

TABLE 6.1 : MISSION STATEMENT/STRATEGIC PLAN/COLLEGE CHARTER
AND MARKETING

<u>Question</u>	<u>Similarities</u>	<u>Differences</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Benefits of marketing	Strong similarities	Few differences	Both colleges recognise advantages & benefits of marketing. It should also improve the corporate image.
Strategic Plan	Strong similarities	Sheffield place emphasis on people and process.	Both are informative.
College Charter	Strong similarities	Few differences.	Both are excellent.
Market Research	Strong similarities	Sheffield did carry out Accommodation research.	Little evidence of detailed marketing research.

MR budget	Strong	/	Staff believe	budget
	similarities	/		is inadequate for re-
				search required.

COMMENTS ARISING AND LEADING TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF BEST PRACTICE

There is clear evidence that each college wants to be the leading educational institution in its area. From the interviews, it is clear that each college has excellent vision, and carries out its strategic analysis and planning very thoroughly. On the other hand, many respondents believe that marketing is under-funded and under-staffed, if the colleges wishes to perform marketing activities to meet their objectives and the high expectations of the public. In addition, relationships with potential students, parents, employers and TECs need to be improved at both colleges. The colleges need to identify the changing needs of students more accurately and ensure all its marketing activities actually assist students.

COMMITMENT TO MARKETING

Again there is little or no difference between the two institutions. It is recognised that all staff are involved to some extent, and that the degree of involvement is only limited by time available, and is not one of attitude. Teaching staff want to be involved and to contribute to ownership. Main groups, managers and lecturers, at both colleges are seriously committed

to marketing.

As most staff believe they 'are doing a good job' related to marketing, individually and collectively, there is a need for performance indicators to be developed and actioned to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing activities, including the central Marketing Unit at both colleges. Indicators need to be meaningful and owned by the staff involved.

There are clear intentions to establish close relationships with all customer groups to assist them in every way, and to involve all staff. However, closer examination reveals there are differences between the intentions of the college and the actual practices. The commitment of staff is not in question. The opportunities to become involved to the correct degree, ie in-depth, regular contacts with all customer groups, is definitely limited by lack of RCCH and training in appropriate marketing techniques. Lecturers do want to participate more and more in marketing activities, as they recognise this is the only way forward to assist recruitment, but they must be given more encouragement and practical help.

Maybe it is the deliberate intention of the colleges to keep remission to a very low level; if so it is not producing favourable results and opportunities are being lost. The whole issue requires critical examination at both colleges.

TABLE 6.2 : COMMITMENT TO MARKETING

<u>Question</u>	<u>Similarities</u>	<u>Differences</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Staff Involvement	Strong similarities.	No differences.	All staff are committed to some extent, only limited by time; lack of RCCH & training in marketing.
Direction of Marketing Policies	Strong similarities.	Few differences.	Staff believe policies are about right, but they are not informed of changes in policy; need to improve communications.
Target Marketing	Many similarities.	/	Colleges recognise the need & advantages of target marketing.
Measuring	/	/	Staff recognise the need for performance indicators.

COMMENTS ARISING AND LEADING TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF BEST PRACTICE

At both colleges, there is an impressive commitment to marketing at all levels of staff. The marketing activities are top driven and a positive influence is apparent, therefore both colleges score well. Markets are segmented and targeted.

Some specialist subject lecturers feel their involvement is

limited by lack of time available, ie lack of remission and training in marketing techniques. Many staff feel they are not informed about marketing activities programmed, therefore communications need to be improved.

DIRECTIONS OF MARKETING POLICIES

Most replies from each college believe the directions of marketing policies are about right. At Shrewsbury, some replies indicating this belief, appear to be from staff already involved, and others who believe they are 'too broad' or 'too narrow', appear to be from staff who have little or no involvement with marketing activities. A few minor points are suggested which could improve the situation.

Many staff feel they are not informed regularly about marketing policies and changes. There does seem a genuine need to improve communications at both colleges, and to inform everybody. A detailed College Calendar, listing all marketing activities programmed, would assist. Teaching staff feel disadvantaged by a lack of information and marketing research.

MAIN MARKETING ACTIVITIES

Most respondents firmly believe that the need for marketing research is the single, most important activity required, as the results of research, for example, accurately identify

customer's needs in a changing world and so allows the college to target appropriate segments. Many areas requiring research include how to improve Schools Liaison, Industry Liaison, MIS data-bases related to students, industry, target markets, etc.

Closely linked but separate is the need to achieve a realistic balance of the central Marketing Unit in a co-ordinating role and a much greater involvement of subject specialists, and middle and senior managers. It is vitally important to encourage subject specialists to become more deeply and regularly involved. Senior managers need to be involved 'to sell' the college to managers of feeder schools and employers.

THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE

Staff believe most marketing activities are concerned with brochures, publicity and promotions. Although there are visits to feeder schools by Liaison Teams, they are perceived not to be very effective and there is little or no contact with industry on a regular basis. Staff believe reasons for this include a limited budget, lack of senior manager involvement and lack of early, effective and regular contact with Years 9, 10 and 11 at feeder schools. Clearly there is room for improvement.

The Sheffield College relies very heavily on the public contacting the college for information. This method presumes the public actually seeing and being attracted by publicity information. More work is urgently required to inform the public, to en-

courage and attract them to find out more. The college must be much more pro-active and more deeply involved in trying to establish contact. There is strong competition in the market place and most teaching staff do not believe the college is doing enough to beat off the different forms of competition.

SHREWSBURY COLLEGE

Staff believe the advice shop 'Prospects' in the Darwin shopping centre during the summer months, and at Bridgnorth Adult Education Centre are very successful and effective. They take the college to the public and provide a guidance service for 16 year olds and adults. The theme may be extended elsewhere. Others believe in publicity and promotions in the widest sense including a college video, and more frequent and better use of local media.

Serious concern is expressed by the apparent lack of budget. Staff believe the Marketing Unit is under-funded and understaffed, and fear this will have a detrimental effect by limiting marketing activities and possible take-up by schools and adults. Good practice naturally demands marketing research to be a corner stone of marketing activities, to give good direction. Both colleges place a priority on the urgent need for marketing research, as there are strong feelings that the colleges are suffering due to lack of recent research. Again it is an example of practice not matching the intention. In a changing world and facing intense competition, staff believe the way forward is to

action selected topics such as Schools Liaison, Industry Liaison, MIS data-based related to students and industry. Some intelligence in these areas is available, but limited, often out-of-date and out-of touch with today's needs.

The method adopted by the Sheffield College of relying on the public to contact the institution, must be questioned especially in light of the positive experience of Shrewsbury of going out to meet the public by setting up Advice Shops. Help phone-in lines at the College Centres, staffed by subject tutors and student services during the critical summer period when examination results are made known, are most helpful. But even more positive action is required to take the college to the public and to employers. Much careful thought and investment are required to overcome inertia. More positive and more frequent use of all the media, including local free sheets, can convey a caring college image, and make information available to advise influence potential students and employers at critical times of the year.

Obviously more activities equate to more investment. Staff accept money is very tight with redundancies being a current topic. However the burning question must be asked, can the college really afford not to invest more to boost recruitment, when facing such stiff competition?

TABLE 6.3 : MAIN MARKETING ACTIVITIES

<u>Question</u>	<u>Similarities</u>	<u>Differences</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Need for MR	Strong similarities.	/	Most staff believe there is a need for MR for many topic areas.
Main Marketing Activities	Staff perceive activities to be limited to brochures, PR & course leaflets. Both colleges have School Liaison teams. To achieve targets in Strategic Plan, publicity & liaison with schools & industry.	Sheffield rely on the public contacting the college for information. Need for college to be proactive by going out to inform the public. Shrewsbury have Advice Shops which are effective to keep in touch with the public.	In summer months, colleges could use local newspapers to inform the public of courses on offer and accept an enrolment form printed in the newspaper without the need to attend a college centre.
Improve Communications	/	/	Need for a college video.

COMMENTS ARISING AND LEADING TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF BEST PRACTICE

Many replies indicate there is a powerful need for marketing research, covering many topic areas, to be carried out urgently to accurately establish basic data related to the real needs of students, parents and employers, and to prioritise the needs. Staff accept markets are being targeted but do not accept the selection basis uses up-to-date information as student and employer needs change rapidly.

Staff believe many current marketing activities are lacking in depth, penetration and effectiveness. School liaison teams often seem to perform token gestures and contacts with industry are almost negligible. Marketing activities seem very limited, perhaps because of financial restraints.

A college video would help each college with its external communications to project a vibrant and caring institution.

Performance indicators should be used to measure efficiency and effectiveness against standards set by each college, and results should be used to improve the future performance of marketing activities.

CENTRAL MARKETING UNIT AND SUBJECT STAFF

Both colleges recognise the overall responsibility for marketing activities must rest with the Marketing Manager. However replies indicate an 'us and them' division. Staff believe everyone

should be involved and that there is room, indeed a need for everyone to be actively participating. The effective marketing of college courses requires a mix of full time staff at central HQ and College Schools, and a significant involvement of specialist subject tutors. There are strong feelings that more investment and marketing activities are required within the College Schools and less within central Marketing Unit.

However, subject specialists who want to contribute more, feel they are unable to do so, because adequate remission is not allowed. This problem needs to be resolved by both colleges. More RCCH and more staff training in marketing techniques need to be made available to encourage the specialists to be really involved in marketing the college. A balance between budget available and hours required, needs to be achieved.

THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE

There are strongly expressed feelings that more investment and more marketing activities are required within College Schools and less within the central Marketing Unit. As the newly formed College Schools become more established, they will develop their own style and characteristics, and inform the public of their specialisms. This seems a natural progression providing there is co-ordination to operate within a corporate image and profile, which central Marketing need to project and protect.

SHREWSBURY COLLEGE

Some replies express a concern with some discipline areas trying 'to sell' their courses and programmes at the expense of others, and the lack of overall co-ordination. Clearly students need to be given educationally sound information and advice, free from bias, to enable them to make correct decisions for themselves. Staff do feel the Marketing Unit is under-funded and this may be the reason for the apparent lack of overall co-ordination.

In this area, good practice means effective co-ordination by the central Marketing Unit of all marketing activities performed by all staff; and clearly this is not happening at both colleges. Some staff returns suggest an 'Ivory Tower' attitude of central Marketing, while others are more constructive and practical.

Many replies suggest College Schools should be allocated more investment for its own marketing activities, and less to be performed centrally. College Schools need to create and expand their own individuality, and also need to co-operate with central Marketing to maintain corporate image.

Staff perceive the central Marketing Unit at both colleges are under-funded and under-staffed. Qualified and experienced staff are required in order to perform the many calls made upon their expertise.

TABLE 6.4 : CENTRAL MARKETING UNIT AND SPECIALIST SUBJECT STAFF

<u>Question</u>	<u>Similarities</u>	<u>Differences</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Responsi- bility for mark- eting	Staff believe more market- ing activities should be car- ried out by Schools and less by central marketing. Cen- tral marketing need to project corporate image and accept role of co-ordinator.	Sheffield staff belie- ve marketing only equates to publicity & promotion. Shrewsbury staff belie- ve visits by lecturers, familiar with industry, are good.	Staff believe everyone should be involved and there is a need for active participation. Subject specialists should be encouraged by more RCCH & training in marketing techniques. There is inadequate di- alogue between central Marketing and subject tutors; central Market- ing is too remote. The budget is inadequate at both colleges.

COMMENTS ARISING AND LEADING TO RECOMMENDATION OF BEST PRACTICE

Staff throughout the organisation at both colleges, believe everyone should be involved with marketing activities, but in practice , this is not the case. Staff believe the College Schools should be allocated funds and responsibility to carry out their own marketing activities with the central Marketing Unit

acting in a co-ordinating role and projecting the corporate image. At both Colleges, these issues are not clear cut. This problem needs to be addressed urgently.

Performance indicators should be used to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of all marketing activities, including the central Marketing Unit. Indicators should be developed and owned by the staff directly involved.

IMPROVEMENTS IN MARKETING ACTIVITIES

Staff throughout the organisation at both colleges believe there is a need for more, wider ranging and in-depth marketing research to accurately determine the real needs of all customers. Schools Liaison and Industrial Liaison are carried out but only to a limited extent, according to the replies. Sometimes the efforts are little better than token contacts. They do need to be much more positive, more exciting, and more attractive for potential students. Research is necessary to find out precisely how this may be achieved, especially in view of strong competition. Research also needs to be directed towards adults, women returners and mature students in general to find out exactly what programmes they want to meet the changing and challenging world of work, and particular types of learning that best suits their needs, which may take the form of open and distance learning, combinations of time of day including twilight hours, and may even be Saturdays. Many research projects are required to provide information, and these have to

be sensibly balanced against funding available.

THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE

Contrary to the college's belief, many staff are convinced that the college is not very close to industry and commerce, and little up-to-date marketing intelligence appears to be available. There are high potential target markets and few serious, concentrated efforts are being made to contact and develop them. Results of recent marketing research and subsequent action taken, are not well known by staff, which suggest communications do need to be improved, the Accommodation Strategy excepted. Replies indicate a need for active internal marketing as many teaching staff feel disadvantaged by the lack of information related to any recent research and lack of details related to forward activities. Staff do feel neglected.

A marketing research joint venture of feeder schools and college would establish what students actually want and need by way of FE. The corporate image is perceived to be very poor and drab. The sinking 'S' college logo is considered typical and needs to be changed to something much more dynamic conveying a positive image and quickly.

SHREWSBURY COLLEGE

Staff perceive the Marketing Unit to be under-funded, and one result is the apparent lack of any marketing research being carried out and subsequently a lack of up-to-date information.

Respondents believe much more marketing research is required to distinguish actual patterns and trends more accurately. Because of limited finance and an almost endless list of demands, target marketing is absolutely essential, but accurate information is required first. The timing of the many marketing activities needs to be inspected critically to ensure maximum benefit is being obtained by the college at the appropriate time of year, say for summer enrolment.

There needs to be more direct contact with feeder schools, industry and business in general, and managers should lead 'to sell' the college by raising corporate image and profile. Many staff believe the marketing activities performed by the college are inferior when compared with other FE colleges and institutions.

Some staff indicate a need to up-date the college logo; they think it is out-of-date and represents an old fashioned image.

Both colleges carry out strategic analysis to identify target markets and use methods of segmentation, and relate these to the capabilities of the colleges and resources available. On the other hand, staff really believe there is an urgent need for greater commitment and more investment in order to improve marketing activities at both colleges, as there is very strong competition in further education. Much more research is urgently required to determine accurate parameters, to obtain up-to-date information and real needs of all customers to enable posi-

tive decisions to be made based on facts and not guesswork. Many other ideas and suggestions are put forward, see detailed returns in chapters 4 and 5; all equate to more activities and therefore more investment.

TABLE 6.5 : IMPROVEMENTS IN MARKETING ACTIVITIES

<u>Question</u>	<u>Similarities</u>	<u>Differences</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Improve- ments	Central Mark- eting is per- ceived to be under-funded & lacking in up-to-date information.	Sheffield staff believe the co- llege is not close enough to feeder schools industry and commerce.	Staff at both colleges believe there is room for more in-depth MR to determine needs of all customers. Corpor- ate image at both col- leges is perceived to be poor and drab.

At both col-
leges staff
believe there
is an urgent
need for gre-
ater commit-
ment and more
investment to
improve mark-
eting activi-
ties to safe-

guard the
future.

Measure-
ment

Performance indicators
should be used to mea-
sure efficiency & eff-
ectiveness of all mar-
keting activities and
marketing units.

COMMENTS ARISING AND LEADING TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF BEST PRACTICE

From both colleges, a very clear message is given; staff believe there is an urgent and fundamental need for more, wider and in-depth marketing research to obtain data related to the actual needs of students, parents and employers. Colleges need to be much closer to potential students.

The central Marketing Unit and Schools marketing are perceived to be under-funded and under-staffed. The corporate image and logo are perceived to be dreary and uninspiring, and urgently need improvement.

Each college needs a much greater commitment and more investment from the top, to improve all marketing activities to safeguard its future, and it needs these now. There is a powerful case for a dynamic person, located in the central Marketing Unit, to be appointed and given the responsibility for co-ordinating all marketing research activities and actioning the results.

QUALITY

In their mission statements and other literature, both colleges place a strong emphasis on quality, quality control and quality improvement, and if achieved, they would compare most favourably with best practice. However, many staff do not believe this is the case. There are serious criticisms of paper-only exercises and no follow-up action. These should not be ignored or regarded as staff 'whinging'; they are far more serious.

THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE

Many respondents believe quality, however defined and measured, is poor, especially in terms of outcomes and information systems. Many examples are quoted of issues raised at evaluation and monitoring meetings but little or no action is taken. Some staff even believe quality procedures are only in place to satisfy FEFC requirements and the Directorate. There is serious concern about the role of Quality Co-ordinators, and what is or is not achieved.

43% of replies do not believe the college would gain benefit/status if it had BS 5750 accreditation, and a further 25% surprisingly, do not know.

SHREWSBURY COLLEGE

QMIS is perceived to be an effective system with some replies believing it to be too reliant on box-ticking and therefore not requiring serious depth of thought.

Staff are not convinced that the College would benefit greatly from BS 5750 or ISO 9000; they regard the standards as paper driven and not entirely suitable for education.

Best marketing practice demands good quality standards and effective measures for quality control. Although strong emphasis is placed on quality by senior management in the Mission Statement and other literature, many staff are convinced there are serious gaps between the intention and the practice. No one doubts that systems are in place, but the actual monitoring and follow-up with action seems to be lacking. There is too much emphasis on completing paperwork and few effective methods are employed to actually improve quality.

TABLE 6.6 : QUALITY

<u>Question</u>	<u>Similarities</u>	<u>Differences</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Quality	Both colleges emphasise quality, QC & quality improvements. However, staff do not believe it works	At Sheffield, although issues are raised, little action is taken. At Shrewsbury, QMIS is per-	Some staff cynically believe quality procedures are only in place to satisfy FEFC requirements. There is too much emphasis is placed on paperwork and not enough on improving quality.

in practice. ceived to be Staff believe the coll-
an effective ege would not benefit if
system, but is it had BS 5750.
too reliant on
box ticking &
more depth of
thinking and
reporting is
required.

COMMENTS ARISING AND LEADING TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF BEST PRACTICE

Literature from both colleges place a strong emphasis on its systems related to quality, quality control and quality improvement. However, many staff cynically believe that quality procedures are only in place to satisfy FEFC requirements. Obviously there are serious problems, especially related to areas of vocational courses, and they do need to be resolved quickly. Paperwork systems and existing performance indicators do not result in positive action to address the real issues.

These views are staff perceptions, honestly expressed and definitely not given in a sour, destructive manner but offered as factual and constructive information. FEFC inspectors may see these problems from a different point of view.

Realistic performance indicators need to be developed and actioned urgently to improve actual quality standards. The colleges

need to determine if there is a quality gap between what customers expect and what they experience at college.

OTHER ASPECTS

LIFE LONG LEARNING

It is acknowledged that many employees require to switch skills arising from redundancies and restructuring by organisations, and new skills are required to get them back into employment. FE colleges need to work much closer to TECs for detailed co-operation to achieve these goals. It should not be left to the individual; they need help and guidance.

In addition, many older people want opportunities to acquire knowledge or simply to follow a hobby and preferably in neighbourhood locations. It is recognised that these may not be cost-effective using conventional standards, but they are vital as a community need. Money does need to be made available to keep open these locations, with appropriate assistance from FEFC and Local Authorities.

Both colleges appear to compare favourably with best practice, assuming no more facilities are lost. Learning Resource Centres are of outstanding quality and very well used.

STAFF/MANAGEMENT COLLABORATION

During the past few years, colleges and staff have experienced serious difficulties, including severe financial constraints imposed by FEFC and changing working practices, and in many

cases these still exist with threats of redundancies hovering in the background. It is necessary to face these issues to meet the demands of modern times. It is fairly easy to predict that even more flexible working arrangements will be required in the future. New contracts give colleges greater scope and staff recognise the need for change. Future changes may take the form of twilight working, week-end working and summer school working; nearly all being a greater move towards unsociable hours and unions will protect staff.

In addition, more and more paper based administration seems to fall on the teaching staff. Again it is recognised that students, parents, employers and FEFC all want more detailed information, say regarding progress. There is a clear need for MIS to provide much of this information, if appropriate software and methods of in-putting are developed. Colleges need staff to collaborate to ensure success, and ways must be found to reduce the paperwork burden on staff to a minimum.

COLLEGE IMAGE AND PROFILE

Everyone in colleges recognise the strength of competition. But few attempts seem to be made to improve the image of the college, and its profile. Good marketing practice demands a healthy, vibrant, well-known and well-appreciated house image, and most successful companies spend much money and time to achieve this. There is no doubt at all, most companies are constantly trying to improve this in the eyes of customers. Apparently col-

leges do not and the staff perception of the college image and profile are not good.

Colleges should be working to improve image and profile, from Chairman of Governors and Principal down to all staff, all the time. PR should not be regarded as a bolt-on extra for Marketing to deal with. Every contact and every phone call is an opportunity to enhance image. Much more positive action is required to elevate the college in the eyes of customers, and it is no good at all to leave it to someone else; everybody must be involved.

STUDENT AND STAFF CONSULTATIVE MEETINGS

Attempts are made to obtain adequate feed-back from student/staff consultative meetings. However many do not take advantage of trying to obtain student's views, or regard them as trivial, with little or no value. Good practice requires feed-back from customers to measure their satisfaction or otherwise with the product and other aspects of the college. If it is not practised, it is a lost opportunity.

Student/Staff Consultation meetings should be mandatory and reference to this should be included in the Students Handbook; it is particularly important for full-time students.

TABLE 6.7 : OTHER ASPECTS

<u>Question</u>	<u>Similarities</u>	<u>Differences</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Lifelong learning	Both colleges offer opport-	/	Colleges need to be much closer to TECs & indust-

unities, including local community needs say for OAPs. Staff concerned about closures,

Staff/Management Collaboration - At both colleges, the need for change has been accepted. Staff believe more flexible working arrangements will be required to safeguard the future of staff & college.

College Image - Staff are very disappointed with corporate image at both colleges.

Student/ - Concern is ex-

ry to offer the new skills required. At main centres, new Learning Resources are excellent and well used.

Concern is expressed related to an increasing paper-based admin work load falling on lecturers. Many areas require detailed information but this could be met by computer systems if software was developed.

More positive action is required by staff at all levels to improve image.

Staff pressed at the
Consult- lack of feed-
ative back from these
Meetings meetings, and
 lack of positive
 action.

COMMENTS ARISING AND LEADING TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF BEST PRACTICE

Both colleges need to be much closer to TECs and industry in order to ascertain what new skills are required ie strong emphasis on IT, communications, team-work and leadership, and to build these skills into programmes, including academic and vocational courses. Colleges need to meet local community needs, where, by definition, class sizes are smaller but they are vital for the community. Learning Resource units are excellent, but more attention needs to be given to distance learning. A more realistic allocation of time for lecturers to carry out these duties, is required.

Staff do recognise the need for flexible working and collaborative practices with management. However, staff are seriously concerned about the increasing paper work admin load. Many feel that computer systems should replace this paper mountain. Without doubt, there is excellent collaboration both ways.

At both colleges, staff are disappointed with the college image and logo. The corporate image and logo need to represent a vibrant, modern and top of the profession institution. Unfor-

tunately, staff perceive their college to be exactly opposite. There is an urgent need to improve the corporate image, internally and externally, and to up-date the logo.

For any organisation, a vital aspect of marketing is feed-back from its customers; to be successful, it knows it must listen to the views of its customers and take appropriate action. Staff at both colleges are concerned at the lack of information, sometimes lack of opportunity for consultative meetings and often, the lack of action resulting from these meetings. This area represents an opportunity to listen to customers, but it seldom happens and improvements rarely result. College management should direct that meetings should be held for every course and formal minutes, with recommendations for action to be widely circulated, and follow-up checks to be made by senior managers.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

To summarise, chapters 4 and 5 give a brief history of the selected FE colleges, an outline of the main features of the methodology used and the results of the research. In this chapter, considerable effort is made to identify the actual approaches to marketing within the colleges, and to compare these with the approaches intended. Differences are almost inevitable due to interpretation, management direction, individual emphasis and opportunities; there are many factors. These differences and similarities in approach to the actual marketing practices at each college are tabled and brought together in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7 : RECOMMENDATIONS OF BEST MARKETING PRACTICE
FOR F E COLLEGES

INTRODUCTION

Earlier chapters examine the approaches to marketing, starting with general manufacturing industries, narrowing to service industries and continuing into further education. Several authors, Gray(1), Piercy(2), and Cowell(3), suggest approaches to marketing within further education are poorly developed and inadequately executed.

Conclusions from chapters 1 to 3 inclusive, based on the theoretical literature search, suggest FE colleges have responded to changes in recent Government policies of shifts of control from Local Authorities to consumers and the aim to improve efficiency by increasing competition, by adopting more positive approaches to marketing. Responsive colleges are making every effort to sense, serve and satisfy the needs and wants of their consumers within the constraints of its mission and budget. The appearance of marketing as a distinct management function, means it has to compete with the claims of other areas of responsibility.

Conclusions from chapters 4 and 5, are based on empirical findings. Chapter 6 examines the approaches to marketing within the selected Colleges, and compares these with the intended approaches of the Colleges as laid down in Mission Statements,

Strategic Plans and College Charters. Differences are identified and evaluated, and detailed comparisons are made.

Where the theory is supported by actual practice established at the selected Colleges, obviously there are no problems. However where these do not match, then it is necessary to question why. It may be that the literature is now out of date, or the findings from the questionnaire and interviews indicate different local practices and the reasons for these differences. Tables in chapter 6 help to identify the similarities and differences.

S W O T ANALYSIS

From the comparisons of the two Colleges in chapter 6, similarities and differences are identified and explained. To support these, a SWOT Analysis is developed to apply equally to both organisations.

STRENGTHS

- well motivated, experienced and caring staff who generally have a flexible and co-operative attitude to changing work patterns
- new, flexible working contracts have been agreed by nearly all staff
- dedicated and hard working senior managers who are facing very strong external competition with a determined attitude and using new managerial skills
- large number of premises, major centres and neighbourhood sites located around the cities, equate to multiple delivery points

- new Learning Centres are excellent and well furnished. Support Services offer excellent guidance, counselling and pastoral advice
- sound and established education institutions are recognised and well known to feeder schools, parents and employers.
- Colleges recognise the benefits of all aspects of marketing activities
- Colleges believe they have good liaison with feeder schools, parents, employers, adults and TECs

WEAKNESSES

- a small minority of staff who still cling to the old, out of date working practices
- some middle managers lack expertise in latest managerial skills, particularly marketing techniques
- all staff, particularly senior managers need to sell the corporate image of the Colleges more
- many teaching rooms and laboratories are very poorly equipped; social rooms and refectories also have poor equipment and limited opening times
- utilisation of premises, measured over an academic year, is often very low
- lack of marketing research in many areas, results in lack of data, or using out of date information to make decisions
- lack of MIS related to students, guidance for students, feeder schools and industry, results in poor support information

- there is a conflict regarding the role and functions of central Marketing Units and that of College Schools
- the specialist skills and knowledge of some subject tutors are not being fully utilised by marketing due to lack of remission and some basic training in marketing techniques
- both colleges are relatively high cost institutions, therefore costs have to be reduced at a time when more financial investment is urgently required

OPPORTUNITIES

- more specific marketing research is required to obtain actual, up-to-date information to enable the Colleges to direct their resources more efficiently and effectively
- most young people, parents and employers recognise the need for further education to obtain jobs and develop careers in highly competitive work situations; colleges should grasp all the opportunities to satisfy the tremendous needs of all potential customers. Specific marketing research is required to determine how to establish closer relationships
- some subjects and programmes may need to be offered to customers at unsocialable times, including week-ends and summer schools
- new qualifications, NVQs, GNVQs and modular delivery, represent opportunities for colleges to lead the field and to attract more customers
- modern apprenticeships represent opportunities for colleges to

work more closely with TECs and employers

- Colleges have specialists with knowledge and skills to obtain commercial, training and consultancy contracts thus gaining status and additional income
- there is room for improvement in quality when measuring actual teaching standards and the resulting outcomes
- some manual, paperwork administration performed by lecturers should be replaced by more use of computer systems
- Colleges should develop and use performance indicators to measure and monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of key performance areas such as all marketing activities and quality control methods

THREATS

- there are many highly competitive private trainers who can undercut costs and prices of FE colleges, as well as sixth form and independent schools
- potential customers are better informed and their demands are increasing
- tight financial controls of FEFC equate to difficulties but the Colleges have to manage these constraints successfully to survive and grow
- many employers have cut their training budgets
- staff are being encouraged to accept more responsibilities and more flexible working contracts; if pushed too hard or too far, the goodwill and co-operation could evaporate

FURTHER COMMENTS LEADING TO RECOMMENDATIONS

The final part of the research is to develop recommendations of best marketing practice for FE colleges, based on all previous considerations. To develop recommendations for all FE colleges is very demanding as no two colleges are exactly alike and there are many interpretations of the term 'Best Marketing Practice'. Obviously, the Government and the FEFC are major players. They impose tight financial and administration control, and force colleges to examine, most critically, all their activities through the eyes of market forces. FE colleges have to comply with the many and varied FEFC Directives.

FE colleges should develop and make more widely known, their marketing policies and there must be effective co-ordination of all marketing activities. Broad outlines are often made public through Mission Statements, Strategic Plans and College Charters. However, colleges need to go much deeper than broad Statements of Intent. FE colleges need to establish accurately, the precise needs of students and employers; much closer relationships are necessary. More research is required to determine ways and means, and the methods to be employed to improve student recruitment, retention and to achieve successful outcomes.

Feeder Schools Liaison and Industry Liaison Teams need to be more positive and realistic. For feeder schools, they need to establish contact with year groups, Year 9, 10 and 11 to build a realistic dialogue with the emphasis on advice and guidance to

try to meet what students want and what colleges can offer, and an understanding of the changes taking place. Advice and guidance for students related to subjects and programmes are vitally important prior to their final selection. Many students simply do not really know the syllabus content of some subjects, and seem attracted by title only. Better advice is clearly needed rather than trying to boost numbers for a particular subject. For industry, colleges need to establish contact with all local industry and offer programmes and timetables to meet the actual requirements of industry and employees. Timetables may even take the form of Saturday mornings or week-end schools or at the place of work. Senior and middle managers need to be involved with schools and industry to raise college image and profile, and to deliver critically important messages regularly to the main sources of recruitment. Staff collaboration and flexibility of working practices are required more than ever before. Colleges must recognise this need and provide more staff development and training update, to maximise its important resource of people.

After searching through many literacy sources to investigate what might be considered the best marketing practices and then relating these to education and applying them to the changing world of a service industry, Further Education, and also by obtaining many views from staff at the selected Colleges, the following recommendations have emerged. Clearly some colleges may place greater emphasis on certain aspects more than other

colleges, but the recommendations listed below, may be accepted and used in order to better serve and satisfy customers.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF BEST MARKETING PRACTICE FOR FE COLLEGES

The college should:

1. have clearly written, unambiguous and widely communicated **MISSION STATEMENT, STRATEGIC PLAN AND COLLEGE CHARTER** which defines aims, objectives, purpose and embodies educational philosophy. These should relate to the marketing functions of the institution as a whole, and integrate all marketing activities with other disciplines.
2. provide comprehensive **EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES** to meet the needs of all customers to help them to achieve their long term satisfaction and to provide a lifelong learning opportunity; these should be wide ranging covering traditional, academic, vocational and minority community needs, and balanced against financial constraints. There should be minimum restrictions.
3. establish **CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS, PARENTS, EMPLOYERS, TECs, FEFC AND HE** to assist them to become better informed, to gain from making use of college courses and to assist progress to HE or Industry. Colleges should assess the changing needs of students and expectations of society, and should

ensure that its marketing activities assist students, parents and employers.

4. MAXIMISE ITS OWN RESOURCE OF PEOPLE by way of identifying and providing for more staff development and training needs, more encouragement for flexible working and changes in main skills and aim for greater collaboration.
5. state in the Mission Statement and Strategic Plan, its POLICY relating to FRANCHISING, its commitment to ATTRACT MEN AND WOMEN RETURNERS, to cater for SPECIAL NEEDS and the needs of the LOCAL COMMUNITY.
6. have the MARKETING ACTIVITIES TOP-DRIVEN BY SENIOR MANAGEMENT, down to all staff for a totally committed approach to marketing. Positive influence is required at the highest level to portray FE COLLEGE IMAGE and appeal to potential customers.
7. have QUALIFIED AND EXPERIENCED MARKETING STAFF in a sound and progressive management structure.
8. ensure the marketing staff DESIGN CRITICAL, DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES such as market planning and marketing budgets, to achieve the goals wanted by the college, its markets and its customers.

9. ensure central Marketing Unit performs a CO-ORDINATING ROLE FOR ALL MARKETING ACTIVITIES.
- 10 inform all staff of all marketing activities; a DETAILED MARKETING CALENDAR is recommended.
- 11 should conduct MARKETING RESEARCH to identify and fully understand customers and markets, to collect and communicate information and intelligence about customers, competitors and changing environments, to identify new curriculum needs, and to help the college to initiate change more effectively.
- 12 ensure the marketing activities build a CORPORATE IMAGE AND IDENTITY that is acceptable to the public.
- 13 have regular MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF MARKETING PLANS AND POLICIES by the Principal and Directors.
- 14 provide a REASONABLE BUDGET AND RESOURCES to ensure its marketing activities can be performed effectively, and review regularly its main marketing budget, its Schools marketing budgets, and how these are developed.
- 15 carry out STRATEGIC ANALYSIS to identify target markets and use methods of segmentation, and to relate these to the capabilities within the college.

16 carry out a detailed **SWOT ANALYSIS OF MARKETING ACTIVITIES** to identify internal strengths and weaknesses, and areas of competitive advantage; and to identify external opportunities and threats in the environment.

17 consider **TAKING 'THE COLLEGE' TO THE PUBLIC** by way of using Advice Shops in central areas, shopping centres, during the critical summer months. The college should also use **LOCAL NEWSPAPERS** to inform the public of programmes on offer, and include an **ENROLMENT FORM** in the newspaper supplement. **NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES** should be open in the summer period to offer advice and accept enrolments.

18 make and use a **COLLEGE VIDEO** and involve students.

19 set **STANDARDS** for the **CONTROL OF ALL MARKETING ACTIVITIES** including the central Marketing Unit and those carried out by the College Schools.

20 use **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS** to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of all marketing activities; indicators should be meaningful and should be developed and owned by staff directly involved. They should not be imposed externally.

21 have a **DATABASE** related to all **STUDENTS'** needs, wants, progression and outcomes.

- 22 have a DATABASE related to EMPLOYERS' needs, wants and training programmes.
- 23 ensure practical quality assurance procedures and effective MIS systems are in place. Colleges need to MONITOR AND EVALUATE ALL ASPECTS OF QUALITY, QUALITY CONTROL AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT, and determine if there is a quality gap between what customers expect and what they experience at College. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS should be developed to measure standards and outcomes objectively.
- 24 compete in terms of QUALITY OF ITS PRODUCTS, curriculum provision and value for money that it provides.
- 25 provide students with INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PROGRAMMES OF STUDY including open learning and distance learning, and consider offering programmes at different combinations of time including twilight hours and week-end schools, to attract more students. For distance learning, a more realistic allocation of time is required to enable lecturers to carry out these duties satisfactorily.
- 26 MAKE COURSES MORE FLEXIBLE, say mix traditional A Level subjects with vocational subjects, and modularise all academic and vocational programmes.

27 should provide **COMMUNITY EDUCATION** in neighbourhood locations at affordable prices where there is a reasonable demand

28 have comprehensive and effective systems related to **CAREER ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING** for all students.

28 comply with **FEFC POLICIES AND DIRECTIVES**.

29 encourage subject specialists to become more involved with marketing activities by making **ADEQUATE RCCH** and appropriate **TRAINING IN MARKETING TECHNIQUES**, more readily available. Senior and middle managers should also be actively engaged in marketing activities.

30 continually review its **SCHOOLS LIAISON AND INDUSTRY LIAISON** programmes, and its **RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION** in order to provide comprehensive and effective services.

31 develop **FRANCHISING** agreements for HE courses.

32 develop **TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY CONTRACTS**.

33 provide adequate feed-back systems from **STUDENTS AND STAFF CONSULTATIVE MEETINGS** to College management.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

This chapter covers a SWOT Analysis and comments leading to the final recommendations related to both selected colleges, and implications arising are included in chapter 8.

The end product of the research is to identify recommendations that represent best marketing practice in FE and these are listed in this chapter. These recommendations are based on the research at both selected colleges and cover interviews with all levels of staff and the responses to the marketing questionnaire.

To complete the research, various in-depth conclusions related to these recommendations are made in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7 : REFERENCES

1. Gray L, (1990), Marketing Education; Open University Press
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CHAPTER 8 : CONCLUSIONS

OVERVIEW OF MARKETING

The Education Reform Act 1988 freed FE colleges from LEAs and was followed by incorporation when the new further education sector was established on the 1 April 1993. Since then, it has been necessary to increase access to further education and this coincides with the need perceived by the government to produce more highly qualified manpower.

Central government through the Department for Education and Employment aim to improve efficiency and effectiveness by increasing competition in FE, and as a consequence, a number of features of a market economy have been injected. FE colleges face serious problems related to changing student needs and expectations of society, increasing competition, demographic changes and continuous financial pressures.

As FE colleges have had to respond to these changes, the institutions have turned more towards marketing to examine how marketing concepts are relevant to current issues and how these might contribute to possible solutions

RELEVANCE OF MARKETING TO FE

Marketing is perceived by FE managers and staff to be highly relevant to its many current problems. FE colleges have

recognised the need to define target markets and to examine market segments, mainly for financial reasons and to obtain the best value for money.

An FE college needs products and services to satisfy the wants of its customers. The interdependent variables of the marketing mix highlight the need for these elements to be integrated in a harmonious way to create the maximum attractiveness of the mix. FE management has to decide what are the objectives of the organisation and who these objectives must serve. Vision management is an important aspect of marketing so that the organisation might prove to be an effective provider of needs satisfaction. For FE colleges, the setting of objectives and strategies in relation to services and markets, is a fundamental element of the marketing planning process. The marketing objectives represent performance commitments for the future. FE colleges must analyse their present and future environments and review their major resources to identify what they can actually accomplish. Marketing research is firmly related to marketing planning and control. Research attempts to provide answers to questions for FE colleges.

Marketing activities should produce benefits for colleges. These include greater success in fulfilling its mission and to establish what the college is actually doing compared with what is intended. It should also result in greater satisfaction for

customers of the colleges and improve the attraction of marketing resources.

FE is under close public scrutiny and colleges are likely to experience political pressures and conflicting demands to serve the public interest. Marketing managers are facing major changes and the pressures are similar to those confronting commercial organisations. For marketing management, there is a focus on management culture, understanding new technology and the latest management skills.

One of the issues is how to define core competencies of FE. It could be argued that it is that of course design and assessment, not necessarily that of delivery. In addition there is also the issue of whether the pressure for change demand/lead to changes at the management level or for more fundamental change. The need to expand the number of students in FE is putting enormous pressure on the marketing activities of colleges. Only those colleges who meet their growth targets will be rewarded financially.

As a result of the examination of literature, the relevance of marketing and changes taking place in FE, various aspects of best marketing practice have been identified and incorporated into the final recommendations.

MAJOR DISCOVERIES ARISING FROM THE RESEARCH AT SELECTED COLLEGES

The Sheffield College believes that the management processes and the people who develop them and pursue are more important than the structure, and the structure must facilitate the processes and be subject to constant review and change when required. This is a refreshing statement , placing process before structure of an organisation.

Both Sheffield and Shrewsbury Colleges want to continue to expand their services covering all ages, all abilities and all interests. Clearly these are laudable intentions but economic factors are dictating future changes. Realistically, in the short term, both Colleges could see reductions in the number of delivery places as finance continues to play an increasingly important role.

The relationship between colleges and feeder schools and employers is paramount. If liaison teams are performing really well, then school leavers and employees will automatically be attracted to the colleges. The management of both Sheffield and Shrewsbury Colleges believe they have excellent links. However, according to the results of the research, the actual truth is different. There are links but they lack in quality of people in the teams, specialist subject knowledge, frequency of visits and quality literature for all potential customers. There is a wide gap between intention and practice, and the question must be

asked, why is this so? Two reasons are obvious. Firstly, many specialist subject lecturers do not get adequate remission from their normal teaching duties. Secondly, some basic training skills in marketing are required through staff development, to enable liaison teams to perform more effectively.

Another major discovery relates to the role of central Marketing Unit and the marketing activities performed by College Schools. Lecturers believe more resources should be allocated to College Schools to carry out their own marketing activities with the central Marketing Unit in the role of co-ordinator and facilitator.

The lack of marketing research is a major worry, according to respondents of the marketing questionnaire, for most staff at both Colleges. Many staff cannot understand how major decisions can be made logically and effectively when information is lacking or out-of-date.

The College logo and College image are poor and need improvement. The sinking 'S' logo of Sheffield is not liked by staff and the logo of Shrewsbury is considered out-of-date. This is surprising when both Colleges have Art and Design groups and an internal competition for a new logo would stimulate considerable interest, particularly among students. The College image of both institutions is also regarded as poor and in need of improvement.

It is recognised that this is a subjective judgement, but the view is widely held. It seems more work is required at all staff levels if the Colleges wish to gain wide spread recognition and acclaim.

Half of the respondents to the questionnaire believe quality, however it is measured, is not monitored effectively. Many staff believe quality is poor in terms of outcomes, delivery of programmes and claim that it is not driven sufficiently by management. On paper, there are systems for monitoring quality, but in practice, very little action is taken by management, particularly at the Sheffield College.

At both Colleges, there is a strong feeling that marketing activities are under-funded and under-staffed at both the central Marketing Unit and at the College Schools. Staff feel there is a need for a member of staff to be appointed to the central Marketing Unit with specific responsibilities for marketing research.

COMMENTS ON RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recognised that developing recommendations for all FE colleges is very difficult. No two colleges are exactly alike and there are many interpretations of the term 'Best Marketing Practice.' In addition, there are major financial constraints

imposed by the Government and FEFC. However the 33 Recommendations listed are an attempt to establish benchmarks and guidelines regarding marketing activities of FE.

FE colleges should develop detailed Mission Statements and Strategic Plans and make them widely known, and colleges should monitor to check if these aims and objectives are being met consistently, and if not, why not.

Marketing research is required to determine accurately, the educational and training programmes required by customers. Feeder Schools and Industrial Liaison teams need to establish closer and meaningful relationships with students, parents and industry. Strategic analysis based on factual information, can identify target markets accurately.

There is a powerful need for more staff development and training needs, directed to marketing activities. Senior management should be involved much more actively to raise the profile and image of the college. FE colleges need to take 'The College' to the public. Many variations can be used, all to create an image of a customer-friendly and caring organisation. There is a strong case for performance indicators to be developed and used particularly for all marketing activities and quality aspects. The indicators need to be realistic and achievable.

Because of financial constraints, community education is being reduced and once lost, it will probably never be restored. These areas of community needs do warrant special treatment as they also serve a social need. Costing of such courses require careful examination.

FINAL POINTS

When compared with industry, marketing activities within FE colleges are in the embryonic stages and lacking in expertise. The case for marketing in FE is increasingly self-evident and directors and senior managers of colleges recognise the need for a more positive emphasis on all aspects of marketing. There is serious competition facing FE colleges. When industry faces such competition, they use marketing to try to retain/expand their market share. Although there are financial constraints in FE, colleges must ask the question of themselves, can they afford not to increase budgets for marketing when confronted with similar, serious problems.

It has to be recognised that some FE colleges are already practising some of the recommendations made in chapter 7. However, most colleges could probably benefit from examining these recommendations and taking positive action to introduce them, perhaps over a period of time. It is accepted that not all these recommendations will be adopted by all colleges. There are many restrictions including financial, competition, size and

location of college and its environment.

Finally, it is acknowledged that this research is based on two selected Colleges, a sample size of 93 questionnaires issued and personal interviews. However, the questionnaire and interviews are quite detailed and the resulting information has been used carefully to establish the recommendations. Naturally a larger sample size, more interviews and more than two selected Colleges would have been desirable. Perhaps in the near future, it will be possible to extend to further research.

APPENDIX 1 : THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE : MISSION STATEMENT

The Sheffield College exists to stimulate, encourage and respond to any demand for post-16 education and training identified locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. The main focus of its activities will be made within the City of Sheffield and surrounding areas. The positive response will be made by offering:

- a comprehensive consistent and high quality education and training service to customers of all ages, all interests and all abilities;
- a coherent marketing strategy which will include helping customers articulate their demands and needs;
- a total service including all modes of learning and involving as many means of support for students as possible;
- lifelong learning opportunity for customers to continue to return to, benefit from, and contribute to the service;
- a sensitive service which continually challenges barriers to access and progression and embeds equal opportunities within its processes;
- opportunities for individuals to take responsibility for their own individual development;
- a service which enhances the environment within which it is located.

The positive response will be achieved in a variety of ways including the consolidation and development of:

- networking with other agencies providing a related service to ensure a coherent provision;
- close links with partner schools to ensure positive progression from these;
- close links with institutes of higher education to ensure progression from the College to these;
- close links with employers to ensure the maximum take up of employment opportunities;
- close links with funding and facilitating agencies locally, nationally and internationally including the Training and Enterprise Council to ensure consistency of funding and support
- close links with the City Council and the Community to ensure harmony of initiatives;
- close links with industry, business and the professions to ensure the service provided by the College addresses their needs, and consequently, through their good offices, can be communicated to others;
- an audit and monitoring system which will enable a process of continual review, evaluation and improvement in cost effectiveness, breadth of provision and standard of service;
- neighbourhood services to ensure local identification with the opportunities which the College provides and to encourage the College to provide a service specific to needs.

APPENDIX 2 : THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE : STRATEGIC PLAN 1995-98

1.CHANGE The College will vigorously pursue its intention to be the first-choice provider of post-16 education training and by so doing become a major contributor to the social and economic regeneration of Sheffield.

1.1.1 The College recognises the need for financial stability in a period of declining income and has produced a plan to move in year one to a trading surplus and to have eliminated the cumulative deficit by the end of the period.

1.1.2 The College recognises the need for efficient and accurate management information and has taken the appropriate practical steps to improve performance.

1.1.3 The College is considering alternative methods of service delivery, both on and off site.

1.1.4 The College Strategic Plan will be underpinned by a business planning process which will progressively spread throughout the College and its agencies.

1.1.5 The Strategic Plan document consists of:

a) The Plan

b) The Appendices which support the Plan

1.1.6 Longer, more detailed documents are being prepared on Information Technology Development and the Premises Strategy, and these will be presented to the Governors.

1.1.7 All targets in the Plan are year one targets. Others

will be developed following full consultation throughout year one.

1.2 CONTEXT The period 1982 to 1992 was one of rapid development of strategies and programmes to promote access to education and training opportunities for everyone in Sheffield.

1.2.1 The establishment of Six Tertiary Colleges in 1988, the amalgamation into a single college 1992 and the incorporation of the Sheffield College in 1993 shared common ideals of increasing participation and achievement. The "staying on" rate in Sheffield has increased to 56% and participation in access programmes has increased by 25% in each of the last three years.

1.2.2 Sheffield has 16-18 provision in schools as well as two secondaries in the Grant Maintained sector. There are many further education providers in Yorkshire and Humberside and the East Midlands regions. The College's primary aim has been to provide a comprehensive tertiary curriculum supporting school leavers through the provision of high quality guidance in neighbourhood locations.

1.2.3 The City has higher than average male unemployment (22.2%) which is not declining as fast as in other comparable metropolitan authorities. Young people (18-24) are disproportionately affected by unemployment comprising one third of the total. The presence of two

large Higher Education Institutions with a high rate of graduates remaining in Sheffield after qualifying and not immediately finding employment contribute to this figure. This factor, combined with a legacy of a low "staying on" rate and the decline in manufacturing and manual occupations account for the high unemployment rate in this age range.

1.2.4 The College operates on six major centres. The properties range from 1960/70 buildings (4 sites) and 2 sites modified in 1988 from 1960/70 schools. The estate is well over 1 million square feet. The buildings have been poorly maintained to a low specification. They have all the building nightmares of their age (flat roofs, acres of glass and low insulation factors). Over 100 satellite centres cover the north, east, south and central areas of the city. In the west and south west, penetration is limited by the presence of schools with 11-18 provision. Transport difficulties combined with the natural geography and the cultural/economic divisions of the city necessitate multiple site delivery.

1.2.5 The College organises student programmes by the level of the qualification entry - foundation, intermediate, advanced (academic GCE and applied) and higher. The curriculum groupings are represented by sectors of which there are nine, organised into four schools - the groupings have curriculum coherence rather than re-

presenting equal sized "chunks".

- 1.2.6 The College mission is to stimulate, encourage and respond to demand for high quality education and training in a local, national and international context. The particular thrust within the scope of the triennial plan is within Sheffield. The mission is achieved by investing in the staff of the College and ensuring identified needs are continuously met.

STRATEGIC PLAN 1995-98

S W O T ANALYSIS

1. STRENGTHS

- 1.1 Significant staff experience and expertise with ability to move into new markets as necessary.
- 1.2 New, more flexible contracts agreed and signed by a large majority of teaching staff.
- 1.3 Delivery points accessible to customers.
- 1.4 Space in which to expand.
- 1.5 Continued increases in the efficiency of delivery of learning programmes.
- 1.6 Local and national reputation in key areas and markets.
- 1.7 Modular GNVQs now available across vocational areas.
- 1.8 Growth across a range of learning programmes eg Advanced level, Access to HE, Art & Design.
- 1.9 Learner and Learning Support functions.
- 1.10 New Learning Centres.

- 1.11 Considerable recent progress in developing new learning strategies, modularisation and resource based learning.
- 1.12 Increasingly flexible delivery mechanisms.
- 1.13 Business planning approach being adopted in planning programmes.

2. WEAKNESSES

- 2.1 Too many delivery points.
- 2.2 Too much space, relatively poor utilisation.
- 2.3 Declining viability of programmes in some areas eg Motor Vehicle, some parts of Construction.
- 2.4 High cost culture equated with Quality amongst some teaching staff.
- 2.5 Enterprise work too small a proportion of programmes delivered.
- 2.6 Communications, Management Information and Quality systems underdeveloped.
- 2.7 Market research needs to be refined and developed.
- 2.8 Scope for increases in the efficiency of the delivery of learning programmes.
- 2.9 Employer Liaison could be improved.
- 2.10 Training and Development needs to be in line with business objectives.
- 2.11 Need to co-ordinate consistency of procedures for contact with the consumer.

3. OPPORTUNITIES

- 3.1 Improved partnerships and collaboration with schools,

employers, TEC, Local Authority and private training providers.

- 3.2 Franchising agreements, eg with employers and expanding employer network.
- 3.3 New contracts for teaching staff.
- 3.4 New Competitiveness White Paper, Forging Ahead.
- 3.5 New premises strategy.
- 3.6 Funding methodology now recognises expenditure in areas other than teaching.
- 3.7 Expansion as a regional centre in some vocational areas
- 3.8 Increasing Year 11 cohorts in schools over the next 3 years
- 3.9 Modern Apprenticeships.
- 3.10 Merging of Education and Employment Departments at a national level.

4. THREATS

- 4.1 Sixth Forms and "new independent" schools.
- 4.2 Competition from other local colleges, private providers and external institutions.
- 4.3 New Competitiveness White Paper.
- 4.4 Reduced unit of funding.
- 4.5 Reduction in TEC funding.
- 4.6 Changing European funding/time lag in receiving funds.
- 4.7 New premises strategy.
- 4.8 Employers reducing training budgets.
- 4.9 Modern Apprenticeships.

APPENDIX 3 : THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGE CHARTER

This Charter outlines the college's commitment to you as a student of the college, as a potential student, as an employer using college services, and to the local community.

We are a new college aiming to offer a comprehensive and high quality education and training service to customers of all ages over 16, of all interests and of all abilities. We respect all the differences in our community with regard to race, gender, disability, sexuality, social class and culture.

Please help us by letting us know if we fail to meet our charter standards.

STUDENTS

The Sheffield College wants to help you to succeed to the best of your ability. Therefore, as a student you can expect the college to offer:

- clear and accurate information on all charges, course content and methods, and assessment arrangements
- the guarantee of an admissions guidance interview when applying for a learning programme involving a minimum of 15 hours study per week

- the guarantee of a college place if you are a Year 11 school leaver
- an Induction Programme and a Student Handbook to help you with the move into college
- an Initial Assessment of your needs in Communications, Numeracy and Information Technology so that we can support you
- a Personal Tutor to guide and support you
- an Individual Learning Plan setting out what you hope to achieve and the steps you will need to take to succeed
- extra help and support to your learning if you need it
- regular student review of your progress at least once a term
- access to information, advice and counselling from specialist staff on careers, H E, personal and financial matters
- the opportunity to take part in the college's Student Opportunity Programme, including a wide range of sports, recreational and social activities
- commitment from caring staff
- the right to an interview for progress to the next stage of learning in college, if applicable

EMPLOYERS

As an employer who sends employees on college programmes or uses the College Enterprise Services you can normally expect us to:

- handle your enquiries efficiently
- provide clear and accurate information on the education and training opportunities both within the College and elsewhere

- provide clear accurate information on all charges, course content and methods of study, and assessment arrangements
- provide regular progress reports for your employees
- offer you the opportunity to convey your views to the College
- if you are a work placement provider we will provide a clear statement of your responsibilities and those of the College for health and safety, assessments and supervision; ensure you are fully aware of the student's learning programme and the role of the work experience within it; ensure the student comes well prepared; and ensure your comments on the student are really taken into account
- ensure each student is visited whilst on placement

LOCAL COMMUNITY

As a member of the local community you can normally expect us to:

- take account of the needs of the local community
- offer you the opportunity to convey your views to the College
- continue our commitment to the Community Consultative Committees
- provide information on the College facilities which are available for public use

COMPLAINTS

If you have a complaint as a student, employer or member of the

local community you can expect us to handle the complaint quickly, courteously and fairly within the guidelines of the College complaints procedure set out in the Student Handbook.

As a user of the college you have a right to:

- speak or write to an appropriate individual if you are not satisfied with the services you receive
- a courteous and efficient response to your concern within the period laid down in our quality standards
- receive a full and reasoned reply where necessary
- advice on further steps you may take if necessary

APPENDIX 4 : SHREWSBURY COLLEGE : MISSION STATEMENT AND

COLLEGE CHARTER

Each year more than 8,000 students enrol on courses at Shrewsbury College. Although our students differ widely in terms of age, background, ability and expectations, they all have one thing in common. They have a right to expect Shrewsbury College to be committed to achieving standards of service which will enable them to make most of their potential and achieve realistic learning goals.

The Charter for Further Education, published by the Department for Education in September 1993, sets out what you as a student, an employer or a member of the local community who may wish to use College services, are entitled to expect from the further education sector.

'A Framework For Your Future' is Shrewsbury College's first Charter. It incorporates many aspects of good practice which have been established over a period of time. It also addresses the requirements of the Charter For Further Education. The standards set out in our Charter represent what is realistic and achievable and provide you with a benchmark for assessing our performance.

Our customers have a right to expect a professional, efficient and quality service which provides them with support during their learning programmes and information which is clear and accessible

to enable them to make the right choice from the options available. Shrewsbury are determined to continue to look for ways in which we can improve.

WHAT ARE THE COLLEGE'S OVERALL AIMS

A commitment to service improvement is fundamental to the achievement of the College's mission which is to develop the potential of all its students by providing appropriate education and training. The quality of the provision will ensure that:

- courses and programmes have equality of access and will maximise progression
- assessment, counselling, career guidance and support services will be available to all
- education and training programmes will meet individual needs
- educational and training programmes will be responsive to business, industry and government needs
- efforts are made to co-operate with groups interested in cultural, civic, recreational and other community projects
- we make the most effective and efficient use of the resources available
- the College maximises the capabilities of all staff
- courses and programmes will foster enlightened participation in public affairs, constructive use of leisure time, enhanced satisfaction in personal living, growth in cultural experience, career advancement and personal autonomy
- we shall develop a culture that encourages enterprise and inn-

ovation, promotes individual responsibility and recognises effort

- the College supports the Environmental Charter of Shropshire County Council in a positive and constructive manner.

'A Framework For Your Future' sets out the standards the College is aiming to meet in order to achieve these aims.

INFORMATION

The College prospectuses set out the range of teaching and learning facilities available together with the programmes and qualifications offered.

HELP

Every member of staff is committed to looking after your interests and making sure you make the most of your time and capabilities.

EQUALITY OF ACCESS

The College will endeavour to provide learning facilities appropriate to the needs and abilities of all students to ensure that no student has restricted access to education provision.

LINKS

Shrewsbury College is an integral part of the business community. A large and diverse programme of vocational courses make a significant contribution to the development and prosperity of the local community. Working alongside Shropshire TEC, the College is active in promoting and delivering training to meet national and local targets.

COMPLAINTS

'A Framework For Your Future' sets out our standards and the quality of service you have a right to expect as a student, employer or member of the local community. The key to measuring how well we are doing is the extent to which you are satisfied with the service you receive. We are committed to continuous improvement but realise that we cannot guarantee to get everything right all the time. If our service has not been as good as you expected or you want to suggest an improvement, write to the Principal's Secretary. You will receive a reply within 7 working days of our receiving your letter.

APPENDIX 5 BLANK MARKETING QUESTIONNAIRE AS ISSUED

Name:

Title:

Area of Responsibility:

Direct-line Phone Number

1(a) Do you believe that marketing of its courses, benefits your college?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state in what ways you believe that marketing benefits your college.

(c) If NO, please briefly state why you believe this to be so.

2(a) Does the college's Mission Statement reflect marketing-driven aims and objectives?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state in what ways.

(c) If NO, please briefly state why you believe this to be so

3 Are the college's marketing activities top driven by senior management?

Yes

No

Don't know

- 4 In your opinion, which of these groups is most committed to the college's marketing policies?(please tick ONE box only)

Managers

Lecturers

Admin staff

Reception staff

- 5 Would you say that the main directions of the college's marketing activities are:

Too broad

About right

Too narrow

- 6 What do you perceive to be the college's main marketing activities?

- 7 Which group of staff is responsible for the conduct of the college's marketing activities?

Marketing trained staff

Lecturers who have acquired some marketing knowledge

Others, please briefly specify

- 8 Should staff concerned with marketing the college's courses be:

Full time

Part time with more hours remission

Others, please briefly specify

9(a) Have staff marketing the college's courses undertaken any special marketing courses, staff development, etc?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state reasons.

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons.

10 What do you think are the best features of your college's marketing activities?

11 What do you think are the worst features of your college's
marketing activities?

12(a) Could marketing research be improved to enable your college
provide more suitable full-time courses and recruitment
from schools?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state details.

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons.

13(a) Could marketing research be improved to enable your college provide more suitable part-time courses and recruitment of adults for vocational courses?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state reasons.

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons.

14(a) Could marketing research be improved to enable your college provide more suitable courses for, and recruitment of non-vocational students?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state reasons.

(c) If NO, please briefly state reasons.

15 If your college has carried out marketing research in the last 4 years, please briefly describe changes that have emanated from that research.

16(a) Do students, actual and potential, benefit from the marketing activities of the college?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons.

17(a) Do employers &/or parents, benefit from the marketing activities of the college?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons.

18(a) In your college budget, is there a specific amount designated for marketing activities?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons.

19(a) In the college budget, what are the main marketing activities?

Publicity

P R

Open Days

Leaflets/literature related to courses

Others, please briefly specify

20 How is your college's marketing budget developed each year?

Allocated by senior management

Repeat of last year's amount

Last year's amount plus or minus x%

Do not know how it is developed

Other ways, please briefly specify

21 In your college's budget, if the amount for marketing was to be increased by 20%, on what activities would you envisage the increase being spent? Please briefly state reasons

22(a) If you are a budget-holder within your college, is there a specific amount designated for marketing in your personal budget?

Yes

No

Don't Know

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

(c) If NO, in what ways would it be helpful to you, if part of the budget was designated for marketing?

23(a) In your personal budget, what are the main marketing activities?

Publicity

P R

Open Days

Leaflets/literature related to courses

Others, please briefly specify

24 How is your personal budget developed each year?

Allocated by senior management

Repeat of last year's amount

Last year's amount plus or minus x%

Do not know how it is developed

Other ways, please briefly specify.

25 In your personal budget, if the amount for marketing was to be increased by 20%, on what activities would you envisage the increase being spent? Please briefly state reasons.

26(a) How do the marketing activities of your college compare with those of other FE colleges?

Better

About the same

Inferior

Don't know

(b) Please briefly state your reasons.

27(a) How do the marketing activities of your college compare with other private or public training institutions?

Better

About the same

Inferior

Don't know

(b) Please briefly state your reasons.

28(a) In your opinion, should your college's marketing activities be carried out:

100% centrally

Part centrally, part by each school/department

100% by each school/department

(b) Please briefly state your reasons.

29(a) Please describe the main ways in which quality is monitored in your college.

(b) Is quality monitored really effectively, for curriculum, programmes, outcomes, etc?

Yes

No

Don't know

(c) Is quality not really monitored effectively?

30(a) In your opinion, would your college gain benefits/status if it had B S 5750 accreditation?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons

31(a) Has your college benefited from specific marketing activities during the past 4 years?

Yes

No

Don't know

(b) If YES, please briefly state your reasons.

(c) If NO, please briefly state your reasons.

32 Please briefly state your thoughts on what changes in marketing activities would benefit your college in the immediate future.

- 33 Please attach any further comments you may think are of relevance to your college's marketing activities, which have not been covered by this questionnaire.

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR HELP

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