

Heart of Worcestershire College

General further education college

Inspection dates	8–11 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Adult learning programmes	Requires improvement
Apprenticeships	Require improvement
Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Learners taking English and mathematics qualifications do not succeed well or develop the skills needed to achieve all their learning goals.
- Learners' attendance rates are too low, particularly in English and mathematics classes.
- Leaders' and managers' actions to improve teaching, learning and assessment have not yet led to consistently good teaching across subjects, provision types and levels.
- Teachers make insufficient use of information about learners' prior attainment to plan learning that enables them all to achieve their goals and fulfil their potential.
- Assessors' tracking of apprentices' progress lacks rigour and does not encourage swift progress through all aspects of the framework.
- Teachers do not provide sufficiently detailed or precise learning targets or written feedback to learners and apprentices, making it more difficult for them to achieve good or better progress and complete within the expected timescales.

The provider has the following strengths

- Very strong strategic partnerships and collaboration with employers and stakeholders ensure that courses meet local skills needs extremely well.
- Impartial information, advice and guidance help learners to stay on their programmes. Learners with high needs and those with very specific needs benefit from good and innovative specialist provision.
- Learners benefit from innovative use of technology and resources which support and enhance learning.
- Learners on the study programmes have work placements which are well matched to their vocational courses and support their career aspirations well; apprentices develop vocational skills which are relevant to job roles.

Full report

Information about the provider

- The Heart of Worcestershire College was formed in August 2014 as a result of a merger between Worcester College of Technology and North East Worcestershire College. It is a very large general further education college providing vocational education from entry level to level five across four main campuses and a number of smaller centres across Worcestershire.
- The proportion of pupils who leave school with five or more GCSE qualifications at grades A* to C including English and mathematics is similar to the national average. The proportion of learners attending the college from minority ethnic groups reflects that in the local population. Unemployment in Worcestershire is below the national rate, but a slightly higher proportion of the local population has no qualifications.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that managers and staff implement the English and mathematics strategy fully and consistently across the college. Encourage teachers to help learners understand the importance of developing English and mathematical skills for their future prospects. Enable teachers to use a wider range of strategies and
- Ensure that teachers use all available information about learners' prior attainment, skills and knowledge to plan learning that enables them all, especially the most able, to make good or better progress in lessons.
- Ensure that all teachers set the highest expectations for learners' attendance at, and punctuality to, lessons. Tighten up the procedures for recording, monitoring and improving attendance at lessons, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that managers who observe teaching and learning focus clearly on the impact of teaching on learning, and on the progress that learners make in class.
- Ensure that managers, teachers and assessors make full use of the new tracking system for apprentices to monitor their progress frequently, and to identify quickly when they are falling behind. Ensure that assessors intervene swiftly with relevant support so that apprentices achieve their framework within the expected timescales.
- Ensure that teachers set challenging targets for all learners; make sure that targets are more precise and timed for classroom-based learners, and, for apprentices, that targets build skills beyond those simply needed for the completion of tasks.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the organisation is too variable. Leaders and managers place a strong emphasis on sharing good practice between all parts of the organisation, and on providing training and development. The impact of these strategies is evident in individual cases, where teachers have improved their practice following a lower observation grade. However, facets of teaching, learning and assessment have yet to improve; teachers do not challenge learners sufficiently to achieve of their best, especially the most able, and not enough teaching is good or better.
- Leaders and managers have a strategy in place to improve the English and mathematical skills of learners, particularly those on the study programmes. Managers have placed a lot of attention on this area and are constantly looking at ways to improve, but problems with learners' attendance at sessions and insufficient levels of progress have not yet been resolved.
- Following the recent merger, leaders and managers have been harmonising quality initiatives from the former organisations; many are very new and their impact cannot yet be seen. Leaders and managers at all levels within the organisation understand the self-assessment process and use it to highlight issues and evaluate the effectiveness of improvement actions. Staff in a number of curriculum areas use the process well to bring about improvement, but this is not the case across all areas. Although staff monitor and support improvements in the performance of subcontractors, significant differences exist in the quality of different subcontractors' work, including some weak provision.
- Leaders' and managers' actions have not ensured that the quality of provision is uniformly good across the college. The quality of provision is stronger for learners with high needs than for those on the study programmes, apprenticeships or adult programmes. Staff have implemented consistent systems across the organisation for monitoring the progress of learners. These systems now provide more reliable information for tutors to use in learners' progress reviews, and highlight learners who are underachieving; managers also use the information to identify areas for improvement. However, it is too soon to evaluate the impact of the resulting actions. Staff have introduced a new system to monitor the progress of apprentices, but the changes have not yet reduced the number of apprentices who complete their qualifications after the planned end date for their programme.
- Governors, the Principal and senior managers have a clear vision for the college which focuses on meeting the skills needs of individuals, the local community and the region. To support this vision, leaders and managers promote values of trust, integrity, collaboration and inclusivity. Since the merger, leaders and managers have been successful in ensuring that the values and vision are understood and shared throughout the new organisation.
- Leaders and managers use a range of strategies to promote equality across the organisation and most teachers raise awareness of diversity well in lessons. Managers have developed the curriculum to provide strong support for disadvantaged groups with a clear focus on those with special educational needs.
- Senior leaders have built up very strong partnerships with employers and stakeholders, including the local enterprise partnerships, to develop provision which supports the college vision. Managers plan the curriculum extremely well and develop sustainable courses, which they review regularly for effectiveness. Senior leaders make good use of local market intelligence, stakeholder information and projections of financial viability to assess the suitability of courses. For learners on the 16 to 19 study programmes, their main qualification is combined with other aspects, such as relevant work experience and additional qualifications to support career development and progression into higher education and employment.
- **The governance of the provider**
 - Governors played a key strategic role in the merger and formation of the new organisation. A number of members have high levels of financial expertise and have used this to ensure that the college is in a strong financial position.
 - Through an effective skills audit, governors broadened the skills base of the corporation and appointed additional board members with strong education and training backgrounds. Governors also continue to enhance their expertise in this area through the 'Insight programme'. Governors demonstrate they are finding that this initiative is enhancing their ability to provide effective challenge by being well informed, accessing relevant data and asking pertinent questions about the quality of provision.
 - The college's strategic plan focuses on meeting key local and regional needs while maintaining the college's sound financial basis.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding are effective**
 - Staff at the college and in the workplace have created an environment where learners and apprentices feel safe and know whom to contact if they have a concern. A comprehensive system is in place which ensures effective liaison with external agencies. Learners and apprentices use health and safety measures appropriately.

- Robust systems are in place to recruit staff, with a comprehensive record kept of relevant details. Senior managers provide high-quality training, so that staff are able to identify any potential issues and deal with them appropriately.
- All necessary policies and processes are in place including those relating to the 'Prevent' duty. Staff teaching on adult courses and apprenticeships have made less progress in promoting British values, and awareness of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, to learners than staff teaching other programmes in the college. Further work is needed to monitor and evaluate the impact of 'Prevent' activities on staff, learners and apprentices.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, because the progress learners and apprentices make in lessons and the workplace is not yet good. Teachers' expectations of learners on the 16 to 19 study programmes and adult learning programmes are too low, limiting learners' ambition to improve their skills to the level expected, particularly in English and mathematics. The planning of on- and off-the-job training for apprentices is not good enough to ensure that most of them complete within the planned time.
- In too many classroom-based lessons, teachers do not take sufficient account of learners' needs and abilities. Although teachers have detailed information on learners' starting points and target grades, they do not use the information to plan learning activities and tasks that are sufficiently individualised to meet the full range of learners' abilities. In less effective lessons, learning is characterised by a slow pace with learners not progressing onto the main purpose of the lesson quickly enough. Teachers do not explain clearly or check learners' understanding by setting sufficiently challenging questions to learners, particularly the more able, in order to extend learning. Teachers do not routinely promote the importance to learners of regular attendance and punctuality, or explain how absence and lateness can adversely affect their ability to complete the course successfully.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in both English and mathematics require improvement. Teachers in vocational lessons do not promote these functional skills sufficiently to their learners. Teachers' feedback on the quality of learners' spelling, grammar and punctuation are underdeveloped and do not reinforce the importance of developing these skills to their studies and personal lives. In discrete functional skills lessons, teachers use individual coaching effectively, and the good interaction between the teacher and learner helps develop learners' mathematical and English skills.
- Teachers provide comprehensive and constructive verbal feedback that provides learners with helpful guidance on how to improve and apply skills. Written feedback is less useful in this regard. For example, in carpentry and joinery, electrical installation and hairdressing, the written feedback tutors provide in learners' activity books is often too brief, and focuses almost exclusively on current task performance rather than on what they could do better to aid progression. In better examples, including engineering and access courses, learners value the detailed and constructive feedback they receive from staff to enable them to improve and make more rapid progress.
- Staff's assessment of learners' work is generally well planned and rigorous; learners' work meets awarding body requirements. Staff follow awarding body guidelines to ensure that learners fully understand the assessment criteria. In vocational areas, assessors and trainers use good oral questioning to assess learners' practical skills. Learners in applied science, art and design, and engineering have confidence in the assessment process which supports their progress. On these courses, work is marked well, assessment decisions are fair, feedback detailed and specific, and deadlines for completion adhered to. However, assessors do not consistently plan on- and off-the-job assessment activity well; apprentices are not sufficiently aware of the requirements of the apprenticeship framework or how staff will assess them.
- Through lesson observations, managers and staff are improving the quality of the learning experience for learners, but their actions have not had as much impact as they might. Observers' reports are more analytical, and teachers say that the reports provide them with a greater focus on what they need to do to improve. However, observers do not give sufficient weighting to learners' learning and progress in their evaluation of teaching and learning.
- In the minority of better teaching, learners benefit from well-planned and taught learning activities that contribute to a good pace of vocational and academic skills development. Teachers and assessors use their industry experience well in lessons, the pace of learning is brisk and learners' participation contributes to their making at least the progress expected, based on their prior achievements.

- Teachers use relevant resources, such as detailed case studies and extended assignments, to help most learners make links between theory and practice that engage them thoroughly. Learners benefit from up-to-date accommodation across most of the college that contributes well to learning. They increasingly make good use of the well-populated virtual learning environment (VLE) and online assessment tasks to extend their learning beyond the classroom. Specialist support staff work well with vocational teachers to give targeted support to those learners needing help both in class and on an individual basis. Learners with high needs make good progress and achieve well.
- Teachers integrate the themes of equality and diversity appropriately into lessons. They encourage learners to take turns in answering questions and to respect others' opinions. Learners appreciate the good range of opportunities to explore equality and diversity topics through classroom activities when opportunities arise. For example, in hairdressing, teachers and learners discuss the differences between European and African-Caribbean hair treatments.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

- Learners' attendance at lessons across the college is low; it does not meet college targets nor support the college's aim of helping learners develop a positive attitude to learning. Attendance is particularly poor in English and mathematics classes. Managers' actions to address low attendance have not led to any improvements in the last year.
- In a minority of instances, teachers do not challenge lateness and poor punctuality. Their expectations of both learners and apprentices are low; they do not challenge poor behaviour either in or outside the classroom. They do not deal effectively with low-level disruption which means that the pace of learning in many sessions is too slow and does not promote good progress.
- The majority of learners on the study programmes have a good awareness of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. Learners report that they feel safe and know whom to contact should they have any concerns. Apprentices and adults do not have a good understanding of British values or of the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.
- Study programme learners benefit from good work experience. The majority of learners have already undertaken external work experience and the remaining learners' plans are in place. Staff use their good contacts with local and national employers well to support the development of learners' work-related skills.
- Learners receive good information, advice and guidance before they start the course and a high proportion complete their programme. They also receive good information about future career pathways and most are clear about their planned progression routes. High-needs learners receive careers advice in appropriate formats and from a number of sources to help them make their career choices. Good transition planning supports the more vulnerable learners into the college.
- Most learners on the study programmes develop good personal and social skills. Staff provide effective enrichment activities that enable learners to make gains in confidence and work-related skills. Learners also successfully participate in national skills competitions which have a positive impact on their motivation, self-esteem and career ambitions. A significant proportion of learners on the study programmes also successfully complete additional qualifications which enhance their employment prospects. Apprentices develop vocationally relevant skills that their employers value.

Outcomes for learners require improvement

- The vast majority of full-time learners at the college are aged 16 to 19 and are on the study programmes; most are currently making the progress expected of them. The proportion of learners who successfully completed all components of their study programme in 2014/15 was low.
- Many of these learners undertake English and mathematics, either through functional skills qualifications or at GCSE. The proportion of learners aged 16 to 18 who successfully complete these qualifications, or achieve a grade A* to C at GCSE, is low; these low outcomes have a significant negative impact on learners' ability to complete the overall programme successfully. Leaders and managers recognise this as a major area for development and have developed new strategies to address this weakness. However, it is too early to gauge the impact of these changes with current learners.
- Adult learners on level 1 courses, including learners of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and access to higher education learners succeed well. Learners aged 16 to 18 on level 3 programmes, particularly those taking diplomas, have improved their success rates significantly in the last year. The proportion of learners who successfully completed their programme at level 2 was low for all ages in 2014/15.

- The proportion of apprentices who successfully complete their programme requires improvement; it has improved slightly in the last year and is marginally above the low national average for both overall completion and completion within the planned timescale.
- Internal progression for learners is good with the large majority progressing to a higher-level programme after the successful completion of their course. A majority of level 3 learners who successfully complete their programme progress to higher education courses.
- Managers have taken effective action to reduce differences in achievement between various groups which they identified in the self-assessment report. In the current year, college information indicates that more Bangladeshi, Black African and Caribbean learners are completing their courses, bringing their completion rate closer to that of White British learners. The overall performance of the college's direct apprenticeship provision and that of its subcontractors are similar. High-needs learners succeed very well and progress into employment or further and higher education.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- At the time of inspection, there were 2,830 learners on 16 to 19 study programmes, in nine of the 15 subject areas. The largest areas are engineering and construction; media and publishing; health, public services and care; retail and commercial enterprise; information and communication technology; and business.
- The proportion of learners who achieve their learning goals in English and mathematics is too low. Not enough teachers challenge their learners successfully to make good progress in the development of these skills. A minority of learners do not attend their mathematics and English lessons regularly. Too many vocational teachers do not place sufficient importance on improving learners' written English skills or correcting learners' mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar. While managers recognise this as an area for improvement, it is too early to judge fully the impact of recent changes to the curriculum on learners' progress.
- Teachers' effective use of assessment in the classroom varies too much. In a majority of subjects, regular assessment enables teachers to identify accurately the progress their learners are making. In a significant minority of classes, teachers do not check and consolidate learners' knowledge sufficiently before introducing new learning, and as a result learners' understanding is not secure.
- Too many teachers do not plan effectively to meet learners' individual needs. Not enough teachers inspire and challenge all their learners, particularly the more able, to make good progress, work independently and achieve the highest standards of which they are capable.
- The quality of written feedback on learners' work is not always consistently clear or helpful and does not consistently identify clearly enough what learners have done well and what they need to do to improve further. The development of learners' speaking and listening skills is good. Learners exhibit confidence in making presentations and expressing their ideas. They benefit from good individual coaching and from constructive oral feedback, which helps them to evaluate their progress.
- The majority of teachers use a good range of resources, including technology, to interest their learners. As a result, most learners enjoy their learning, are well motivated and make the progress expected of them.
- Study programmes are well planned and based on both employers' and learners' needs. Curriculum managers plan work experience skilfully and most placements are closely matched to learners' vocational courses and support their career aspirations well.
- The development of most learners' practical and work-related skills is good. Art and design teachers provide a disciplined and studious focus on drawing systems and, as a result, learners acquire the technical skills to enable them to realise their ideas and designs as they progress. Learners studying hospitality and catering quickly gain the skills and confidence to prepare and serve food, to a high industry standard, at a national racing festival.
- Staff provide effective information and guidance services that learners value very highly. Most learners are clear about their career pathways and the steps they need to take to achieve their aspirations. Learners benefit from a wide range of additional qualifications that effectively enhance their learning and work-related skills, such as the award in first aid at work. Most learners progress to higher level qualifications, higher education or into employment.
- Teachers integrate equality and cultural diversity well in most lessons, such as in a mathematics lesson where learners discussed gender equality in the context of National Women's Day. Support for learners, including those with additional needs, is good.

Adult learning programmes

require improvement

- Most adult learners study part-time courses and a small minority study full-time courses across all subject areas.
- The quality of teaching and its impact on learning is not consistently good enough. In a small minority of lessons, learners do not actively participate and teachers do not challenge them to do so, which limits their engagement and enjoyment. In these lessons, teaching is too frequently dull and learners are demotivated as a result. A small minority of learners behave inappropriately and teachers do not address low-level disruption effectively. This does not prepare learners well for employment.
- Although teachers have sufficient information to plan to meet individual learners' needs, they do not use this to consistently good effect. As a result, teachers do not challenge most-able learners sufficiently or offer more support to learners who need it. Their planning does not develop learners' mathematical skills well enough.
- The quality of written feedback, target setting and action planning requires improvement and does not sufficiently challenge learners or provide sufficient guidance on what they need to do to improve further.
- Attendance in lessons during the inspection was poor with many examples of less than half the expected learners in attendance. A small minority of lessons were cancelled as a result of staff absence with no contingency provision. A minority of lessons started late or finished early which hinders effective learning.
- Learners benefit from appropriate advice and guidance before and during their learning programmes. This enables them to choose an appropriate course at the college and then decide on suitable next steps in their career or further studies.
- Learners achieve expected standards. Assessment is accurate and timely, identifying achievement against assessment criteria.
- Adult learning programmes are inclusive, appropriately planned and meet local needs. In addition, managers consider the specific needs of learners carefully, for example by ensuring that timetables fit in with work and care commitments. The curriculum prepares learners well for their intended job roles, career aims and personal goals. Learners overcome barriers effectively to enable them to successfully progress to further education or into employment, For example, Jobcentre Plus refers learners to attend workshops to develop skills required to gain employment, such as producing an appropriate curriculum vitae.
- Staff are experienced and understand their vocational specialisms very well. In most classes teachers are enthusiastic about their subjects and use technical language to good effect. As a consequence learners also use technical language appropriately and confidently. For example, learners are able to discuss and identify different types of schizophrenia with confidence and accuracy.
- Teachers develop English and employability skills well during lessons and learners benefit from this, understanding the importance of this in their chosen sector. For example, in ESOL, learners had to choose an item from a box and describe what it was and how they would use it at work.
- In the majority of lessons, learners enjoy well-paced, current and relevant activities that excite and develop their understanding of their chosen sector and employment. For example, in hair and beauty, learners demonstrate professional working practices and provide excellent customer service to clients. Learners with acquired brain injuries enjoy stimulating activities and very effective teaching and support that build confidence and allow learners to develop strategies to help their memories.
- Practical and written work is mostly of a good standard. For example, engineering learners could identify verbs, adverbs and synonyms accurately and could read complicated words and sentences clearly out loud. This contributes well to positive progression and preparing learners for their next steps. However, in other lessons teachers did not correct errors in written and spoken English.
- The majority of learners enjoy their learning, feel safe and know how to report any concerns. Learners are respectful, well behaved and understand fully the need for tolerance in classes.

Apprenticeships

require improvement

- The college's apprenticeship provision accounts for 15% of its work by funding. The college has 1,278 apprentices and 1,038 advanced apprentices. The majority of apprentices follow programmes in business administration, health and social care, engineering, hairdressing and beauty therapy. Apprentices in college-based delivery are too often not ready to learn. Examples include wearing outside coats, hoods and caps in class, having poorly presented files and using mobile phones openly. Too often, tutors are ineffective in their attempts to deal with low-level disruption which means the pace in many sessions is too slow to promote adequate progress.

- Too much delivery to apprentices is not good enough, both in college and in the workplace, resulting in apprentices not making sufficient progress in these sessions.
- Staff's tracking and monitoring of progress are insufficiently effective; as a result, the progress of too many apprentices is not quick enough and a significant minority of apprentices are continuing beyond their planned end dates.
- Targets are in most cases too general: they focus on apprentices completing tasks as a way of tracking their development, and fail to link to the apprentices' areas for development or career aspirations. For example, when apprentices have highlighted ambitions for promotion, they do not have targets to develop their skills in order to secure the promotion.
- Too many apprentices and employers do not fully understand the complexity of the frameworks they are using and therefore do not fully commit to the completion of non-vocationally linked elements, meaning that too many continue beyond their planned end date or only complete the vocational elements.
- Apprentices, employers and some staff lack a good understanding of the 'Prevent' duty and fundamental British values.
- In the better teaching, activity is carefully planned, focused on the apprentices' development and well paced, and it is evident that apprentices make progress towards the completion of their frameworks.
- Apprentices are developing vocationally relevant skills that are valued by their employers, such as being able to accurately control the value and quality of stock in a hair salon, and pricing menus in different restaurants by being able to include an appropriate margin on cost prices. In some cases apprentices are also supported to develop their personal skills, such as confidence and communication.
- The college's apprenticeship offer meets closely the needs of the employers they work with. Employers value highly the relationship they have with the college, with repeat business a regular feature across sectors.
- Assessors and employers provide effective support to develop apprentices' vocationally relevant English, mathematics and employability skills beyond those needed to complete the qualifications.
- In workplace sessions, tutors promote the right behaviours and attitudes to develop work-ready skills appropriate to the environment in which apprentices work.

Provision for learners with high needs

is good

- The college has around 160 learners with high needs, with two thirds of them studying on inclusive learning programmes and the other third on 16 to 19 study programmes. College leaders are committed to developing this provision further.
- The majority of teaching, learning and assessment is good resulting in learners with high needs developing a good range of skills including English language and information technology, as well as skills to support their progression into independent living and work, such as cooking, money management, problem solving and decision making. Learners with high needs succeed well across all types of provision.
- Initial assessment is well organised and coordinators plan and carry out a comprehensive range of support interventions.
- Learners are well prepared for their next steps. They receive a wide range of advice and guidance to help them make appropriate choices for careers and study programmes. All programmes have a strong employability focus with work experience or work-related activities integral to them.
- Managers have designed the curriculum well to enable learners to join at the appropriate level and study English and mathematics up to GCSE. Most learners on inclusive learning move onto positive destinations.
- Managers consider work placements and internships carefully to match them as closely as possible to learners' career aspirations and interests. Employers interviewed said they benefit from having learners completing supported internships and one had employed a learner on a five-day contract as a housekeeper. Learners' skills developed through the supported internships are well used and shared with other learners back at college. A small number of learners have progressed into paid work as a result of their internships.
- In the inclusive learning provision, activities are highly personalised to meet the needs of individual learners. Most teachers are skilled at integrating equality and diversity and British values into their lessons. In one session, learners voted for the subject they wanted to study next and, in another, learners were coached to play wheelchair basketball by one of their peers who is a wheelchair user himself. Learners with high needs on mainstream study programmes make progress in line with their peers.
- Learners with high needs are well integrated into the college community, and managers are striving to raise their profile more widely through learners entering regional skills competitions on a par with their peers.

- However, many teachers do not develop learners' mathematics skills. For instance, when planning a meal out at a local restaurant, journey times and distance were not discussed, and on a level 3 study programme learners were asked to make only very simple additions.
- Written feedback mainly describes what the learners did and does not provide any points for improvement. For example, where learners had repeated a cooking activity later in the year, it was not clear how they had developed or improved their skills. Similarly, learners on a light motor vehicle programme received feedback that did not help them improve their practical skills such as changing car light bulbs.
- Learners' progress against targets is only recorded as achieved or not achieved at the review date. As a result, it is difficult to gauge learners' progress over time against them.
- Teachers do not always plan sufficiently well how they will use the support assistants to support learners; communication relies too heavily on informal discussions at starts and ends of lessons and, for learners who have changes in tutors or support assistants, there is a lack of continuity.
- Learners with high needs feel safe, and their tutors pay good attention to health and safety in lessons.

Provider details

Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	14+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	11,923
Principal/CEO	Stuart Laverick
Website address	www.howcollege.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	390	755	1,126	1,170	1,313	425	1	26
	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	417	861	308	730	1	73		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	11		7		18			
Number of learners aged 14-16	8							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Matrix Training & Development Ltd. ■ Eurosource Solutions Ltd. ■ Eagles Consultancy Ltd. ■ LMPQ Ltd. ■ KYP Know Your Potential Consultancy Ltd. ■ Track Training Ltd. 							

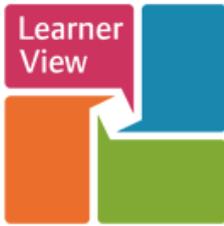
Information about this inspection

Inspection team

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Heather Barnett	Her Majesty's Inspector
Victor Reid	Her Majesty's Inspector
Maggie Fobister	Ofsted Inspector
Ralph Brompton	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Gibson	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Gay	Ofsted Inspector
Ken Merry	Ofsted Inspector
Heather Cadman-Marks	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Green	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the vice-principal, curriculum and quality, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection reports. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

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