

# Brooklands College

## Inspection report

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**Unique reference number:** 130825

**Name of lead inspector:** David Martin HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 10 February 2012

**Type of provider:** General further education college

**Address:** Weybridge Road  
Weybridge  
Surrey  
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## Information about the provider

1. Brooklands College (the college) is a large general further education college with two main sites; one close to the town of Weybridge in Surrey, the other in the centre of Ashford, Middlesex, five miles away. In addition, the college offers part-time courses, primarily in basic skills and supported learning, at other venues, including community centres and workplaces, in the Elmbridge, Runnymede, Surrey Heath and Spelthorne districts.
2. The local educational environment is particularly competitive, with many sixth forms in state schools and with significant private sector provision. Other further education colleges are relatively close. The college offers courses from entry to higher education levels. In addition to the college's learner responsive provision, largely vocationally focused, it has significant numbers of work-based learners and provides training for school pupils aged 14 to 16. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic communities attending the college is around 18%, which is just above the percentage resident in the most immediate local communities.
3. The college sites are within affluent areas, with Weybridge being one of the most affluent in the country; but there are significant numbers of young people and adults locally with low educational attainment. The percentage of school leavers achieving five passes for the GCSE, grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, is above the national average.
4. At the time of the previous inspection, the college's well advanced plans for significant new accommodation collapsed, due to the external financial crisis within the government funding body. As a result, the college decided to close A-level provision and its Ashford site completely. A subsequent interim management team reinstated A levels and rescinded the closure and the disruption to learners was significant, including their movement from one site to the other between the first and second year of their studies. Many learners left the college, with significant impact on retention and, therefore, success rates.
5. The college provides training on behalf of the following providers:
  - Oxford Brookes University (foundation degree in motor sport)
  - Greenwich University (postgraduate certificate in education and certificate in education).
  - Kingston University (foundation degrees in early years education and in special educational needs)
6. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the college:
  - Star Training Limited (advanced diplomas for the children and young peoples' workforce, customer services and management)
  - Professional Training Solutions Limited (foundation awards in caring for children, introduction to health and social care and children's and young people's settings)

- Tribal Education Limited (intermediate certificates in understanding the safe handling of medicines and in equality and diversity)
- Advanced Future Training Limited (intermediate certificates in business administration, customer services and in team leading, Advanced certificate in management and Advanced diploma in customer services)
- Coco & Co FC Limited (intermediate certificate in activity leadership).

<b>Type of provision</b>	<b>Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11</b>
<b>Provision for young learners:</b> 14 to 16  Further education (16 to 18)  Foundation learning	403 part-time learners  1,405 full-time learners 402 part-time learners  569 full-time learners 50 part-time learners
<b>Provision for adult learners:</b> Further education (19+)	193 full-time learners 1,628 part-time learners
<b>Employer provision:</b> Train to Gain Apprenticeships	585 learners 179 apprentices
<b>Adult and community learning</b>	189 learners

## Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

<b>Overall effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>
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<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>
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	<b>Grade</b>
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3

<b>Subject Areas</b>	
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	3
Science and mathematics	3
Visual and performing arts and music technology	2
Literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages	3

## Overall effectiveness

7. Brooklands is a satisfactory college. It has gone through troubled times since its previous inspection. After a damaging period of instability and loss of reputation for the college, strong leadership, and the work of re-invigorated governors, is successfully promoting the college's recovery. Learners' success and retention have significantly improved and the college is well regarded by its partners. Involving staff, the college has developed reliable new systems to set realistic improvement targets, monitor progress and implement action plans. At course level, there is still work to do to ensure that teachers and course teams are fully proficient in self-evaluation.
8. Learners achieve satisfactory outcomes overall and enjoy their learning. However, although recently much improved, learners' overall success, taking into account their pass rates and how many complete their courses, is still too low. Outcomes for work-based learning courses are satisfactory overall.

Achievement of school pupils aged 14 to 16 is good. Learners' skills and standards of work are good and sometimes outstanding, especially in their practical work. They often make good or better progress on their courses. Many continue with their studies to higher levels or gain employment. Learners feel safe in the college and the arrangements for their safeguarding are good.

9. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. The college has rigorous and systematic quality improvement arrangements for teaching and learning. Teachers are knowledgeable and well qualified. They are enthusiastic and work productively with learners. In the most effective lessons, teachers successfully plan and prepare, taking full account of the individual needs of learners. In many lessons, however, teachers' questioning of learners is too general and does not suitably check all learners' understanding and progress. Too few teachers make good use of the detailed learner profiles available to them to plan their lessons. Training for work-based learners is satisfactory, both at the college and with employers.
10. The expanding range of courses adequately meets learners' and employers' needs and interests. Good partnerships with other organisations, including with employers, improves the quality of learners' courses. The care, guidance and support of learners are good. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory, but is insufficiently promoted in lessons or work-based learning reviews.

## Main findings

- Overall success rates for learner responsive provision improved significantly in 2010/11 and retention, a major reason for the poorer success, is much better in the current academic year. Learners aged 14 to 16 achieve very well, with high pass rates.
- Full framework success for apprentices improved substantially over the last year and is now just above national average, although it is below average for the small number of advanced apprentices. Completion within agreed timescales is satisfactory for Train to Gain learners.
- Learners make good progress in improving their economic and social well-being. They are well motivated, well behaved and enjoy their studies. They make good progress on their courses and satisfactorily progress to other courses and employment. Their standards of work, and the skills they develop, are often good and sometimes better, especially in practical tasks. Excellent use is made of extensive work experience opportunities.
- Rigorous and systematic quality improvement arrangements provide the college with a sound platform for the further improvement of teaching and learning. Inspectors found a significant and increasing element of good lessons, pockets of outstanding practice and a small number of lessons judged to be inadequate. The college has found this significant variation for itself, both across, and within, subject areas.

- In many lessons, teachers' questioning is insufficiently developed to provide an effective check on all learners' learning and progress. Teachers' planning of lessons does not make consistent use of detailed group profiles to support individual learning and progress effectively.
- The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of users is satisfactory. Enrolments on A-level courses have decreased. Learners engage in a wide range of enrichment activities. Partnerships with schools, industry and many local organisations and voluntary bodies are good. Partnerships with employers are particularly effective and support curriculum development well. Learners benefit from excellent work experience.
- The care, guidance and support of learners are good. Learners have their needs identified early and support is arranged promptly. Access to a wide range of experienced and specialist counsellors and therapists benefits learners very well.
- New senior managers have brought stability and an energetic and practical approach to identifying and tackling weaker aspects of college performance and provision. With staff, they have developed robust new systems to set realistic targets, monitor progress and implement action plans, and these have led to improvements.
- Governors have a better understanding than previously of the further education context, how to judge success and how the college can improve. They have confidence in the information provided for them and now provide more effective challenge to managers.
- The college safeguards young learners and vulnerable adults well, working closely with external agencies where necessary. Learners feel safe and employ safe working practices.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The college prioritises equality and diversity and has made good progress towards making these themes central to all of its work. However, teachers do not promote equality and diversity sufficiently well in lessons. Vulnerable learners receive good support and progress well at the end of their courses.
- Satisfactory quality assurance has led to improved target setting and monitoring of progress against targets, and to improved outcomes. However, not all course teams produce accurate self-assessment reports. Curriculum area self-assessment reports identify some, but not all, areas for improvement noted by inspectors.
- The college provides satisfactory value for money. Its financial health is satisfactory. Senior leaders and governors have recognised previous weaknesses in financial management and are taking appropriate steps to tackle them, leading to improvements in financial health and control.

### **What does Brooklands College need to do to improve further?**

- Maintain the momentum of improvement for learners' success rates, by building on the good practice demonstrated in higher performing subjects and by continuing with the strategies to keep learners on their courses.

- Ensure that teachers in lessons make more precise and frequent checks on all learners' learning and progress, by more consistent use of questioning directed to individual learners.
- Provide more training to help teachers make better use of detailed information they receive about their learners so that they can plan learning activities which ensure that they all make appropriate progress compared to their prior learning.
- Ensure that all teachers successfully integrate the promotion of equality and diversity into their lessons.
- Improve the skills of course teams to self-assess the quality of their provision, in order to support further improvements and raise achievements.

### **Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors**

#### **What learners like:**

- feeling safe in the college
- being treated with respect in an adult atmosphere
- the helpful and understanding teachers
- the good levels of support throughout the programme
- the good help and guidance available in college, including individual tutorials
- the receptiveness of the college to making changes
- the opportunities to give views.

#### **What learners would like to see improved:**

- the timing of assignments and the amount of feedback on assessments
- value for money in the college's refectory and the availability of healthy eating options
- the extent of recreational facilities and opportunities
- the extent and security of car parking.

### **Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors**

#### **What employers like:**

- the welcoming atmosphere in the college
- the college's intent to meet local needs
- the college's prompt response to queries and issues
- good communications and the excellent working relationships with the college's staff
- the high quality of training
- the good levels of support available for employers and individuals.

**What employers would like to see improved:**

- the extent of information about what learners are doing at college
- the enrolment process for their employees, which can be confusing
- more details about what the college provides and may be able to offer.



## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

**Grade 3**

11. After a damaging period of uncertainty, with many changes to senior management, a new senior team has brought stability to the college and provides good leadership to bring about improvements. Success rates improved significantly in 2010/11 and current retention is high. Staff and governors have determined the college's values and objectives, which they strongly support. Managers have significantly improved internal and external communications. Revised management arrangements have improved the accountability of managers and the monitoring of progress against targets. Quality assurance now promotes improvement, although the college recognises that not all course teams are sufficiently skilled in self-assessment.
12. Staff access to, and use of, data to improve performance is significantly improved. Good training and development have much improved staff and managers' understanding of the college's and learners' performance and how to make it better. A rigorous system for the observation of lessons provides a more realistic view of the quality of teaching and learning, which is satisfactory, and support for teachers is leading to improvements. Senior managers are improving financial health and control, while projects to improve the college's infrastructure progress well. A new accommodation strategy, linked to future curriculum requirements, is well developed.

### Outcomes for learners

**Grade 3**

13. The college has successfully and significantly reversed a declining trend in learners' success. Overall success rates were very poor in 2009/10, but the college achieved significant improvement in 2010/11, by eight percentage points. In spite of this, the overall success rate, at 75%, remains too far below the national rate for similar colleges, as does that for long courses overall. The overall success rate for short courses is significantly improved since 2008/9 and is now satisfactory, but for learners aged 16 to 18 it is high.
14. Overall outcomes for employer responsive provision are satisfactory, both for apprenticeships and for Train to Gain. Full framework success for apprentices has improved substantially over the last year and is now just above national averages, although it remains below for the small number of advanced apprentices. Completion within agreed timescales is satisfactory for Train to Gain learners.
15. The large number of learners aged 14 to 16, attending the college from local schools, achieve well. Overall, pass rates were 88% in 2010/11, with new diploma achievement at 90%.
16. For long courses, the trend of improvement, but with a shortfall against national rates, is evident both for learners aged 16 to 18 and for those aged 19

and over. The key reasons for poorer performance differ for the two age groups. For younger learners, overall, poor retention has lowered success while pass rates have improved to around the national average. In contrast, for older learners, poorer pass rates have reduced success, while retention is above national rates. The college is making significant inroads in improving retention and, at the time of inspection, overall college retention for 2011/12 was 97%.

17. The extent of improvement in success rates varies considerably across subjects, course levels and age groups. All the subject areas directly inspected show at least satisfactory improvement and within those not inspected success rates are now particularly high in hairdressing and beauty therapy and are markedly improved, often to good levels, in construction and in catering and hospitality. Overall, for learners aged 16 to 18, success is poorest at advanced level, but is satisfactory for the significant number of foundation and intermediate level learners. In contrast, for learners aged 19 and over, the advanced level success rate is at the national average, with foundation and intermediate level courses performing less well.
18. The college analyses data well to identify any differences in the performance of learners. Analysis of success rates by the various equality categories shows no significant differences in the performance of learners.
19. Learners make good progress in improving their economic and social well-being. They are well motivated, well behaved and enjoy their studies. Their standards of work, and the skills they develop, are often good, especially in practical tasks. In engineering, they often work above expected standards and in art and design the standards of work are sometimes high. Learners make good progress on their courses, as in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and in art and design. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Learners' progression to further study and work is satisfactory overall, with 47% progressing within the college and 34% to employment and higher education. Progression is particularly good in visual and performing arts subjects.
20. Learners feel safe within the college and employ safe working practices. In a college survey, 93% felt that the college was a safe place to learn. Learners have good opportunities, through the college's curriculum and supporting activities, to help them make informed decisions about their health and well-being. Learners make a very good contribution to both the college and local communities. They organise and participate in many charitable, college and community events, including many involving catering, public services and hairdressing and beauty learners.

## **The quality of provision**

## **Grade 3**

21. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Inspectors found a significant and increasing element of good lessons, pockets of outstanding practice and a small

number of inadequate lessons. The college has found this significant variation for itself, both across and within subject areas.

22. Leaders and managers have evolved rigorous and systematic quality improvement arrangements for teaching and learning. These provide the college with a sound platform for further improvement and have started to pay dividends. In jointly observed lessons with college observers, inspectors found observers' judgements of strengths and areas for improvement, and likely lesson grades, to be reliable. Observation documentation directs observers towards learning and the effectiveness of the promotion of equality and diversity.
23. Support arrangements for teachers of satisfactory and inadequate lessons are well matched to needs, are systematic and are producing improvement. Learning mentors help teachers to improve professional practice. Managers monitor carefully actions for improvement arising from observations and link these to staff appraisal. The extent of positive impact from these activities varies, with more work to do to ensure that all learners have a consistently high-quality experience.
24. Teachers are enthusiastic and have productive working relationships with learners. They know their subjects well and often use their extensive industry experience well to support learning.
25. In the most effective lessons, teachers plan a wide range of activities well matched to the precisely-stated learning outcomes for the lesson and to learners' prior learning. Activities interest learners; they participate successfully, and are sufficiently challenged to allow them to make sound progress. Teachers make frequent and thorough checks on learning and extend learners' knowledge and understanding. Independent learning in visual and performing arts is well developed and learners benefit from reviewing their own and others' work. Teachers promote equality and diversity insufficiently in lessons and often miss opportunities for promotion. In work-based learning, progress reviews do not develop learners' understanding and application of equality and diversity sufficiently.
26. In less effective lessons, learning outcomes are often too broad and it is unclear which learners will attempt the more challenging outcomes. In many lessons, teachers' checks on learning are not frequent or thorough enough to assess learning and progress, or to focus discussion. Undirected questions allow more confident or vocal learners to dominate, whereas other learners' progress goes unchecked. Sometimes teachers talk too much, leaving learners inactive for long periods. Most teachers have detailed group profiles, providing useful information on learners' prior attainment and experience, needs and progress. Too few use this information effectively, or the college's comprehensive lesson planning documentation, to help meet the needs of all learners.

27. Most classrooms and workshops are equipped with interactive whiteboards or computer projection systems. Teachers use these appropriately for presentations and video clips, but they are seldom used by learners during lessons. Learners' use of the virtual learning environment (VLE) is developing, but is inconsistent across subject areas.
28. The assessment of learners' work is fair and thorough. Learners rightly value the constructive feedback on their work, helping them to improve, and the support of their teachers, freely given both in and outside lessons. The college identifies inconsistencies in the quality of target setting in individual learning plans which are reflected in inspectors' findings. The piloting of an electronic system is helping to improve target setting and progress monitoring. In work-based learning, progress reviews are too narrow, concentrating too much on the completion of individual units in the qualification.
29. Classrooms, studios, salons and workshops generally provide a satisfactory or better learning environment. Engineering workshops are well resourced, and salons in hairdressing and beauty therapy are well equipped, although they are in temporary buildings. However, facilities in music suffer from significant noise intrusion and in performing arts, learners work on concrete, non-sprung floors.
30. The college satisfactorily meets the needs and interests of users. It provides a suitable range of courses with progression routes through to higher education. The significantly increased apprenticeship provision meets the needs of employers particularly well. Adult provision includes help to improve literacy, numeracy and language skills. The college works well with a substantial number of young people aged 14 to 16. The decision to discontinue A-level provision, albeit reversed, has reduced enrolments with the legacy of very low numbers on some courses. Plans to widen provision, through collaboration with local schools, colleges and higher education, include additional A-level courses, programmes to re-engage disaffected young people and distance learning courses for the international market.
31. Learners benefit enormously from the excellent access to good-quality work experience. The college's target is that all learners aged 16 to 18 have work placements. Learners have good access to a range of wider activities to enrich their studies. On vocational courses these are particularly varied and relate well to core studies.
32. The college's partnerships are good. The college has built particularly effective links with prestigious employers that regularly provide work placements, and which sometimes lead to employment for learners. The college is represented on 14 to 19 partnerships at strategic and curriculum levels. Links with schools, college associations, local organisations that support unemployed people, ex-offenders and sector skills councils are all very well established.
33. The care, guidance and support of learners are good. The college's streamlined admissions service offers learners easy access to well-qualified and experienced

careers staff, learning support and information on finance and funding. Good ongoing support during learners' courses is readily available. Tutorials are effective.

34. Learners who need additional support services are well looked after. Specialist support includes the services of a mental health worker, a family psychotherapist and speech and language therapist. The college and local physical and sensory support team work well together to provide appropriate support for learners, and staff, when required.
35. Support staff regularly review learners' detailed learning support plans. Teachers and support workers know about, and utilise, specialist aids and adaptations. Recently revised tutorial arrangements very effectively focus on individual learners' progress and pastoral support needs.

## **Leadership and management**

## **Grade 3**

36. Leadership is strong. Senior leaders and governors, working with staff, have developed clear values and objectives which raise aspirations for learners and the college. Implementing them has re-energised staff, managers and governors, and benefited learners. After the previous inspection a period of stagnation and uncertainty followed. New senior managers have brought stability and an energetic and practical approach to identifying and tackling the problems faced by the college. With staff, they have developed robust new systems to set realistic targets, monitor progress and implement action plans. Success rates and retention have significantly improved.
37. Many curriculum and course leaders now have a stronger grasp of their roles and increased accountability, and staff morale has improved. Leadership and management in the visual and performing arts are good and satisfactory in other areas inspected. The college is well regarded by its partners.
38. Governance is satisfactory. The membership of the governing body has changed considerably over the last 18 months. External training has helped governors to better understand the further education context, the critical indicators of success and the way forward. They now provide more effective challenge to college managers, informed by their varied professional expertise. Governors now have confidence in the reliability of information they receive, including the robust learner data. They are keen to drive forward improvements and have a realistic grasp of the college's weaker aspects.
39. The college safeguards young learners and vulnerable adults well. It has provided appropriate training for all staff, volunteers and governors, including staff with child protection responsibilities. Managers ensure that appropriate recruitment checks, including criminal records checks, cover all personnel. Staff work closely with external agencies to support learners who require protection and safeguarding. The management of health and safety is satisfactory.

Publicity and tutorial materials for learners on personal safety and e-safety are good.

40. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The college has established clear priorities and processes to place equality and diversity at the centre of its work, and is making good progress in this. Learners, governors and most staff have participated in well-planned training. However, teachers do not promote equality and diversity sufficiently in lessons. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and looked after children, receive good support, and progress well, both on course and subsequently.
41. Satisfactory use is made of the views of users. Learners contribute their views through the college's student council, and a successful learners' conference took place in 2011. A student governor has been supported well in contributing to governors' meetings. However, the opportunities for learners to contribute to course reviews are insufficiently formalised and are inadequate in some subject areas. Employers appreciate the good communications with the college. For work-based learning, the college is developing ways of improving further the collection of employers' and learners' views.
42. Self-assessment is satisfactory. Improved quality assurance gives greater responsibility to course and curriculum leaders for setting targets, and for monitoring progress more rigorously and regularly. This new emphasis has led to improvements in the curriculum and in success rates and retention. However, not all course teams are yet proficient in self-evaluation. Curriculum area self-assessment reports identify some, but not all, areas for improvement noted by inspectors. Staff's access to, understanding and use of data at all levels are much improved. The revised process for the observation of teaching and learning has improved the quality of lessons since the last inspection.
43. The college provides satisfactory value for money. Its financial health is satisfactory. Senior leaders and governors have recognised previous weaknesses in financial management. New managers are taking appropriate steps to tackle these, leading to improvements in financial health and control. The improving outcomes for learners are increasing value for money. The college has identified weaknesses in its infrastructure, which are legacies from an earlier period. Senior leaders have made progress in tackling all of these, through development projects, effectively managed, within planned timescales.

## Subject areas

### Engineering and manufacturing technologies

### Grade 3

#### Context

44. Currently, 578 learners attend a range of engineering courses from entry to advanced levels. Three progression routes are available, providing courses in motor vehicle engineering, aerospace engineering and in manufacturing technologies. In addition to the 360 full-time learners aged 16 to 18 and the 60 aged 19 and over, there are a 90 school pupils aged 14 to 16 and 68 work-based learning apprentices.

#### Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. The development of learners' skills and their standards of work are good. Learners sometimes demonstrate skills above the level expected for their courses. Advanced level motor sport learners designed, manufactured and fitted suspension parts to a track race car to high standards, to improve its road-holding characteristics for live racing at Silverstone.
- Apprentices' progress is good, with many ahead of target. Apprentices develop good skills and job knowledge and in many cases have taken on more responsibility at work as a result of their studies.
- Success rates were low on most courses in 2009/10, but many improved in 2010/11. They are high on the foundation certificate in engineering and around national averages for foundation vehicle maintenance, intermediate diploma in engineering and advanced manufacturing, vehicle technology, and aerospace diplomas. Overall success rates for work-based learners were low in 2010/11, but good for advanced apprentices. Outcomes for learners aged 14 to 16 are good.
- A highly effective work experience programme for the majority of full-time learners enhances their understanding of industry and supports skills development. This improves learners' progression and learners gain employment or apprenticeships as a result. All of the learners on a programme sponsored by a significant aerospace employer obtained employment.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Practical teaching is often good. Most theory lessons are satisfactory. Teachers use a range of resources to maintain learners' interest, including information and learning technologies (ILT), and their industrial experience is used well to enhance learning. In a minority of lessons, learners are insufficiently motivated or involved. Teachers talk too much and miss opportunities to engage learners through weak questioning techniques.
- Assessment of learners' work and progress is appropriate. Learners' marked work occasionally lacks detailed feedback to enable the learner to progress

effectively. Targets set for apprentices lack detail and do not always incorporate both the workplace and college aspects of their work. Employers are not always sufficiently involved in the reviews of their employees' work.

- The range of courses is satisfactory and relevant to learners' career and employment goals. Progression opportunities onto advanced level courses and apprenticeship programmes are promoted well. Learners understand their options and make good progress into further study or employment.
- Learners feel very safe in college and on work placements. Teachers ensure that all learners use safe working practices in practical lessons and in the workplace.
- Good industrial links and partnerships, with major and prestigious local companies, have resulted in the significant sponsorship and support of courses. This has improved curriculum development, to meet the needs of learners and employers. One key employer has jointly designed a course, with the college, to meet the needs of their industry.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. A new management team has placed the improvement of success rates at the centre of teachers' work, with a clear improvement plan in place. At the moment, however, the course review process is insufficiently rigorous and does not suitably address key issues such as teaching and learning and using the views of learners.
- Equality and diversity are covered in tutorials, but teachers do not plan opportunities to promote diversity in their lessons. Managers have not analysed learners' performance for achievement gaps and this is not addressed in the self-assessment report. For apprentices, equality and diversity are covered at induction. Their understanding is satisfactory, but not suitably reinforced at reviews.
- Resources for learning are good and in some areas outstanding. All equipment meets current industry standards and some is better. For example, the aerospace workshop houses a fully operational aeroplane. Some classrooms have out-of-date fixed-bench layout that hinders innovative teaching and learning.

### **What does Brooklands College need to do to improve further?**

- Improve success rates overall by increasing the amount of good or better teaching and learning in lessons across all courses, building on the good practice demonstrated on some courses and in practical sessions.
- Build on the existing work to improve the quality of provision, by further developing teachers' understanding of the need to implement the course review process rigorously and by raising the profile of teaching and learning in self - assessment.
- Improve learners' understanding of the importance of equality and diversity by ensuring that teachers and trainers review and reinforce its promotion in lessons, and that they are suitably trained to do so.



## Visual and performing arts and music technology

## Grade 2

### Context

45. Fifteen full-time courses are provided across a range of vocational subjects, from foundation to advanced levels. All courses are located at the college's Weybridge site. At the time of inspection, 409 learners were enrolled, with 244 studying creative and visual arts, 77 performing arts and 88 music. Learners are almost equally split between females and males. Some 14% of learners are of minority ethnic heritage.

### Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Learners' work is of a good standard with high-quality work often seen across all disciplines. Learners are encouraged to work in a professional way, conceiving, researching and designing ambitious projects. These fully meet assessment criteria and result in high-quality final pieces of creative industry standard. Progression from intermediate and advanced level courses, to higher education and employment, is good.
- Success rates for learners in art and design and performing arts have been historically poor. They improved during 2010/11 to around the national averages. The proportion of distinctions and merits achieved within units has risen significantly. Success rates for music have remained significantly above the national averages. Current learners are making good progress and unit achievement is good.
- Learners feel safe in the college. Most courses embed subject and studio-specific health and safety practices within their classroom management. Health and well-being discussions, related to subjects studied, are included within tutorials and, where applicable, teachers cover independent living skills within courses for more vulnerable learners
- Teaching and learning are predominantly good. Teachers are, in the main, practicing professionals with subject-specific expertise. They share their experiences with learners, motivating them to strive for distinctions within their qualifications. Most teachers have a full understanding of their learners' individual needs and learning styles, using their knowledge to teach their learners in the most productive way.
- The assessment of learners' work helps to promote their achievement. Individual learner targets are actively discussed and reviewed within lessons. Feedback on learners' work enables them to improve and teachers' assessments against qualification criteria are accurate. However, all of this good work is not supported by consistently applied internal verification of standards.
- Resources for art and design are good and excellent use is made of the 'atrium' for exhibitions and celebration of learners' work. However, resources for performing arts and music are poor and do not meet industry standards. ILT is used well in lessons. Visits to galleries and events take place within courses and

as independent study. Art and design and music technicians support learning well.

- Learners' interests are well met, with a comprehensive range of creative opportunities, at all levels, provided by carefully-chosen units within the qualifications. These provide a good choice of disciplines for learners to explore, with a solid foundation in their chosen subject area, enabling them to make informed choices for progression and further learning or employment.
- Engagement with community partners is satisfactory. They provide work experience opportunities for learners, including for learners to demonstrate their newly-acquired skills. Art and design and music projects, often engaging with the world of work, valuably introduce learners to their professional worlds outside of college.
- Support for learners is good. Tutorials include good target setting and monitoring of learners' progress and opportunities to explore healthy and independent living choices. Good additional learning support is provided within lessons and through independent access for advanced level learners. Learners follow functional skills and GCSE English and mathematics courses where initial assessment identifies the need.
- Curriculum management is good and focused on improving success rates and the quality of provision. The new management team is supported well by cross-college initiatives and ensures that teachers are fully involved. Staff understand their role in driving forward quality improvement. The new termly quality improvement review has generated a positive focus for improvement.
- Safeguarding of learners is satisfactory with more vulnerable learners supported well. Staff are trained and are clear about their responsibilities. Equality and diversity are satisfactorily promoted, with an emphasis on diversity in lessons and through resources. Analysis by the area shows that there are no achievement gaps in relation to achievement or success for different groups of learners.
- Learners' views are valued and are used to inform the self-assessment process and curriculum planning. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate in its evidence and judgements and the resulting quality improvement plans are used well to promote improvement.

### **What does Brooklands College need to do to improve further?**

- Review the use of the poor performing arts and music accommodation, working towards its improvement or replacement, to ensure industry standard spaces are available for all learners.
- Ensure that the good practices demonstrated in assessment and review of learners' progress are secure, and improved further, through the operation of rigorous internal verification.

## Science and mathematics

## Grade 3

### Context

46. The area offers GCSE mathematics and science and A-level, mathematics, physics, biology, chemistry and psychology. In the current year, an extended diploma in forensic science and an apprenticeship programme in applied science were introduced. Of the 364 learners, around 40% study sciences. Some 70% of all learners are aged 16 to 18, 45% are female and 27% are of minority ethnic heritage.

### Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Success rates rose significantly in 2010/11, to be broadly in line with the national average overall. While learners in GCE AS- and A-level psychology performed well, results in other subjects at these levels were mixed. All learners passed A-level biology and mathematics, but numbers were very small. Pass rates continue to be low for all the AS sciences.
- Attainment and progress are satisfactory and improving. The standard of work in AS sciences and mathematics indicates that most learners are achieving well. Current retention is good and attendance satisfactory. High grade passes in GCSE science are above national average but low, and declining, for GCSE mathematics. All learners feel safe and work safely. Health and safety practices are appropriate.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In better lessons, teachers provide a stimulating range of activities to interest and motivate learners. In both sciences and mathematics, good use is made of models, practical and group work to tackle problem solving and to encourage independent thinking. Clear explanations are provided and learners appreciate the support they receive from their teachers in class.
- Too many lessons lack variety and challenge for the more able learners. Teachers' questioning is frequently ineffective in checking the learning of all and in stimulating discussion. There is little use of ILT by learners in lessons and variable use of the college's virtual learning environment.
- The quality of assessment is much improved and is satisfactory. Across all subjects, frequent homework is marked quickly and provides learners with constructive written and oral feedback to help them improve. Some completed coursework for the forensic science course lacks teachers' summary feedback which would be helpful to learners.
- The needs of learners are satisfactorily met by an expanding provision, now including a vocational course, which has enrolled well. A much improved learner selection procedure helps ensure that learners are on the right course, including tighter entry requirements, interviewing by subject specialists and an induction programme, incorporating taster sessions.

- Learners take part in a number of visits to contextualise their learning. The psychology learners visit Auschwitz, while the physics and mathematics learners study motion at Thorpe Park. There are also visits to workshops at local universities and to science exhibitions. The forensic science course has regular visits from a fire investigator and forensic photographer.
- Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Learners are well looked after. Learners at risk of underachieving are allocated mentors who are undergraduates from local universities. This has resulted in improved achievement.
- Effective monitoring of learners' progress was recently introduced. Learners' predicted pass grades, based on performance in homework and progress tests, are compared to their expected grades, based on their previous attainment, and are monitored regularly in individual meetings with tutors. All learners have individual learner plans, updated by tutors, but learners' targets and actions for improvement are insufficiently detailed and challenging.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Management actions and processes, including setting challenging targets for the performance of each qualification and closer monitoring of progress, are having a positive impact. New teachers for all the science subjects are contributing well. The self-assessment report is reasonably accurate and evaluative. Most of its findings are appropriate, but not all key areas for development are identified.
- Quality reviews at course level are insufficiently rigorous. Quality improvement plans are too generic. Although course improvement targets are sound and driving improvement, teachers are not yet sufficiently involved in their development and the views of learners are insufficiently noted. The implementation of actions to improve teaching and learning, including some development needs identified through the college's observation process, has been slow.
- Resources to support learning are satisfactory. Laboratories are adequate and well supported by two technicians. Teachers are all fully trained and appropriately qualified. Staff development is good and teaching and learning mentors provide good support.

### **What does Brooklands College need to do to improve further?**

- Improve learners' success rates through the further development of quality review and improvement. Building on the productive work of managers, fully involve teachers in the development of actions for improvement and targets, and their monitoring, to ensure more rigorous course-level self-assessment.
- Improve teaching and learning by building on the good practice evident in better lessons. Act promptly on the actions to improve identified in the college's programme for the observation of teaching and learning.
- Raise the aspirations of all learners and enable them to reach their full potential, by ensuring that the monitoring of their progress is reflected in their personal learning plans. Goals and targets must be specific, measurable and regularly monitored and reviewed in conjunction with teachers.

## Literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages

## Grade 3

### Context

47. Approximately 450 learners are enrolled on courses for literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). Courses consist of two or three hours a week, over thirty-four weeks. Of the learners, 55% attend ESOL, 25% literacy and 20% numeracy classes. Apart from twenty learners aged 16 to 18, all are adult learners. Some 25% are male, 73% are from minority ethnic heritage and 14% have a disability. All learners have the opportunity to take nationally accredited qualifications from entry to intermediate level. Courses are provided at the two main college campuses and at eight outreach centres.

### Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Learners develop relevant knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, learners learn language for negotiation, fill in forms and measure volume. Their work is of a good standard and attendance is good. Many intend to rejoin the work force once they have improved their literacy, numeracy and language skills. Learners enjoy their learning and the social contact it brings. Progression within courses is good for learners of ESOL. Learners feel safe in the college.
- Success and pass rates have been low in the previous three academic years, apart from ESOL intermediate level, where they have been high. Success rates have fluctuated wildly over time. For example, for ESOL entry 2, they were 77% in 2008/09, 47% in 2009/10 and 69% in 2010/11. By contrast, functional skills success rates were good for mathematics and satisfactory for English and in 2010/11.
- Retention rates have been stable, and high in the last three academic years, for example 90% for numeracy. Retention for the whole area of learning was very high at 99% at the time of inspection.
- The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although inspectors saw a significant proportion of lessons where teaching and learning were good. Lessons consist of useful sequences of activities, the pace of learning is good and lessons are lively. Learners have good opportunities to learn new skills as well as extend their existing skills through good reinforcement. Teachers are appropriately skilled and qualified.
- Lesson topics and activities match the needs and interests of the learners well. For example, young learners learn to apply skills in mathematics in real life contexts. In a minority of lessons, the range of learners' skills is too wide for the teacher to meet all their needs. The total number of tuition hours for ESOL learners is insufficient for some of them to achieve their targets.
- The outcomes of the assessment of learners' skills and development needs are insufficiently well used by teachers to set targets and plan learning. In

particular, more able learners are insufficiently stretched. The college has acknowledged this aspect as an area for development in its self-assessment report.

- The quality of teachers' feedback on learners' use of spoken language in lessons is too inconsistent, especially in lessons for literacy and numeracy where a significant proportion of learners do not have English as their first language.
- Partnerships are good. The college works with a variety of schools, the youth service and employers to deliver literacy and numeracy provision. The care, guidance and support of learners are satisfactory. Arrangements for tutorials are satisfactory and learners have good access to careers advice, which they use.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. A new head of department has successfully introduced recent improvement initiatives which have raised expectations well. Teachers are actively involved in the improvement process and morale is high. While it is too soon to see the full impact of measures taken on outcomes for learners, the increase in learners' retention suggests their positive impact.
- The quality improvement plan identifies areas for development well, with clear and measurable targets. The teaching team uses the plan actively to help bring about improvement. The analysis of learner surveys is particularly effective and demonstrates good action taken to improve delivery. The overall self-assessment report lacks sufficient analysis of performance.
- The college's scheme to observe teaching and learning is satisfactory. The action plans resulting from observations are well analysed and inform a comprehensive staff training programme. However, the focus of the observations is too heavily on teaching rather than learning and too many reports lack a description of what was learned and a judgement on the quality of the learning experience.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is embedded in the provision and is satisfactory. The promotion of safeguarding to learners is satisfactory.

### **What does Brooklands College need to do to improve further?**

- Use the outcomes of assessment more effectively to help plan learning, set targets and monitor progress, in order to raise the quality of whole-group and individual learning.
- Develop the skills and understanding of teachers of literacy and numeracy to support learners whose first language is not English, in order to improve teaching and learning and outcomes for learners.
- Review programmes of learning to make sure that they fully meet the needs of all learners and allow them sufficient time to achieve their targets.

## Information about the inspection

46. Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's Deputy Principal, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding bodies, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
47. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of learners and employers. They also looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed for the provider. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

**Record of Main Findings (RMF)**  
**Brooklands College**  
**Learning types: 14 – 16:** Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades <b>using the 4 point scale</b> 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
<b>Approximate number of enrolled learners</b>	2,521	0	1,870	188	463
Full-time learners					
Part-time learners	4,588	392	484	1,191	0
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	3				
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	4				
How well do learners progress?	3				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2				
How safe do learners feel?	2				
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	2				
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2				
<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	3				
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2				
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2				
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2				
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	3				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3				
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3				
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3				

\*where applicable to the type of provision



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