

Lambeth College

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 385343

Name of lead inspector: Lynda Cole HMI

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Type of provider: General further education college

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London
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Information about the provider

1. Lambeth College is a large general further education college in the London borough of Lambeth with a wide choice of study options. It has two main centres in Clapham and Vauxhall and a smaller centre close to Brixton. The sixth form centre opened in Clapham in June 2009.
2. Lambeth is a large and diverse borough with significant proportions of its residents from minority ethnic groups. The college recruits well in these groups, with a high proportion of students coming from minority ethnic backgrounds; the two largest minority groups are Black Caribbean and Black African. These proportions are much higher than those in the local population. Around half of the college's students travel to the college from within the borough. Whilst employment rates in Lambeth are slightly higher than those across the rest of London, the borough is ranked in the bottom quarter of deprivation of local authorities in England. For students aged 16 to 18, prior attainment at GCSE on entry to the college is slightly lower than the national average.
3. The majority of the college's students are aged 19 or over, with roughly the same proportion of students studying at all levels from entry level through to advanced level. Most are studying part time. The smaller proportion of students aged 16 to 18 are mainly on full-time courses, with most studying at intermediate and advanced levels.
4. The inspection took into account all of the provision offered by the college. Provision in construction, humanities and social sciences, independent living and leisure skills, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and business administration and law was inspected in depth.
5. The college provides training on behalf of the following providers:
 - London Borough of Lambeth
 - London South Bank University
 - De Montfort University
 - Canterbury Christchurch University
 - CSkills.
6. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the college:
 - TBG Learning (ESOL, retail, IT, literacy, numeracy, PC maintenance, life and living skills)
 - Dawcliffe Hall (Baytree) (ESOL, IT)
 - Response Security Training (security and customer services)
 - Street League (personal and social development (NEETs))
 - Alandale (logistics, waste management)

- QTS (heating and ventilation, construction site ventilation, electro-technical services)
- Centrepoint (Camberwell Foyer) (personal and social development (NEETs)).

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
Provision for young learners: 14 to 16 Further education (16 to 18) Foundation learning	205 part-time learners 230 part-time learners 1,672 full-time learners 194 part-time learners 694 full-time learners
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	2,607 full-time learners 4,785 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	842 learners 102 apprentices
Adult and community learning	1,837 part-time learners

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 4
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Capacity to improve	Grade 4
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	Grade
Outcomes for learners	4
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	4
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3

Subject Areas	
Construction	3
Humanities and social sciences	4
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	2
Independent living and leisure skills	2
Business administration and law	4

Overall effectiveness

7. Recently appointed senior managers have taken firm actions to tackle underperformance and introduced a raft of well-considered new procedures and processes. Whilst many of these are showing some early signs of having an impact, it is too early to see the overall impact on the quality of teaching and learning and standards. Since the last inspection, improvements to students' achievements have halted and overall the proportion of students who successfully complete their qualifications has declined on most provision. Where achievements did improve, they did not keep up with those at similar colleges. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and too much is no better than this. Teachers are not planning carefully enough to make sure that students with differing abilities make equally rapid progress. Too many staff do not support students consistently or routinely by setting precise and detailed targets to help them improve their work and stay on track. Students' punctuality and attendance are not good enough.

8. The college has used its good partnerships to develop flexible provision to benefit the local community. Many of these are used well to enable students to gain good skills in readiness for work. The college population is culturally and ethnically diverse and managers have successfully created a culture of respect and tolerance. The college's safeguarding arrangements are strong and students feel safe around the campuses. The college has identified accurately the differences in performance between various groups and has reduced some of these considerably.
9. Managers have a realistic view of performance overall and inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that outcomes are inadequate. However, the college does not yet evaluate the quality of its own performance with sufficient accuracy or detail. Self-assessment processes have not identified clearly enough issues relating to other aspects of provision.

Main findings

- Not enough students complete their qualifications successfully, as the college recognises in its self-assessment. Too many leave their courses early and not enough of those who stay until the end pass their qualifications with the grades they are capable of achieving.
- Over the last three years, the proportion of students who successfully complete their courses has fluctuated with few clear trends of improvement. Broadly, success rates across provision on long courses have declined over the last three years to well below the national average. Where a few success rates have improved, many of these have not kept pace with rising national trends. Students' achievements on functional skills are low.
- The standard of students' work is satisfactory. In a few subjects students achieve very well and gain skills that equip them effectively for employment and/or progression to further study including higher education.
- Teaching, training and assessment are satisfactory, as identified in the college's self-assessment. Teaching across the college's subject areas varies too much in quality and there are too few lessons in which students make rapid progress. Most teachers do not make good use of the information on students' profiles when planning their lessons.
- Teachers pay great attention to improving students' confidence and self-esteem. Often their care and attention have enabled students to overcome significant personal and socio-economic difficulties and achieve success. However, in other cases teachers do not have high enough aspirations for their students, and do not set high enough standards in the classroom. Students' poor punctuality and attendance prevent students from learning effectively.
- The college provides a particularly broad curriculum with clear progression routes from adult and community provision to foundation degrees. However, as recognised by the college, provision for 16- to 18-year-olds offered through the

sixth form centre is not meeting students' needs well enough as too many students on advanced courses drop out before completing their courses.

- The college's productive partnerships encompass a wide range of organisations from large employers to small charities. The college is closely involved in local strategic planning for education and workforce development. It is flexible and innovative in meeting the education and training needs of organisations promoting employment, and other specialist providers. Students with disabilities benefit particularly from effective collaboration with special schools, voluntary organisations and the National Health Service.
- Guidance and support for learners are inadequate. Managers have improved arrangements to ensure students are on the right course and have good support during their courses including closer monitoring and intervention. However, these new systems and procedures have not succeeded yet in ensuring that students achieve their learning goals well.
- Staff do not set sufficiently detailed or specific targets for students to know how to improve their work, and as a result they fall behind. Despite some recent good intervention from staff with designated roles as coaches and mentors, these measures have not yet had a significant impact on students' retention overall and attendance remains too low.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. Senior leaders and governors have not secured sufficient improvements in students' achievement since the last inspection. Quality assurance and self-assessment systems have not been sufficiently rigorous or applied consistently enough to secure sustained improvements.
- Governors have lacked sufficiently detailed and timely information to enable them to monitor performance and challenge senior managers effectively. Performance targets in the strategic plan are not sufficiently ambitious to raise standards significantly.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Students feel valued and speak positively of the well-established culture of tolerance and respect in the college. However, the effective promotion of diversity within subject areas varies considerably, from outstanding in ESOL to inadequate in business and construction. The college safeguards its learners well. Students feel safe in and around college centres.

What does Lambeth College need to do to improve further?

- Improve students' outcomes and raise standards by a thorough review of enrolment procedures so that students are placed correctly on the most appropriate courses. Ensure that recently strengthened procedures for close monitoring of students' progress are applied thoroughly. Intervene promptly for those identified as at risk of leaving or underachieving.
- Improve the standard of teaching and learning by ensuring that all teachers provide challenging tasks and activities which enable students to raise their expectations and make sustained progress.

- Develop greater consistency in the ability of all staff to set and monitor targets in individual learning plans, so that students improve their performance and do not fall behind in their studies.
- Ensure that the promotion of equality and diversity forms an integral part of lessons and progress reviews in order to broaden students' understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society.
- Ensure that governors receive detailed and timely information on key performance measures and indicators, including national averages, to enable the board to monitor the college's performance effectively and provide appropriate challenge and direction.
- Ensure that the underlying reasons for weaker performance are accurately identified through self-assessment, including analysis of the quality of teaching, and that quality improvement plans detail specifically what needs to improve and how this is to be achieved.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the way that good teachers give feedback that helps them to achieve
- feeling safe and knowing where to seek help
- gaining useful skills that help them to get good jobs
- the good support they receive from skills coaches
- the welcoming and inclusive college environment
- enjoying the courses they take
- taking part in exciting projects that raise their aspirations.

What learners would like to see improved:

- some of the outdated buildings, facilities and equipment
- the opportunities to do practical work relevant to the workplace
- the poor way some teachers explain activities and tasks during lessons
- the quality and quantity of advice and guidance about how to improve their work
- the quality and detail of feedback provided by the college about its response to learners' concerns
- the variety and range of food in the canteens at Clapham and Vauxhall.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the very good relationships they enjoy with the college
- the flexible way that assessors support apprentices

- the way the college plans programmes to meet business demands including for specialised provision
- the way staff help students to achieve
- the high-quality training which develops their staff.

What employers would like to see improved:

- the level of detail in the information about the scheme of work so that they can coordinate on- and off-the-job training better
- the detail and timeliness of information they receive about their employees' attendance and punctuality
- the feedback they receive on employees' progress, with more face-to-face meetings
- the number and availability of places on NVQ programmes.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 4

10. The college does not have a track record of sustained improvement. At the last inspection success rates on long courses were broadly in line with national averages. Modest improvements in success rates up to 2009/10 did not keep pace with national rates of improvement. The decline in success rates in 2010/11 means that overall success rates on long courses have fallen to well below national averages. Quality assurance systems, including self-assessment, were not effective in alerting senior leaders and governors to this underachievement soon enough to take sufficient corrective action. Despite recent improvements in these systems, and some improvement in retention rates compared to a similar time last year, it is too early to determine that this will result in sustained improvement. While governors are improving their oversight of the college, performance targets set for the next few years are not sufficiently ambitious. Although middle managers are increasingly accountable for the performance of their areas, the quality and effectiveness of curriculum management remain variable.
11. The college has not made sufficient progress in the key areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Success rates for students aged 16 to 18 on long advanced-level courses have declined over the last three years and are now well below average. Success rates for adults on foundation-level courses have improved only slightly and remain below national averages. Attendance rates are still too low and on some courses are very low. Increasing the proportion of good and better lessons remains a key priority.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 4

12. Since 2008/9 success rates have fluctuated with few clear trends of improvement. In 2010/11 improvement halted and rates on most provision declined. In comparison with other similar general further education colleges, success rates overall are amongst the lowest in the country. Where success rates did not decline, for example on short-course provision, A level and adult provision at intermediate and advanced levels, they mostly did not keep pace with the rising national rate. Generally, retention rates show a greater decline than pass rates. However, both pass and retention rates are below the national average, except for the small amount of short provision where retention rates are broadly around the national average. In 2010/11 retention was below the national average for students aged 16 to 18 at intermediate and advanced level, and for adults at advanced level. The college recognises the shortcomings in outcomes for learners.
13. Students' achievements on A-level provision for both age groups have improved and are broadly satisfactory. In science subjects at A-level students are making good progress. However, achievements on advanced-level vocational courses are particularly poor with success rates well below the national average in

2010/11. On AS-level courses success rates for students aged 16 to 18 have declined significantly and are 20 percentage points below the national average overall. Success rates on functional skills qualifications are inadequate and well below the national average. Outcomes for adults studying literacy and numeracy qualifications are also very low.

14. The picture of performance of different groups shows that there is little difference between students of all ages and different ethnic backgrounds. However, overall male students aged 16 to 18 perform slightly better than female students.
15. Pass rates at grades A* to C on the small amount of GCSE provision are poor, particularly in English and mathematics where not enough students complete their qualifications. Those who do stay and complete achieve at a satisfactory level. Attendance is satisfactory, and although improved slightly, this hides the significant variation and pockets of poor attendance in many curriculum areas. Punctuality is also poor with too many students arriving late for lessons.
16. Standards of students' work are satisfactory overall, but vary across provision. On some courses, for example ESOL and independent living skills, students gain employability skills that effectively help them gain employment. Construction apprentices produce high standards of work on prestigious projects. Progression to higher education is broadly satisfactory with more 16- to 18-year-olds choosing to apply and being successful in their application to university in 2011 than in previous years. However, on too many courses students do not produce work of a high enough standard.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

17. Teaching, training and assessment are satisfactory, as identified by the college. Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment for 2010/11 that its own observers significantly overstated the quality of teaching and learning observed. Teaching across the college's curriculum areas varies too much in quality and there are too few lessons in which students make rapid progress, or which inspire students and raise their aspirations. Results of initial advice and guidance and information gathered at interviews have been used effectively to produce profiles for students. Most teachers do not make good use of this information when planning and giving their lessons. Teachers pay great attention to improving students' confidence and self-esteem and are mostly encouraging and supportive. In many cases their care and attention have enabled students to overcome significant personal and socio-economic difficulties and achieve success. However, in other cases teachers do not have high enough aspirations for their students, make incorrect assumptions about their potential and do not set high enough standards in lessons. Students' poor punctuality and attendance prevent them from learning effectively.
18. Where teaching is consistently good, for example ESOL, teachers plan a range of activities and use good learning materials to ensure that all students

contribute and make swift progress. The less successful lessons lack pace and challenge so that students lose interest and motivation. These lessons are characterised by a poor choice of activities, poor management of learning and weak responses to students' contributions. Teachers do not always develop students' skills in analytical and critical thinking sufficiently to allow them to reach their academic potential.

19. Teachers do not always use information and learning technology (ILT) well. The college's virtual learning environment (VLE) is valued by students, particularly adult students. However, while some subject areas have recognised this benefit and exploited the VLE's potential well by populating it with useful materials, in other subjects there is little or no related content. Generally, practical resources are satisfactory but a few teaching areas in construction and beauty therapy are outdated and do not reflect current industry standards.
20. Assessment is generally satisfactory but written feedback ranges from extremely full and detailed notes, including thorough correction of the student's spelling and grammar, to cursory ticks and generic comments.
21. The college has not ensured that all teachers promote equality and diversity effectively during lessons. Whilst some teachers do this well and take advantage of opportunities to widen and develop students' understanding, others lack the confidence to pursue themes around diversity which occur during lessons.
22. The college has a broad curriculum with progression routes from first steps to foundation degrees. Adults often start with non-accredited courses in community venues and progress into more advanced courses. However, as recognised by the college, provision for students aged 16 to 18 in the sixth form centre has not yet met students' needs well enough. Employers appreciate the flexible and responsive way the college tailors the small amount of work-based learning programmes to meet commercial pressures. The college collaborates effectively with voluntary organisations running projects developing employability skills for disengaged young people, unemployed adults and people with disabilities. Aspirational projects with high profile partners broaden horizons for small groups of students, for instance through university visits, mentoring from high profile professionals, or internships in the City. Students have access to a wide range of enrichment but take-up of some activities is low.
23. Work with partner organisations is beneficial. The college has productive relationships with a wide range of public bodies, large employers and small voluntary sector organisations. Its long-standing relationship with the council has strengthened in recent years to improve strategic planning for local education and workforce development. The college works very flexibly with organisations promoting employment such as Jobcentre Plus and Step Ahead. The local youth unemployment rate is exceptionally low. Partners say the college listens to them and is highly responsive. Providers of specialised provision appreciate the college's innovative approach. Good local links with

special schools and the voluntary sector ensure a smooth transition into and out of the college for people with complex needs.

24. Guidance and support are inadequate. Although managers have revised many aspects of support, including improving the consistency and coherence of its admissions criteria, many aspects are very new and have not had time to make an impact on students' outcomes yet. The college recognises that although systems to monitor students at risk of leaving have improved, thresholds for action are too high. Closer and more responsive intervention by teachers and tutors is still needed to ensure students achieve their learning goals. Managers have developed the electronic monitoring system well to coordinate all the targets that tutors and support staff set for students on accessible individual learning plans. However, too many targets are insufficiently clear or measurable and, as a result, students do not know how to improve their work, and fall behind. Although staff with designated coaching roles work effectively, mentoring and supporting 'at risk' students, this intervention is yet to have any significant impact on retention rates overall and attendance remains too low.

Leadership and management

Grade 4

25. Senior leaders and governors have not been successful in securing sustained improvements in students' achievements since the last inspection. In recent years, the college has experienced significant changes in senior leadership and a period of uncertainty about a possible merger with other colleges and the redevelopment of college accommodation. During this time there was insufficient oversight and monitoring of students' performance, and success rates declined to well below average in 2011.
26. The recently appointed acting Principal, acting vice-principal for curriculum and quality and senior managers have worked unstintingly to strengthen quality assurance and monitoring arrangements, which have improved markedly in recent months. While there are some modest increases in current attendance and retention rates, these vary significantly between different courses and it is too early to determine that revised systems are leading to sustained and consistent improvements. Middle managers support senior leaders' drive for improvement and are becoming more skilled and confident in using data to monitor course level performance. However, the effectiveness of curriculum management is not yet consistent across the college.
27. Governors demonstrate strong commitment to their roles in supporting the work of the college and many bring relevant expertise which provides valuable advice and guidance to senior managers. However, governors have lacked sufficiently detailed and timely information to monitor college performance and challenge senior managers effectively. Governors have very recently established a performance review group to focus on key performance indicators and the effectiveness of actions for improvement, but it is too early to see the impact of this initiative. Governors are involved in annual strategic planning, but the

- performance targets they set in discussion with managers are not sufficiently ambitious to raise standards significantly.
28. The college safeguards its learners well. The college places a high priority on ensuring that students feel safe in and around college centres. Students value the increased presence of police and security staff and the steps that college staff take to ensure that they stay safe in college and in the local area. The college conducts the required checks on all staff, volunteers and governors, including criminal records checks where appropriate.
 29. Staff and governors have received relevant training, and students and staff know how to report any concerns. The designated officer and other managers with responsibility for safeguarding are meticulous in following up reported incidents or concerns and monitoring outcomes for these students.
 30. The college attracts students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Students feel valued and speak positively of the well-established culture of tolerance and respect in the college. Managers promote social inclusion very well and encourage widespread celebration of social, cultural and ethnic diversity through induction, tutorials and different events through the year. Despite recent staff training, the effective promotion of equality and diversity is not consistently well developed in all subject areas. Managers monitor the performance of different groups of learners and accurately identify any differentials in performance between them. The college acknowledges that younger students generally achieve less well than adults. While younger female students still achieve less well than their male counterparts, the college has reduced this difference considerably in 2010/2011.
 31. Student representatives feel that the college takes students' views seriously and responds positively to their concerns or suggestions for improvement. Regular meetings provide course representatives with good opportunities to raise issues, and a clear mechanism to receive feedback on actions taken. The college is seeking new ways to ensure information reaches all students. Employers speak positively about how well the college responds to their concerns, although a few indicate they would welcome more face-to-face contact with college staff.
 32. Managers at all levels acknowledge that quality assurance systems have not been sufficiently robust or consistently implemented in recent years to secure sustained improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and students' achievements. The college recognised that the lesson observation scheme did not provide a sufficiently critical or accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning, but it has taken several years to devise and implement fully a revised scheme. Lesson observations are beginning to provide useful and broadly accurate information and judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. Managers recognise the need to strengthen moderation arrangements further and analyse the strengths and areas for improvement in more detail, to share good practice and support further improvement.

33. While the quality of curriculum area self-assessment reports has improved markedly this year, managers do not analyse clearly enough the underlying reasons for weaker performance, or the quality of teaching and its impact on students' learning and achievement. Actions in the quality improvement plans are often too generic and lack detail about exactly what needs improvement and how this is to be achieved. Monitoring of action plans focuses too much on whether actions have been completed and not enough on the impact of those actions in securing the required improvement.

34. The college provides satisfactory value for money. The college manages its finances and resources effectively. Most accommodation is at least satisfactory and the recently developed sixth form centre provides a very good learning environment. Most staff are well qualified and with good relevant vocational experience. However, inadequate outcomes for students reduce value for money overall.

Subject areas

Building and construction

Grade 3

Context

35. Currently 774 students study on a range of construction courses at foundation, intermediate and advanced level, both full and part time, including 127 aged 16 to 18. Well over half of all students are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Work-based learning is provided to 49 apprentices, mainly in plumbing and maintenance operations. The college also has a small number of school pupils on 14 to 16 programmes.

Key findings

- Outcomes for students are satisfactory overall. Pass rates are high across all courses. Success rates for adult learners have remained around the national average. Success rates are good on the level 1 diploma in site brickwork, level 3 diploma in painting and decorating and level 3 diploma in bench joinery. However, not enough students aged 16 to 18 stay to complete their courses and as a result success rates are low for this cohort.
- The standard of students' work is satisfactory. Students are developing appropriate skills and are enthusiastic and eager to learn. Apprentices work well on prestigious developments such as renovation work and for West End theatres and shows. For example, an apprentice produced a high standard of plastering on a ceiling in a confined space. However, not all students' standards of finished joinery are as high as they should be.
- Students feel safe in college. The college has taken strong security measures at the Vauxhall centre and students value the opportunity to speak to specialist staff about any safety concerns. Students comply with the requirements for workshop safety by wearing the appropriate personal, protective equipment. Students' behaviour is good. Students respect their tutors and each other.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good teaching is characterised by careful planning with teachers using their professional knowledge to motivate and engage students well, breaking down the individual tasks into easy-to-understand parts and thus enabling students to learn quickly and make good progress.
- However, too much teaching is no better than satisfactory. Teachers spend too long talking, the pace of learning is slow and not every student is fully involved. Too often the more able students perceive the lessons as dull and consequently are not inspired to achieve high standards.
- Teachers do not use ILT sufficiently well to support teaching in theory sessions. Interactive whiteboards are installed in most classrooms and although staff have received training many teachers lack the confidence to use them to

enliven learning. They do not make good use of the VLE to encourage independent learning.

- Teachers do not promote equality and diversity well within the curriculum. They do not make the most of opportunities to highlight issues and broaden students' understanding of the diverse culture and environment in which they work.
- Support and guidance for students have improved and are now satisfactory. Initial advice and guidance are now effective in ensuring students are on the right course. The monitoring of students' progress has improved. Staff plan and monitor progress effectively with students aged 16 to 18. However, they are less effective at setting learning targets with adults; the targets are not specific or detailed enough.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Recent changes to the way the managers and staff monitor progress and review provision is beginning to halt the previous decline in success rates. More learners are completing their qualifications.
- Managers now draw effectively on the views of all staff and accurately identify the key areas for improvement when conducting their self-assessment. However, they do not use data well enough yet to analyse and evaluate outcomes and identify actions for improving success rates, particularly for those groups of students whose achievements are lower.

What does Lambeth College need to do to improve further?

- Develop teachers' abilities to use a wider range of learning strategies effectively, to ensure that all learners are involved and inspired to achieve high standards.
- Ensure teachers improve their expertise in using ILT, including the VLE, in order to promote independent learning and develop students' reflective practice.
- Make better use of the experiences of the diverse workforce and surrounding construction projects in order to promote and enhance students' understanding of diversity, and to close the achievement between groups of students.

Social sciences and humanities

Grade 4

Context

36. Currently 165 students are enrolled on humanities and social science courses. Most students are aged 16 to 18. Just under two thirds of students are female and just over four fifths of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Students study on full-time AS- and A-level economics, English literature, government and politics, psychology and sociology courses as well as the access to higher-education humanities programme, mostly based at the Clapham sixth form centre.

Key findings

- Outcomes for students are inadequate. Success rates are high in A-level sociology and on the access to higher education humanities programme, but on most courses success rates have been too low over the past three years. Success rates are low on many subjects at AS level and the proportion of high grades is low.
- Standards of students' work are satisfactory but vary considerably between subjects. In sociology, students' academic writing is good with students making cogent and suitably analytical arguments in their writing. In other subjects, a few students are articulate and confident and their written work is well developed and presented. However, too much work is overly descriptive with weak referencing.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers are enthusiastic and build good relationships with their students. In better lessons, teachers introduce a range of activities and encourage students to learn effectively together to enable them to make good progress. However, too many teachers do not provide a range of tasks which ensure that every student is fully involved and acquires knowledge and understanding quickly.
- Teachers check students' understanding by different methods in lessons, but few ask the type of questions that deepen students understanding and, as a result, students' analytical and critical skills are poorly developed. Teachers written comments on assessments vary considerably and do not always provide sufficient direction to students on how to improve.
- Resources to support learning are satisfactory. Teachers do not encourage the use of the college's VLE sufficiently either in lessons or for individual study.
- The range of subjects is satisfactory, enabling reasonable numbers of students to progress from AS- to A-level courses and many to progress to higher education. However, persistently low success rates indicate the provision does not currently meet students' needs and interests well enough.
- Support for students is satisfactory. Although more rigorous entry criteria and thorough performance monitoring have been introduced to redress low attendance and retention, these have yet to make a significant impact.

Students receive satisfactory individual support but individual action plans set by staff are often imprecise and do little to help students keep on track.

- Despite recent changes which are beginning to rectify key problems, managers have not improved low success rates successfully. They have introduced more extensive performance monitoring this year. Students' retention has improved slightly but their attendance and punctuality remain poor.
- The self-assessment report is insufficiently critical and clear about key activities. For example, it does not present sufficient detail about the quality of teaching and learning. The promotion of equality is satisfactory, but teachers do not take up well enough opportunities to promote it further in lessons. Staff's awareness and implementation of safeguarding arrangements are good.

What does Lambeth College need to do to improve further?

- Raise retention and pass rates, including the proportion of high grades, by ensuring that students are enrolled on the right course and teachers adopt and closely monitor strict standards for attendance and punctuality.
- Develop clear and effective ways of improving the quality of lessons and of learning by training and helping teachers to make all lesson activities challenging, and ensure that learning is imbued with energy and enthusiasm.
- Strengthen the process for individual action planning for students. Set realistic but challenging targets that are precise and measurable and monitor these frequently to help students stay on track and succeed.
- Be more critical in self-assessment. Develop and use more robust and comprehensive self-assessment and performance analysis reports to provide a more realistic picture of priorities and actions for improvement.

English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

Grade 2

Context

37. Currently 1,879 students are enrolled on ESOL courses ranging from entry level 1 to level 2. Most students are adults. Full-time students aged 16 to 18 join a preparation for study programme and full-time adult students choose between preparation for work and preparation for study programmes. In addition, ESOL courses are run by two franchise partners, Training and Business Group and Bay Tree, and by the college's adult and community learning department. The college also offers Certificate in English Language Teaching for Adults (CELTA) teacher training courses.

Key findings

- Outcomes are good overall with outstanding outcomes in CELTA, basic ESOL and the full Skills for Life certificates at entry level and level 1. Success rates on most full certificate courses have improved since 2008/9 and are good.
- Students enjoy lessons and learn well, demonstrating a good understanding of grammar and vocabulary and good pronunciation. They participate fully in class, group and paired work. Students develop good personal and social skills, and a broad understanding of issues relating to citizenship. They gain the language, ICT and numeracy skills required to enhance their opportunities for employment and study.
- Students feel safe in the college and know who can help if they experience problems. Staff effectively incorporate topics related to health and well-being into the ESOL curriculum and group tutorials.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons well with relevant and challenging activities, and provide different tasks for learners who find the work easier or more difficult. Teachers effectively elicit explanations, vocabulary, grammatical rules and encourage peer correction. They use a good range of interesting and relevant learning materials, including effective use of interactive learning technologies to enliven lessons. Consequently, students make good progress.
- The range of courses in different venues and with different modes of study caters effectively for the needs of users. Staff provide thorough diagnostic testing that ensures students attend a course which meets their needs very well, and as a result students develop the skills they need for their life in the United Kingdom.
- The range of courses in different venues and with different modes of delivery caters effectively for the needs of users. Staff provide thorough diagnostic testing that ensures students attend a class which meets their needs very well and as a result students develop the skills they need for their life in the UK. Effective partnership with Jobcentre Plus and work with two franchise partners have enabled many more students to study ESOL courses.

- Students receive good academic and pastoral support. Staff effectively set targets and monitor students' progress routinely. However, students do not have access to independent study materials on the college virtual learning environment to support their study and help them to catch up when they are unable to attend.
- A strong and well-managed curriculum team ensures that learners experience high-quality teaching and a good curriculum. Managers ensure staff training is very good and teachers benefit from regular update training that ensures they develop their practice effectively. However, on franchise provision, teachers are unable to access similar professional development, and resources and equipment are not of the same high standard.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. The well-planned personal and social development programme enables students to integrate into British society very well. For example, interesting enrichment activities such as the college's annual 'international fair' help students gain knowledge and understanding of different cultures and celebrate cultural diversity.
- Self-assessment is carried out with contributions from all staff. The report is thorough and accurately identifies key strengths and areas for improvement. Action plans demonstrate a strong commitment to the further improvement of good provision.

What does Lambeth College need to do to improve further?

- Develop learning materials on the VLE to enable students to complete independent study both to supplement work in lessons and catch up when they are absent.
- Develop the quality of the provision of franchise partners by ensuring their teachers have access to professional development of the same high standard as that provided to teachers of ESOL based in the college.

Independent living and leisure skills

Grade 2

Context

38. Currently 241 students are enrolled on one of two pathway programmes, the employability pathway or the independence pathway, with access to a range of additional vocational qualifications from entry to level 3. Sixty students, aged 16 to 18, attend full time. Of those students who are adults, 120 are part time with the remaining 61 on full-time courses. Of the students, 31% are from minority ethnic backgrounds

Key findings

- Outcomes for students are good. Most students complete their main qualifications, although success rates for functional skills are inconsistent. Although many students stay to complete their course, attendance rates are not always as high as they could be.
- Students develop good personal and social skills. They increase their confidence particularly well, with high numbers progressing into paid or voluntary employment or into further education. Students feel safe in the college, enjoy their studies and work enthusiastically. Those students who are able to do so develop their independent travel skills well. Students increase their awareness of healthy eating through their work in the Healthy Gourmet café at the Brixton site.
- Teaching and learning are good. Staff have planned well to allow students to practise their new skills in realistic working environments, such as in the college shop and café, and consequently their confidence increases as they attempt and master new skills. However, teachers do not explicitly plan how to help students develop their mathematics and reading and writing skills alongside their other work.
- Staff use initial assessments satisfactorily to identify students' skills and support needs. However, information from previous education providers is not always available to assist in planning appropriate support. Individual students' profiles do not always include sufficient information about teaching and learning support needs.
- Teachers do not always set sufficiently detailed or clear targets for students in their individual learning plans and during reviews. Targets are often too broad and not specific enough to help students to make swift progress.
- The range of programmes to develop independent living and employability skills in a vocational context is good. The wide range of external qualifications available enables students to develop particular vocational skills. The college offers well-designed programmes specifically for students with mental health

difficulties. Students participate in a suitable range of enrichment including good outward-bound activities.

- The college has developed strong and effective partnerships with local employers, statutory and voluntary organisations. Students benefit from integrated, multi-agency planning of provision. Effective partnerships provide students with good opportunities to achieve employability and social skills and join in more local community activities.
- Teachers and staff provide good personal support to students, particularly in preparation for their job interviews and through their well-established and very effective links with external support agencies. However, staff do not always provide specialist support such as adaptive technology for students' particular needs in lessons.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers have a clear strategy to engage and meet the needs of the most socially excluded and disadvantaged students in the local community. They have good knowledge and understanding of what they need to do to improve provision and are planning for those improvements.
- Staff safeguard students well. The college responds quickly to any matters relating to safeguarding, working with appropriate external organisations to remedy situations promptly. Although staff have recently received training to update their own knowledge of equality and diversity, teachers do not routinely explore or broaden their students' understanding of these themes during lessons.
- Arrangements to assure the quality of all aspects of students' programmes are currently under review and development. Staff observing teaching and learning now make more rigorous judgements. Satisfactory course reviews inform the self-assessment process but do not include the views of all stakeholders.

What does Lambeth College need to do to improve further?

- Identify and implement effective ways to include functional skills more successfully within lessons, to help students see the relevance more clearly and help improve their success rates.
- Make greater use of initial and baseline assessments of students' skills and individual support needs to set clear, specific and measurable learning targets. Use these as a sound basis for reviewing students' progress against all areas of their programmes, and to ensure that best practice is shared to achieve consistency of target setting by all staff.
- Ensure provision is reviewed critically and that self-assessment includes the views of all stakeholders, to identify actions that promote sustainable improvement.

Business administration and law

Grade 4

Context

39. Currently 838 students are enrolled on courses in business administration and law. Approximately one third of students are aged 16 to 18 studying programmes at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels; the remaining two thirds are adults following full- and part-time courses. Just over 70% of students are from an ethnic minority background, with equal numbers of male and female students.

Key findings

- Overall, success rates are inadequate and not improving. While pass rates for students on a minority of courses such as the BTEC first diploma and A-level business studies are close to the high national rate, students' outcomes for the majority of other courses have remained significantly below national rates for the last three years.
- Students make satisfactory progress in their studies. In A-level business studies, students make good progress. Most students following A-level and BTEC national programmes make reasonable progress.
- The standard of students' written work is satisfactory and students acquire the skills to gain employment. However, attendance and punctuality are poor, weaknesses the college has recognised. Students comment favourably about feeling safe at college and appreciate the good measures the college has put in place to ensure their safety and well-being.
- Standards in teaching and learning are inadequate overall. In the small minority of good lessons, teachers use their subject knowledge and passion to engage and motivate students to achieve high standards. However, in too many lessons teachers fail to provide stimulating and engaging tasks and activities, and as a result the pace of learning is slow. Teachers do not challenge more able students sufficiently, and activities in these lessons are perceived as dull by students.
- Teachers do not use ILT to support learning very well. Although a few teachers use this technology to enliven lessons, it is not used fully by many and is often restricted to displaying written information on the screen.
- Standards of assessment are satisfactory. Students regularly receive homework, which is marked promptly and returned with useful comments which help students improve the quality of their future work.
- Recent amendments to the range of provision mean it now better meets the needs of students and employers. Students value the developing links with local employers and the increasing number of external visitors who come into the college to share their expertise and knowledge. The college works effectively with the Career Academy to offer high-quality internships to a small number of students who develop valuable real-life work skills with prestigious companies.

- The college has recently strengthened guidance and support arrangements resulting in more regular reviews of students' progress by tutors, who take prompt actions where there is cause for concern. Staff provide effective support for those students with specific learning support needs. However, they do not always set students specific enough targets to ensure they know exactly what they have to do to improve their work.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. Although the college has introduced more robust monitoring systems, managers do not set high enough targets for course teams and do not monitor progress sufficiently to ensure standards improve. Lesson observation is now more rigorous, so that teachers have a clearer view on what they need to do to improve.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is inadequate. The college has not yet closed the gaps in performance of different groups. For example, the performance of learners from minority ethnic groups is low compared to that of White British students. In most lessons, teachers do not take advantage of opportunities to broaden students' understanding of equality and diversity.
- The self-assessment report correctly identifies the key areas for improvement, but, as it lacks critical detail, often does not consider and explore the underlying problems with sufficient rigour.

What does Lambeth College need to do to improve further?

- Establish high expectations for students' retention and achievement and apply recently strengthened procedures rigorously to ensure students' progress is monitored frequently. Ensure that all staff take prompt action where students are at risk of underperformance.
- Ensure that teachers develop a wider range of teaching strategies that encourage greater participation by students, while motivating and inspiring them.
- Set challenging, rigorous targets for all students' learning, which are robustly monitored to ensure more consistent success.

Information about the inspection

40. Six of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's acting curriculum and quality manager, 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.
41. 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)
Lambeth 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 using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners					
Full-time learners	4,371	152	1,438	2,354	484
Part-time learners	4,871		205	4,520	
Overall effectiveness	4		4	4	3
Capacity to improve	4				
Outcomes for learners	4		4	4	3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	4				
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?	3				
How safe do learners feel?	2				
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	-				
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	-				
Quality of provision	3		3	3	3
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?	4				
Leadership and management	4				
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	4				
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	4				
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?	2				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	4				
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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