

Huntingdonshire Regional College

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 130612

Name of lead inspector: Paula Heaney HMI

Last day of inspection: 1 October 2010

Type of provider: General Further Education College

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Information about the provider

1. Huntingdonshire Regional College is a small college located in the town of Huntingdon. It is one of several providers of post-16 education and training within the area. Huntingdonshire is a relatively prosperous area, but unemployment has risen faster than in other parts of Cambridgeshire. Almost a quarter of the local population have no formal qualifications, slightly lower than the Cambridgeshire average and lower than the national average.
2. The college offers provision in most subject areas, the largest being preparation for life and work; business administration and law; health, public services and care and arts, media and publishing. It operates on two sites, with the smaller centre at St Neots offering courses mainly in construction. The college is a major provider of opportunities for learners with difficulties and/or disabilities in partnership with a number of social enterprises across the county. Higher education courses are offered as part of a franchise from a local university.
3. Very few learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of Year 11 pupils who achieve five A*-C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, in Cambridgeshire is higher than the national average. The current principal is to leave the college very shortly and recruitment for a replacement is underway.
4. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the college:
 - Constructive Assessment & Training Services Limited
 - Intrinsic Training Solutions Limited
 - Assessment UK Limited

Type of provision	Number of learners in 2009/10
<p>Young learner provision: 14-16 Further education (16-18) Foundation learning tier</p>	<p>203 part-time 712 full-time 395 part-time 165 full-time 120 part-time</p>
<p>Adult learner provision: Further education (19+)</p>	<p>334 full-time 1,863 part-time</p>
<p>Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships</p>	<p>2,517 part-time 257 part-time</p>

Summary report

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

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

Subject Areas	Grade
Engineering	3
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	3

Overall effectiveness

5. Huntingdonshire Regional College is a satisfactory college. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory and improving. Success rates are around the most recent national averages for most groups of learners and high for adults on foundation level courses; learners aged 14-16 and work-based learners. Learners make satisfactory progress in lessons. The proportion of learners aged 16-18 completing literacy and numeracy qualifications to help them progress to higher level courses and employment is increasing. Achievement remains low in numeracy.
6. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but the proportion of lessons that are good or better is low. Learner target setting is not sufficiently detailed or helpful. The broad range of courses meets most learners' needs and interests well. Partnership work with employers and other agencies to promote learning opportunities are good, and outstanding for the significant proportion of vulnerable learners. These learners have excellent opportunities to undertake work experience through a wide network of social enterprise organisations.
7. Leadership and management are satisfactory, and are good for employer responsive provision. Senior managers and governors promote a clear vision of

an inclusive college. Arrangements for quality assurance are appropriate and increasingly effective, although many initiatives to improve provision further are recent. Self-assessment is satisfactory. It is largely accurate and self-critical. Staff morale is good. Most learners enjoy their courses and training and they are kept safe. Learners receive appropriate pastoral and academic support. The college promotes equality and diversity effectively, although opportunities are missed within some lessons and work-based reviews to develop knowledge and understanding. The college has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are improving and are satisfactory overall, including for more vulnerable learners. Attainment is good for adults on foundation level courses, for learners aged 14-16 and for work-based learners. Learners make satisfactory progress when compared with their starting points. The achievement of different groups of learners is largely in line with the college average.
- Learners develop appropriate skills for employment and progression to other courses. The achievement of literacy and numeracy qualifications is improving satisfactorily; although in numeracy it is low. Vulnerable learners on the college's 'Pathfinder' and 'Bridgeway' programmes have excellent opportunities to apply their skills in work placements.
- Most learners enjoy their courses and training. Learners say they feel safe. They have a satisfactory awareness of how to lead healthy lifestyles. They make an appropriate contribution to college life and demonstrate respect for each other. Attendance is improving and is satisfactory. College data for 2009/10 suggest that retention has improved, particularly for adults, and is around the national average overall.
- The quality of learners' target setting is inconsistent. They receive helpful and formative targets in the best progress reviews; but targets in many individual learning plans are too general and do not help learners progress.
- Teaching, training and learning are satisfactory. The quality of the college lesson observation process is high. Managers standardise observation outcomes rigorously. The proportion of good or better lessons is low. Too many lessons are satisfactory rather than good.
- Teachers and assessors give good feedback to learners to help them improve their assignments; however, the meaning of what learners write is often unclear, because learners' spelling, grammar and punctuation are insufficiently marked and corrected.
- The provision is wide ranging and offers flexibility to both learners and employers. Progression opportunities for learners are good. Additional qualifications on many full-time programmes enhance learners' employability skills. Activities that enrich learners' experience at the college are not available on some courses.

- The college's work in partnerships is good, and it is outstanding for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These partnerships result in provision that suits both the local community and business needs well, focusing effectively on social inclusion. The use of employer links to broaden work experience activities for full-time learners across the curriculum is underdeveloped.
- Arrangements for care, guidance and support are satisfactory, with effective arrangements for additional learning support. Tutorials support learners' personal development well. The college works closely with external partners to offer a good range of personal support services to learners.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governors, managers and staff share a clear vision of the college as an inclusive community and respond well to the needs of learners and employers in the area. They have managed an increase in the numbers of learners successfully. The recent changes to curriculum management are at an early stage and have yet to secure consistent college wide improvements to success rates.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good overall. Learners are valued as individuals and the college places a strong emphasis on tolerance and respect. Outcomes for different groups of learners are analysed and effective actions taken to reduce variations. The promotion of equality and diversity in teaching and learning needs further improvement to ensure consistency across the curriculum.
- Safeguarding is satisfactory. The safety and well-being of learners are given appropriate attention in the college. Staff work effectively with other agencies to include many vulnerable learners at the college and to ensure that they are safe and protected. Learners use safe working practices in learning and in the workplace.

What does Huntingdonshire Regional College need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the rate of improvement in success rates and in the achievement of literacy and numeracy skills, particularly for learners aged 16-18, by sharpening the focus of quality improvement at course level, so that all learners' attainment is at least at national averages. Raise the proportion of good or better lessons, especially for learners aged 16-18, by varying learning activities and challenging learners fully in order to maintain their interest and involvement.
- Build on the recent improvements in curriculum management to ensure a sustained and consistent approach to quality improvement and so improve learners' experiences and outcomes.
- Develop approaches to equality and diversity, so that all staff are confident and competent in promoting equality and diversity actively in lessons and in reviews of progress for work-based learners.

- Increase the rigour of marking learners' work so that they improve their spelling, grammar and punctuation and consequently clarify the meaning of their written communication.
- Improve the quality and specificity of target setting in individual learning plans, so that learners of all abilities are inspired to attain challenging aims.
- Further develop work experience and enrichment activities for learners across the curriculum, utilising existing employer links, so that more learners have opportunities to enhance their economic and social well-being.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- being treated like adults
- the quality of teaching in the majority of lessons
- support by teachers both within and outside lessons
- the support for individual learning needs and for health related matters
- learning at work
- being able to work at their own speed on work-based programmes
- the friendly atmosphere around the college
- the feeling of safety and security in the college.

What learners would like to see improved:

- better targeted support for literacy and numeracy
- insufficient space within practical workshops
- insufficient work experience on some courses
- the range and availability of lunchtime enrichment activities.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- good quality customer service
- responsive and flexible training
- the quality and frequency of information and support
- how the college helps them meet their business and training needs
- the high standard of learners' work.

What employers would like to see improved:

- to be better informed about the detail of the apprenticeship scheme

- literacy and numeracy support for those on Train to Gain programmes.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

8. The college has satisfactory capacity to improve. Actions taken since the last inspection to improve performance have been slow to have an impact on all the areas for improvement identified. Success rates for learners aged 16-18 on foundation and intermediate level courses were below the most recent national averages. Leaders and managers understand the college well and areas for improvement are identified clearly through self-assessment. Management arrangements are clear and curriculum management is improving.
9. College data for 2009/10 indicate improvements at all levels, particularly for younger learners on intermediate level courses. The high success rates for work-based learning provision have been sustained on most courses. The college has adapted and expanded its curriculum effectively to meet learners' additional needs. Managers have strengthened the rigour of the lesson observation scheme; but the proportion of good or better lessons remains low.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

10. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory and improving. Since the last inspection, success rates for learners aged 16-18 rose only slightly and were below national averages in 2008/09, particularly for learners on foundation and intermediate courses. College data for 2009/10 indicate improvements at all levels, most significantly at intermediate level. Outcomes for learners on foundation courses remain below average overall, particularly for the significant group of learners on motor vehicle and brickwork courses. For adult learners, long success rates improved, with college data for 2009/10 indicating they are around the most recent national average and high at foundation level. Success rates for learners aged 14-16 are also high. Short course success rates are in line with the most recent national averages. Attendance is improving, rising from 83% to 87% in 2009/10. Retention rates are improving at a satisfactory rate for most groups of learners.
11. A high proportion of apprentices complete their programmes within the expected timeframe, except in engineering, and success rates are high. On employer-based Train to Gain programmes, success rates are high on most courses. Construction learners' success rates are very high, but low for learners on information communication technology (ICT) and business courses in 2008/09. College data for 2009/10 suggest the rates of attainment have been maintained, but success rates for manufacturing technology and hairdressing apprentices are low.
12. Adult learners with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve higher success rates than those without. Success rates for the younger learners in this group are improving, but remain lower than their peers. Males and

females achieve at similar rates. Outcomes for learners from minority ethnic backgrounds are monitored closely. The college recognises that for the very small numbers of learners aged 16-18 from Pakistani and African backgrounds, success rates are below the college average, identifying at course level where the learners were based to aid more effective monitoring.

13. Most learners enjoy their courses and training programmes. They develop appropriate social and employment related skills. They work co-operatively and safely in lessons and workshops. Additional qualifications and enterprise activities to enhance employability skills more effectively, particularly for foundation level learners aged 16-18, are increasing in 2010/11. Learners' work is generally of a satisfactory standard. College data indicate that the very low key skills achievements in 2008/09 improved for learners aged 16-18 in 2009/10. Numeracy outcomes remain low. Outcomes for adults on key skills are above the most recent national averages.
14. Learners say they feel safe and are aware of how to lead healthy lifestyles. Healthy eating options are not available at the St Neots site. Learners on childcare, sport and supported learning 'Pathfinder' and 'Bridgeway' programmes have a good range of opportunities to contribute to the local community through activities such as fund-raising, horticulture and recycling projects and they participate well.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

15. Teaching, training and assessment are satisfactory. In the best lessons, learners enjoy challenging and inspirational learning activities. They make rapid progress. Teachers check learning well and support learners' development of new skills. Teachers relate functional skills effectively to learners' vocational areas. Learners benefit from the excellent use of information learning technology (ILT) to aid learning.
16. In the less effective lessons, learners lose interest and are easily distracted. The pace of learning is too slow. Teachers do not use enough interesting activities to develop and extend learning. Teachers dominate the lessons and talk excessively at learners who do not have enough opportunities to participate actively in their learning.
17. Lesson plans and schemes of work are comprehensive and detailed. They promote the consideration of equality and diversity and safeguarding well, but teachers do not include discussions of equality and diversity issues sufficiently. The use of ILT and the virtual learning environment by teachers and learners has improved and is effective. The physical learning environment is satisfactory; it is highly conducive to learning in some areas but is worn and cramped in other areas.

18. The use of individual learning plans (ILPs) is underdeveloped, as it was at the last inspection. Many of the targets in individual learning plans are too general and do not help learners' progress. Frequently, they are reminders of deadlines, rather than constructive pointers to motivate learners. Learners' progress review targets are more helpful to them. In contrast, ILPs and targets for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are very effective.
19. Overall, assessment is satisfactory and it is good on work-based construction courses. Internal verification is rigorous. Most assignments contain clear assessment criteria. Most written feedback is very clear and helps learners to improve; however, the marking of learners' work to correct spelling, grammar and especially meaning, is insufficient. The arrangements for initial and diagnostic assessments have improved and are effective. The provision of learning support mentors enables learners to receive individual learning support promptly. The liaison between learning support and student services staff to monitor learners' progress and early involvement in recruitment is at an early stage. Twice-yearly reports and consultation evenings for parents, carers and guardians are satisfactory. Reports to employers follow review meetings every 12 weeks and are satisfactory.
20. Managers have improved the rigour of the lesson observation system since the last inspection although not all teachers are observed each year. All observation reports are checked for the validity of judgements and accuracy of grades and outcomes are amended appropriately. Paired observations moderate observers' judgements successfully. In most cases, inspectors agreed with observers' findings and their judgements. The work of subject learning coaches is beginning to improve teaching and learning but the proportion of good or better lessons remains low. Too many lessons are satisfactory rather than good. The least effective lessons are for learners aged 16-18.
21. The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is good, with a wide range of courses across most subject areas and levels offered flexibly. Additional qualifications to improve foundation level learners' employability have been introduced in 2010/11. The college works well with vulnerable and disadvantaged learners and those with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities on the autistic spectrum. Many progress to further learning. Progression routes across all curriculum areas are clear. An increasing proportion of learners progress within the college and to higher education. Actions to monitor and record learners' destinations more thoroughly are underway. Enrichment activities, such as guest speakers and visits to events and organisations, are available on the majority of courses, and are appreciated by learners.
22. Partnerships are good, and are outstanding for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The arrangements are particularly effective in securing voluntary work and employment for these learners. They enhance their experiences and develop their confidence very well. The college has worked hard to develop work experience provision for learners across the college but it

is still underdeveloped in a minority of curriculum areas and from within existing employer links. Employers speak highly of the pro-active approach the college takes in meeting their needs and in how promptly staff respond to queries. However, they report that feedback and actions arising from surveys are not shared sufficiently.

23. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Learners receive prompt and comprehensive information and guidance before starting their courses. Staff put appropriate support in place for learners with identified learning support needs. Advice and guidance ensure that learners are placed on the right course and level promptly. Arrangements for individual literacy and numeracy support are recent and have yet to have a significant impact on outcomes, particularly for learners aged 16-18. An effective tutorial programme is appreciated by learners. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. A good range of personal and sexual health services is offered by external agencies. Pastoral tutors are highly visible and accessible to learners at both sites, which learners appreciate.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

24. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The college's statement of its vision and values, together with its strategic objectives, set a clear direction. They form the basis for college and curriculum plans and include a clear business planning and monitoring cycle. Governors and managers have a good understanding of areas for further improvement as well as strengths. The leadership and management of employer responsive and 14-16 provision are good.
25. In the last three years the substantial growth of learners aged 16-18 has been managed well, accompanied by regular development of the curriculum to respond to local and national priorities. Overall outcomes are satisfactory and, despite a dip in performance in 2008/09, have improved gradually over recent years. Appropriate actions have been taken to improve the curriculum. A restructure in 2008/09, creating new faculty directors and curriculum manager posts, is beginning to have a positive impact on learners' outcomes. These changes are well supported by staff. Many other actions and initiatives are too recent to measure fully their impact.
26. Governance is strong. Governors have responded effectively to tackle the key issues facing the college and they challenge leaders and managers well in the drive to accelerate improvement. They have a good range of experience and expertise and use their local knowledge to support the college well. Governors monitor the financial and academic performance of the college effectively, scrutinising the impact on success rates more closely. By assisting in validating the college's self-assessment report they have a clear understanding of where the college needs to improve. Appropriate arrangements to appoint a new principal are in place.

27. The promotion of safeguarding is satisfactory. The college has appropriate policies, procedures and arrangements in place to ensure the safeguarding of learners, particularly for the most vulnerable learners. The college works actively with other agencies to complement safeguarding arrangements. Health and safety procedures are thorough. All staff have a basic awareness of safeguarding. A small minority of staff have yet to receive full training, although this is planned to take place in the next few weeks.
28. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The college welcomes all groups of learners, providing opportunities to many vulnerable learners and those at risk of leaving education or training. Appropriate policies relating to race, gender and disability are in place. These are monitored and updated regularly. Although the number of minority ethnic learners in the college is small, it is greater than in the local community. Participation and success rates for different groups of learners are analysed thoroughly and actions taken to reduce the variations which exist. The focus on valuing all learners as individuals and on developing mutual respect and tolerance is successful. Progress on promoting and embedding equality and diversity in course planning is evident, but opportunities are missed to develop learners' understanding in lessons and in reviews of learners' progress in the workplace.
29. Arrangements for quality improvement are satisfactory overall. Initiatives introduced recently to increase the rate of improvement are beginning to have a positive impact. Staff are more accountable and understand clearly the contribution they can make towards improving outcomes for learners. Self-assessment is broadly accurate and in 2008/09 it identified the improvements needed. The college seeks learners' views appropriately. Plans to involve learners more in decision making are underway.
30. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall and managed well. Improvements to the current building are planned, as the college was not successful in securing funding to move to a new site. Financial management is very good. Value for money is satisfactory overall.

Subject areas

Engineering

Grade 3

Context

31. The subject area offers courses in electrical and mechanical engineering; motor vehicle servicing and repair and motorsport preparation. Engineering courses range from intermediate to higher level and motor vehicle from entry to advanced level. Of the 340 learners in 2009/10, 149 are aged 16-18, 109 are adults and 82 pupils aged 14-16 attend from local schools. Just over a third of the learners study full-time and around a quarter are work-based. Most learners are male and from white British backgrounds.

Key findings

- In 2008/09 the success rates on almost all college-based courses were below national averages and had declined significantly from 2007/08. College data for 2009/10 show that success rates on most courses have improved and are close to, or above, the national averages for 2008/09, with the exception of a foundation level, full-time motor vehicle course and an advanced level, full-time engineering course.
- In 2009/10 the overall success rates on apprenticeship programmes were high. For the small number of learners on advanced engineering apprenticeships success rates were below the national average. Too many engineering learners do not complete their programme within the expected time. Overall success rates are high on Train to Gain courses although many learners do not complete their course within the expected time.
- Learners develop relevant industry-standard skills, particularly on apprenticeships. They use hand tools confidently and work co-operatively when required. Advanced level learner assignments and portfolios on national vocational qualifications (NVQ) are at an appropriate standard. They are well presented and make a good use of word processing and engineering software. Learners state that they feel safe in the college and at work. They work safely and to the relevant health and safety requirements.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is broadly in line with the college's self-assessment, with the better teaching in motor vehicle and for learners aged 14-16. In the better lessons, learners are encouraged to develop problem-solving skills through relevant practical work and teachers check individual learners' progress closely. Teachers encourage learners effectively and frequently praise their successes.
- ILT is used well in the majority of motor vehicle lessons. Teachers often refer to the college intranet and learners comment that the learning materials are very useful for revision purposes. However, in some lessons learners are insufficiently interested and become distracted, particularly when access to the internet is not monitored sufficiently.

- Assessment is fair and accurate. On completed work, teachers identify technical inaccuracies and further development points. In motor vehicle, good and prompt use is made of the electronic portfolios introduced recently to record completion of NVQ tasks and help track learners' progress. This contrasts with the paper-based versions produced by individual assessors that vary in content and quality of reporting.
- The college offers a good range of courses, including apprenticeships and Train to Gain programmes for learners in the work-place. Employers state that the college responds well to their requirements and that communications are good. For example, engineering staff and learners have worked closely with a local company to improve their product.
- Enrichment activities are satisfactory. They include appropriate visits to relevant technical shows and local companies. Learners on the motorsport full-time course are motivated further by working as a pit crew on race days. Work experience placements are insufficient on other full-time courses. College staff work co-operatively with local schools to develop the engineering provision in the region.
- Support for learners is satisfactory. Learners receive a suitable induction including a particular emphasis on health and safety. Good pastoral support for work-based learners through a dedicated liaison officer aids direct communication with employers. In motor vehicle, a high level of additional support is targeted suitably at foundation level learners.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Recent management changes have improved the learners' experience. College data indicate success rates improved from 2008/09 to 2009/10 to around the national averages. Co-operation between motor vehicle and engineering staff is increasing and expertise is being shared to improve teaching and learning. Teaching accommodation is being upgraded. The self-assessment report is generally accurate and aids improvement.
- Much of the learning environment is dated. However, some areas have been modernised recently and further improvements are planned. The provision of small tools and larger equipment items is satisfactory. Apprentices use modern industrial equipment in their workplaces.
- Teachers make detailed references to equality and diversity in lesson plans and schemes of work, but this had little impact on the teaching and learning in the lessons observed. In work-based learning, strategies to promote equality and diversity actively are insufficient to reinforce induction information. Female teaching staff have been appointed in both engineering and motor vehicle.

What does Huntingdonshire Regional College need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates by monitoring the progress of all learners more closely to help them achieve their qualification and within the expected time.

- Increase learners' interest and motivation in lessons by a better use of more challenging activities and a closer check on progress within lessons to ensure learners develop their skills to their full potential.
- Increase the opportunities for work-experience for full-time learners by including a work experience activity in their course to help better prepare them for employment.
- Continue to improve the engineering accommodation by ensuring areas are kept tidy and that proposed improvements are implemented to provide a good learning environment.
- Promote equality and diversity actively by ensuring a greater focus during lessons and progress reviews to reinforce the induction information and improve learners' awareness.

Literacy, numeracy and ESOL

Grade 3

Context

32. The subject area offers part-time and short courses in literacy, numeracy and ESOL from entry to intermediate level. Of the 2,370 learners in 2009/10, 1,425 are adults and 945 are aged 16-18. Just under half of the learners study literacy and numeracy as part of their full-time course. Some 250 learners, mainly adults, follow ESOL courses. Two-thirds of learners are male and a quarter are from a minority ethnic background.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Following a decline in 2007/08, success rates in literacy and numeracy rose at all levels. For learners on entry level numeracy courses, success rates increased significantly to the national average but they remain well below the 2008/09 national averages for most qualifications. College data for 2009/10 indicate improvements at foundation level. ESOL learners achieved above the national average in 2008/09 but college data indicate a decline in 2009/10. Adult learners are more successful than younger learners.
- Learners make satisfactory progress. Learning plans are used systematically to track progress; although not all learners are stretched sufficiently to meet their full potential. Learners' targets in literacy and numeracy are inconsistent and do not always identify the specific skills to be attained. ESOL learners' targets are more specific, ensuring learners are clear about what they need to achieve and by when.
- The standard of learners' work is good and learners progress well through the qualification levels. Learners receive valuable feedback during lessons and they are clear about what they need to do to improve. ESOL learners complete homework regularly to aid their progress and tutors provide supportive and informative written feedback. Many learners seek successfully to improve employment opportunities and recognise the value of developing relevant skills.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory on literacy and numeracy courses and good in ESOL. Skilful use is made of information technology to enhance learning in ESOL lessons where speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are developed well to enable learners to be more confident in the community and workplace.
- Lessons are planned well with clear learning outcomes. In the best lessons, activities promote learning and include a high level of learner participation in topics that relate clearly to the course as well as to living and working in the community. Themes and activities in lessons promote awareness and understanding of a range of cultures and backgrounds well. In a minority of lessons the over-reliance on tutor-led activities means that learners lose interest and fail to develop their skills fully.

- For ESOL learners at the college's main campus, lessons are flexible and repeated at different times each week to ensure that shift workers can maintain regular attendance. Links in the community with employers, schools, housing associations and other organisations to meet the needs and interests of the minority ethnic population are appropriate. Well-established partnerships for literacy and numeracy skill development for people on community service orders are effective. The broader range of courses offered within the community and with local companies is too limited.
- Initial assessments inform individual learning plans and lesson planning comprehensively. The good quality advice and guidance learners receive results in effective care and support while on their course and when making choices for their next steps. ESOL learners say they feel safe, secure and confident in college. They report high levels of satisfaction with the individual support and guidance they receive.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. Recent management changes have led to a more systematic approach to quality improvement, involving closer monitoring of the impact of action plans and new initiatives. Regular meetings and professional development and support have improved morale among staff. Self-assessment is self-critical and accurate overall. Most staff have completed training to increase their awareness about vulnerable adults.
- Accommodation is adequate. The base room for adult literacy and numeracy on the main site provides a suitable learning environment. Some large ESOL groups work in cramped classrooms with insufficient access to computers and specialist resources.
- Feedback from adult learners is largely very positive. However, not all of the younger learners are less positive about the purpose of English and mathematics classes.

What does Huntingdonshire Regional College need to do to improve further?

- Continue to implement and monitor the impact of quality improvement strategies systematically in order to improve success rates to above the national average.
- Ensure that all teachers set challenging and individualised targets for learners consistently, recording achievement during reviews clearly, and provide a comprehensive record of individual learning to promote good progress.
- Develop and extend active learning in all lessons ensuring tasks meet learners' individual and employment needs, by reducing the reliance on the tutor.
- Ensure literacy and numeracy courses meet the individual skill level of all learners, particularly for those aged 16-18, by broadening the range of courses on offer and by ensuring activities within lessons challenge the most able.
- Respond to the needs of employers and other potential partners by developing a broader range of provision at community venues.

Information about the inspection

33. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's vice principal, curriculum, 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 body/ies, 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.
34. 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)
Huntingdonshire Regional 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:	1,211	0	877	334	0				
Part-time learners:	5,355	203	515	1,863	2774				
Overall effectiveness	3	2	3	3	2				
Capacity to improve	3								
Outcomes for learners	3	2	3	3	2				
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3								
How well do learners attain their learning goals? How well do learners progress?	3 3								
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	3								
How safe do learners feel?	3								
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	3								
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	3								
Quality of provision	3					2	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?	2								
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?	3								
Leadership and management	3	2	3	3	2				
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	3								
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2								
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3								
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2								
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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