

Kirklees College

Inspection report

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Type of provider: General further education college

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Information about the provider

1. Kirklees College is a large general further education college; its two main campuses are located in the centres of Huddersfield and Dewsbury. Although the district has areas of relative affluence, it also has areas of significant deprivation. More than half of the college's students are from disadvantaged postcodes. Kirklees is a multicultural borough and the ethnic mix of the student cohort closely mirrors that of the local population. The college has a higher proportion of female than male students. In 2010, 52.8% of Year 11 school leavers in Kirklees obtained five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C including mathematics and English, compared to the national average (in the maintained sector) of 55.2%.
2. In 2009/10 around 43% of enrolments were at foundation level, 34% at intermediate level and 23% were at advanced level or above. The college provides courses in all subject areas with most enrolments being in the areas of preparation for life and work, retail and commercial enterprise, engineering technology and manufacture, and health and public services. The college also has higher education (HE) provision, run in partnership with Leeds Metropolitan and Huddersfield Universities, and a large range of provision for students aged 14 to 16.
3. In work-based learning in 2009/10 over 500 learners were following apprenticeship programmes in a number of vocational areas. In addition, the college acted as lead partner in a large consortium of providers, providing Train to Gain provision across the region.
4. The college is going through a period of significant change. Following its formation from the merger of Huddersfield Technical College and Dewsbury College in 2008, the college has been working to stabilise its financial position, carry out significant restructuring of management and rationalise its provision. At present the college is building a new centre in Huddersfield and working on the implementation of a new management information system. A new Principal will take up post at the beginning of June.
5. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the college:
 - A & R Training
 - ACCENT
 - BTCV
 - CMS Vocational Training
 - Biketrain Community College
 - Kirklees Construction Skills Academy
 - Kirklees Youth Training
 - Mark Betts
 - MPC North Ltd
 - National Children's Centre

- Rathbone
- S & S Training
- WBL Solutions
- YH Training
- Fresh Horizons
- Aberdeen Skills & Enterprise Training Limited
- The Training Alliance limited
- DKM Consultants Limited
- SKYE Training Limited

Type of provision	Number of enrolled students in 2009/10
Provision for young students: 14 to 16 Further education (16 to 18) Foundation learning, including Entry to Employment	686 students 3,961 students 3,761 students 1,909 students
Provision for adult students: Further education (19+)	5,403 students
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	1,405 students 544 apprentices

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 3
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	Grade
Outcomes for students	4
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	4
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	4

Subject Areas

Health, social care and childcare	3
Engineering	3
Information and communication technology (ICT)	3
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	3
Sport, travel and tourism	4
Arts, media and publishing	4

Overall effectiveness

- The outcomes for students of all ages have been poor for the two years since the college's formation. Too many students have left their courses early and some groups have achieved markedly less well than their peers. Outcomes on work-based learning programmes have improved and are satisfactory, as are those for students aged 14 to 16.
- The college has put in place a wide range of measures to facilitate improvements. Early signs show that retention is improving this year and the progress that students are currently making in most areas is satisfactory. The quality of provision is satisfactory. The college has a clear focus on improving teaching and learning and this is having a positive impact, although more strongly in some subjects than others. Staff are aware of the need to improve lesson planning and written feedback on assessments. The use and

effectiveness of individual learning plans are inconsistent and the college is aware that further development is needed. The range of provision offered by the college has been rationalised and now meets needs satisfactorily. Partnership working is well developed. Care, guidance and support for students are satisfactory. The college is working on the development of systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of support on students' progress.

8. Leadership and management are inadequate. The college is going through a period of considerable change and challenge. Despite the clear strategic direction and focus on improvement, initiatives have not yet had significant impact on raising students' achievements. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. The system to identify and close gaps between different minority ethnic groups and different genders is inadequate. Quality assurance arrangements have improved but their implementation is insufficiently robust to ensure improvements in all areas. Some of the grades and strengths in the self-assessment report are overstated and the use and interpretation of data are not yet consistent across the college.

Main findings

- Success rates have been significantly below average for the last two years. Marked variations in the success rates of different groups of students show some significant underperformance. Poor retention is a key issue across the college, and some courses also have weak achievement.
- Work-based learning success rates have shown steady improvements and are now satisfactory. Success rates for students aged 14 to 16 are also satisfactory. The progress being made by students this year is satisfactory, as is the standard of work they produce.
- Students feel safe. They are well informed about risks and are given sufficient encouragement to make informed choices about their health and well-being. They also engage appropriately in volunteering, community and charitable work.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In most lessons teachers build a positive rapport with students. While good teaching and learning practice exists in the college, too many lessons are not planned effectively to extend students' knowledge and ensure that they make good or better progress. Opportunities to promote equality and diversity through lessons are often missed.
- The assessment of students' work, including on employer responsive provision, is fair. However, in many cases written feedback does not identify clearly enough what students could do better. Students know their course targets but the quality of targets set, including those for literacy and numeracy, and the monitoring and recording of students' progress against these within individual learning plans are inconsistent.
- The college monitors the quality of teaching and learning frequently and uses targeted staff training and development well to improve teaching practice. Moderation arrangements have strengthened. However, not all observers give sufficient weighting to the progress students make when forming their

judgements. As a result, the college's evaluations of good or better teaching are not as reliable as they should be.

- The college is satisfactorily meeting the needs and interests of students and employers. The college has taken time to rationalise its provision but it remains wide-ranging and offers clear progression routes in most subjects. Reasonable progress is being made in developing students' literacy and numeracy skills. Provision to encourage students who traditionally may not participate in further education is effective.
- Partnership arrangements are satisfactory and improving. Strong and well-established links exist with a range of partners including local schools and the local authority. Several recent collaborative arrangements are beginning to prove beneficial for students by enriching their wider educational experience. Engagement with employers is satisfactory but the systematic gathering of stakeholders' views to inform curriculum planning is insufficiently developed.
- Students receive satisfactory advice, guidance, and support. Personal and pastoral support are good and students with additional learning needs are effectively supported. The college is in the process of improving a number of support arrangements, including more effective coordination, monitoring and analysis of information.
- Senior leaders have had many challenges to face. Governors and senior leaders do not lack ambition and focus on raising standards; however, they were disappointed by the outcomes in 2009/10. Although the college has a clear strategic direction it has been unable to respond quickly or effectively enough to improve the quality of provision or outcomes for students until recently.
- Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. The college makes good use of its links with external agencies to secure students' safety and responds appropriately to safeguarding issues. The college meets government requirements; however the formal engagement of students' views in relation to safeguarding is insufficiently developed.
- The college's approach to equality and diversity is inadequate. It has not introduced sufficiently robust systems to identify or close the achievement gaps between learners from different minority ethnic groups. The equality strategy is effective in promoting equality in the recruitment and fair treatment of students.
- Performance management and quality assurance arrangements have been improved but their application across the college remains inconsistent. Some of the grades and key strengths identified in self-assessment are over optimistic. The use and interpretation of data to monitor and improve performance remain insufficient in significant areas of the college's work.

What does Kirklees College need to do to improve further?

- Improve retention rates across the college by ensuring that monitoring and intervention systems, such as those to support 'at risk' students, are effectively embedded across all subjects.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning by ensuring that all lessons are planned effectively to maximise students' progress. Ensure

greater consistency among the observation team so that the appropriate weighting is given to judgements about lessons.

- Closely monitor students' progress using high quality individual learning plans to set meaningful and sufficiently ambitious students' targets. Ensure that progress against these is clearly recorded, including progress against targets to develop students' literacy and numeracy skills.
- Increase engagement with employers, including within subjects areas, to aid curriculum planning and help drive improvement. Formally gather employers' and stakeholders' views to better inform planning.
- Ensure that full information relating to the support individual students are receiving is used effectively to monitor and assess the impact on their progress.
- Close the gaps in success between different groups of students, particularly those from different ethnic backgrounds, by introducing a robust system to identify where the gaps are and then devise plans for improvement.
- Ensure that systems to improve the quality of provision and outcomes for students are applied robustly in all areas, supported by consistency in the use of data. Ensure that information used to formulate judgements in the self-assessment report is examined rigorously so that strengths and areas for improvement are accurately portrayed.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What students like:

- the helpful and friendly staff
- the range of facilities and equipment
- the support from tutors whenever they need it
- their interesting courses
- the welcoming and friendly environment
- their practical sessions
- their work placements.

What students would like to see improved:

- the canteen food – prices, range and variety
- the cover arrangements for staff and supply staff
- the information technology (IT) reliability and speed of connection
- the use of sanctions to address poor behaviour in class
- the sports facilities
- the cost of printing
- the availability of communal space.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- their communication with college
- the flexibility of assessment
- the strong support for students
- the good skills development.

What employers would like to see improved:

- the degree of their involvement in reviews
- the links between on- and off-the-job training
- their involvement in employer forums
- their input to course development and organisation.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

9. Capacity to improve for the merged organisation is satisfactory. New management structures and managers are in place, a number from the start of this year. These are beginning to bring about improvement across the college, for example in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision, where students' outcomes were very low in 2009/10. It is too early to see the full impact, although initial signs are positive. Middle managers are now challenged and supported more effectively. They are more accountable, but also feel more empowered; positive changes can be seen in most departments, such as hairdressing and beauty therapy and art and design.
10. The college is aware that consistency in the use of quality assurance arrangements requires further development at curriculum management level. Changes put in place for 2009/10 did not have a consistent or significant enough impact on success rates across the college, although some areas improved, such as work-based learning provision, key skills, success rates for students aged 16 to 18 on BTEC courses, and provision in childcare, animal care and construction.
11. Arrangements for target setting have improved. Performance against key performance indicators is judged in performance review meetings throughout the year. However, the performance of different groups is not yet measured adequately. The college has made significant recent improvements to management information reports but is well aware that further work is needed here. The college has satisfactory arrangements to listen and respond to students and is developing its response to employers. Governors' monitoring of performance has improved and is satisfactory. The college has made some strong partnerships, particularly with the local authority and schools. Financial management is strong.

Outcomes for students

Grade 4

12. The long course success rate for students in 2009/10 was 10 percentage points below the national average and had declined from the previous year. For students aged from 16 to 18 the overall success rate on long courses has been well below the national average for the two years since the college was formed, as was the combined success rate of the predecessor colleges in 2007/08. In 2009/10 the success rate was in the bottom 25% of comparable colleges. Poor retention was the major factor causing the weak success rates. For adult students the overall long course success rate has also been well below the national average for the last two years, in the bottom 25% of colleges, and shows a declining trend. For adult students, retention and achievement rates are declining, and are well below national averages.
13. The college is aware that significant improvements are needed in success rates and have put intervention strategies in place. These have had a positive impact

in some areas, such as childcare and animal care in 2009/10. However, the improved overall college in-year retention rate seen in 2009/10 did not result in improved success rates. Further intervention strategies have been put in place for 2010/11 and initial signs show that retention is improving. In some areas, where there was very poor performance in 2009/10, such as ESOL, major revisions to all aspects of provision have been carried out. It is too early to see their full impact on outcomes, but early signs are positive. The outcomes on additional courses that students took also had a significantly negative impact on success rates and much of this provision has been rationalised. Processes to ensure effective data management have been strengthened. Data are more easily available and managers are making greater use of them to monitor students' progress. However the college is aware that further work is needed to ensure data reliability, their production in a timely manner and consistency in their use.

14. The progress that students are making in lessons varies, but overall is now satisfactory. They produce work of a satisfactory standard and develop practical skills well in a number of areas. Students enjoy their studies and behave well. The progress that students make on advanced courses, when compared to their attainment on entry varies from excellent to poor.
15. Key skills success rates have been improving, but from a very low base. Significant variations between different areas and levels were still apparent in 2009/10, with rates well below national averages at intermediate level. The college has adapted provision so that students now follow functional skills courses. It is too early to see the impact of this change. Success rates for students aged 14 to 16 are high on most courses, although on young apprenticeships in engineering they are low. Progression rates to positive outcomes are satisfactory. Success rates for apprenticeship provision are steadily improving and rose to around the national average in 2009/10. The rate at which apprentices achieve their qualification, within the allocated time, improved to above the national average. Success rates on Train to Gain provision have improved and were satisfactory in 2009/10.
16. Wide gaps in the performance of different groups are evident, particularly in relation to students' age and ethnic group. While some gaps are narrowing, some are widening.
17. Students feel safe and secure. Health and safety are given a high profile and students adopt safe working practices. In work place settings, health and safety are promoted to industry standard. Work-based students are aware of good safety practices and safety is addressed appropriately in reviews. The college promotes healthy lifestyles satisfactorily and opportunities for sporting activities have increased in recent years. Students make a satisfactory contribution to both the college and the wider community.

18. Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment that teaching and learning are satisfactory. In most lessons teachers display good subject knowledge, build a positive rapport with students and ensure that safe working practices are appropriately promoted. In the good and better lessons, the use of questions to extend and check students' knowledge is good and lessons are planned well to increase students' participation. In too many lessons however, insufficient attention is given to planning for the full range of students' abilities. As a result, students do not make the progress of which they are capable. The use of information and learning technologies (ILT) in lessons has increased and is used particularly well in ICT but their widespread use in enhancing learning across all areas is satisfactory. The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is inconsistent and opportunities are often missed by teachers to reinforce equality themes.
19. The college monitors the quality of teaching and learning frequently and emerging themes are used well to target staff training and development. As a result, teaching and learning are gradually improving. However, they are improving faster in some areas than others. The college has a large observation team and moderation arrangements have been strengthened but the rigour with which this is applied is inconsistent. In many cases observers accurately identify the strengths and areas for development in lessons, but not all observers give sufficient weighting to the pace of learning or the progress students make in the time allocated when forming their overall judgments. As a result, data on the overall profile of good or better teaching identified by the college are not as reliable as they should be. The college has introduced teacher development centres to provide more bespoke training and focused the role of advanced teaching and learning coaches, to support teachers better in the sharing of best practice. It is too soon to judge the full impact of these recent initiatives.
20. The assessment of students' work, including for employer-based provision, is satisfactory. Students' work is marked frequently but often the quality of written feedback is too brief to be helpful and does not specify exactly what students could do better. The promotion and reinforcement of equality and diversity through work-based learning reviews is weak. While most students know their targets for achievement and have greater ownership of their individual learning plans, the quality of targets set and the monitoring and recording of students' progress against these varies too much.
21. The college is satisfactorily meeting the needs and interests of students and employers. The college was not completely successful in rationalising its curriculum after the merger in 2008. A review and reorganisation of the provision has since ensued and the provision in 2010/11 offers clearer progression routes, in most subjects, from foundation to advanced level. Internal progression between courses is low but improving. The range of programmes available in the majority of areas is very broad and takes appropriate account of labour market and existing employer needs. The tailoring of provision to the specific requirements of those who traditionally may not enter further education is strong and inclusive. Courses are offered through a wide range of community venues across the area. However, success rates on accredited programmes for many of these students in 2009/10 were low. The

current development of students' literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory and reasonable progress is being made against the college's clear Skills for Life strategy. Curriculum enrichment is mostly satisfactory. The range and variety of centrally run, extra-curricular activities is good. Students' participation is low, although increasing, and the college recognises that more effective monitoring is required.

22. Partnership arrangements are satisfactory and improving. Collaboration with local schools is well established and has led to an increased and very broad programme offer for students aged 14 to 16. Several recent collaborative arrangements, such as the partnership with Huddersfield Town Football Club, are innovative and beginning to prove very beneficial for students. The college also works closely with the local authority on a number of community-related initiatives. Links with employers are satisfactory across most subject areas. The self-assessment report correctly identified the need to formalise further the college's engagement with employers. Recently introduced initiatives in this area are helping to raise awareness of the college's work and identify any potential gaps in provision.
23. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The college is in the process of revising aspects of support. It has strengthened recruitment and interview procedures to facilitate earlier identification of needs. It has also introduced a new team leader role to identify and support 'at risk' students. Its new tutorial framework covers 'Every Child Matters' themes well. However, it is too early to gauge the impact of these new developments on students' progress. Students receive good personal, pastoral and welfare support at the college and the college's good links with external agencies are used effectively. Careers advice is satisfactory and supports students in making informed choices about their future.
24. Additional learning support is satisfactory. Students value the support they receive and have fewer withdrawals than the college average. Initial and diagnostic assessment to identify students who need both specific support and literacy and numeracy support is satisfactory. The college has identified the need to develop further its disclosure processes and provide more systematic follow-up of students who disclose a disability. This is supported by training to raise staff's awareness. The college is aware of the need to formalise the process for capturing support, given to students, to more effectively monitor and analyse its impact.

Leadership and management

Grade 4

25. The college has a clear strategic direction. Its mission focuses on addressing the vocational training needs of the communities it serves. Leaders prioritise local and national priorities to support learners who come from areas of deprivation or who have had previously unsuccessful educational experiences. The college has faced a challenging two years to stabilise its financial position, cope with redundancies, and restructure its management. It recognises that this has created some management instability and there remains inconsistency in the

- application of cross-college procedures and practices. Managers are determined to improve the performance of students and the quality of their experience. The significant changes made to management have raised expectations among staff and clarified accountabilities. The monitoring of staff performance has become more robust; however inconsistency remains in the quality of curriculum management.
26. The governing body is highly supportive of the college; its composition reflects that of the communities it serves. Governors recognise the lack of consistency in improvements since the merger and in response have increased the level of challenge they pose to senior leaders. It is too early to judge the impact of this increased rigour. The reports governors receive are not always sufficiently clear to allow them to scrutinise the impact that policies and procedures have on outcomes. However, their understanding of the broad measures needed to improve the quality of provision is satisfactory.
 27. Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. The college has a suitable policy in place. The designated officer has productive links with the local safeguarding children's board and local social services. Risk assessment processes are satisfactory. All new staff receive awareness training at induction and the vast majority of staff and all managers have received updated training recently. Safeguarding procedures are well understood by staff and learners. The college responds to safeguarding cases swiftly and effectively. The college carries out the required checks on staff and records them appropriately. The recording and analysis of 'incidents, accidents and near misses' are appropriate and the college is succeeding in driving down the number of incidences year-on-year. The formal engagement of learners in shaping safety related issues is not sufficiently developed.
 28. Although the promotion of equality and diversity is given a high priority in the college mission, the system to identify and close gaps between different minority ethnic groups and different genders is inadequate. A few curriculum managers examine the performance of different minority ethnic groups but at corporate level there is insufficient analysis. Many students from minority ethnic groups achieve success rates below the college average and for some groups gaps are widening. However, current data indicate a trend of improvement in the retention rates of some groups. The new system to analyse trends in success rates for learners in receipt of additional support is effective and last year the gap closed. Data are available to monitor the attendance of different groups; however, these are not used effectively in all areas.
 29. Staff training has taken place to embed equality and diversity within teaching and learning. However, the impact of this work is inconsistent and not measured rigorously. An appropriate single equality scheme is in place and some equality impact assessments have been carried out. Equality Champions were identified and trained in 2009/10 although it is unclear what impact they have had. The equality strategy is effective in promoting equality for staff, and the recruitment and fair treatment of students.

30. The college's engagement with students and employers is satisfactory. Students' views are collected through questionnaires and conferences. The self-assessment process is well informed by general student feedback; however, the analysis of the views of different groups is insufficiently developed. The use of employers' views varies between curriculum areas and managers recognise that more could be done to enable employers to contribute more effectively.
31. The application of the self-assessment process is inadequate and has not led to a significant enough improvement in the quality of provision or outcomes for students. Leaders were disappointed that the predicted trend of improvement in success rates did not come to fruition in 2009/10. They have taken more positive action this year, for example by removing courses where success rates were very low. New systems have been established to measure the impact of support services on retention and achievement rates and data show that retention is improving. The self-assessment process and the accessibility of data have been strengthened. Some curriculum and course leaders use the new systems effectively to evaluate accurately the work of their subject area; however, inconsistency remains.
32. The self-assessment report identifies several key areas that have improved to reach the expected level but overstates their significance in relation to sector norms. Quality improvement plans are in place for many aspects of work although there is inconsistency in their application and effectiveness.
33. Accommodation varies in its quality but is appropriate and well maintained. The promotion of sustainability is in the early stages of development but high priority has been given to it in the construction of the new campus. The majority of full-time staff hold appropriate qualifications. Opportunities for staff training and development have become more focused. The staff appraisal process has been revised and is effective. The college's financial planning and monitoring are strong as are its internal controls. Given the satisfactory progress that students are now making, their positive views on the range of facilities and equipment, and the sound management of resources, the college is currently providing satisfactory value for money.

Subject areas

Health, social care and child care

Grade 3

Context

34. In this area, full- and part-time courses are available in health and social care, and child development and well-being from foundation to advanced level. Of the total number of students, 678 are aged 16 to 18, 295 are adults, 18 are aged 14 to 16 and 144 are apprentices and Train to Gain students. Just over half are full time, 92% are female and 30% of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Learning takes place at the two college sites in Huddersfield and Dewsbury. Work-based learners are employed in a variety of care settings.

Key findings

- Outcomes for students are satisfactory. The majority of students aged 16 to 18 are on foundation and intermediate courses with high success rates. Success rates on intermediate and advanced courses for adults are below the national average. Overall success rates for work-based learners are satisfactory, but for advanced apprentices they are low. Success rates for work-based learners achieving their qualification, within the agreed timescale, are also low. Outcomes in child care are better than in health and social care.
- Retention shows an improving trend. Most current students are making satisfactory progress. Success rates for functional skills are low, especially in mathematics. Students' work is of a satisfactory standard but with some good assignment work. Good progression rates show students moving on to appropriate employment, or to further and higher education and training.
- Students enjoy their learning, and feel safe both within the college and on placements. Good attention is given to ensuring that students develop safe working practices. For some students successful outcomes are linked to securing promotion and additional responsibility in their places of work. Students make a positive contribution to the community through work placements in a variety of social and care-related settings.
- The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good in lessons. Active and participative learning takes place in a supportive and respectful environment. The pace of teaching is good and the broad range of group activities help to motivate students. Good links are made between theory and practice. The use of ILT and differentiation is sometimes insufficient to develop further the students' learning experience.
- Assessment practices in child care are effective. In health and social care feedback is insufficiently focused on how students can improve their written work. Some inconsistencies in assessment practice are evident and assessment methods are insufficiently varied. Individual learning plans and target setting in health and social care are weak. In child care they are more effective. Assessment arrangements for work-based learners are satisfactory. Timely visits and effective support from assessors help students to extend their knowledge and understanding.

- An appropriate range of provision is available for students to access. The types and levels of courses delivered are meeting the needs of employers effectively. Apprentices help employers to raise the standards of care in the workplace. Some employers support work-based learners effectively through the provision of relevant additional qualifications. Enrichment activities are valued by students but they are not extensive enough.
- Partnership arrangements are good and productive. Links with schools are positive and college staff contribute effectively to open evenings and taster sessions. College staff and students benefit from local headteachers who occasionally share their experience and expertise in college lessons. Collaborative arrangements with work-placement providers support students very well in developing their understanding of different work settings.
- Support for students is satisfactory. Pastoral support is good and students value highly the flexible and approachable manner of teachers and assessors. Tutorials are satisfactory. Additional learning support helps students to learn and develop in self-confidence, and is evaluated and monitored for its effectiveness. Initial advice and guidance are satisfactory and students are now better placed on the right course and level.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Measures to raise performance and quality have been introduced, although it is too early to see their full impact. Additional posts have been put in place to ensure that good teaching and learning is promoted, the rigour of observations is enhanced and that 'at risk' students are better monitored and supported. More effective teamwork has been established and staff are taking greater responsibility for performance.
- Arrangements to promote safeguarding are satisfactory. Equality and diversity are effectively promoted. The students' respect and support for each other are good. The performance of different groups of students is monitored at course level by staff with specific responsibility for 'at risk' students and through regular meetings where discussions focus on appropriate actions to narrow identified gaps in progress and achievement.
- Engagement with users to promote improvements is satisfactory. Student views are captured accurately and acted upon. Several student voice meetings and focus groups have taken place and positive changes have been implemented as an outcome of issues raised. Employers' views are less successfully collected, although in child care some actions have been taken to collect more feedback and respond to suggestions.
- Self-assessment is satisfactory. The process is inclusive and the report evaluative and supported by data. Improvements to retention and teaching and learning have been identified. The quality improvement plans are detailed and used effectively to monitor actions and progress. Arrangements for improving success rates in work-based learning are not addressed in the report.
- Resources are satisfactory. Staff are appropriately qualified, experienced and well supported through professional development. Accommodation is satisfactory, as are resources to support learning, although IT equipment is often inconsistent in its functionality.

What does Kirklees College need to do to improve further?

- Increase overall success rates on courses for adult students at intermediate and advanced levels by at least 10 percentage points over the next 12 months; Improve success rates for advanced apprentices, and success rates within the agreed timeframe, significantly for all work-based learners.
- Enhance the quality of assessment by informing students how they can improve their work, being more consistent in practices such as annotation and correcting spelling mistakes, and broadening the range of assessment methods. Ensure staff are able to set students meaningful and challenging targets on their individual learning plans through staff development and sharing good practice.
- Embed the recently introduced quality improvement initiatives and monitor their impact on increasing success rates and improving the quality of provision.

Engineering

Grade 3

Context

35. The subject area provides vocational courses in motor vehicle, manufacturing, fabrication and electronics. Courses are offered at entry level through to higher education for full-time and part-time students. Currently 425 full-time students are enrolled, of whom 90% are aged 16 to 18 and 5% are female. In addition a further 273 students study part time, of whom 36% are aged 16 to 18 and 3% are female. A vocational school programme for students aged 14 to 16, including young apprentices, has 180 students. A further 317 apprentices are on work-based learning courses.

Key findings

- Students' attainment of qualifications is satisfactory. Success rates on the majority of full-time courses are below the national average and show a decline over the previous year. However, success rates for apprentices are high, the majority completing within the agreed time scale, with the exception of young apprentices whose success rates are low. While retention is a key factor on some courses, poor achievement is also an issue. In-year retention data show improvements over last year.
- Students develop satisfactory industry skills taught by teachers who are ex-practitioners with good industry knowledge and by using industrial-standard resources and equipment. The standard of work in motor vehicle paint and body is very high. Students demonstrate correct and confident use of hand tools and equipment both in college and in the workplace.
- Health and safety are well embedded in all engineering activities, from initial health and safety briefings to best industry practice procedures for different processes, tools and equipment. The wearing of personal protective equipment is compulsory. Students say they feel safe and that the college is a safe and supportive environment.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In some lessons teachers use a range of techniques to engage and motivate students and effective use is made of ILT. However, in the less effective lessons students are not fully engaged, there is insufficient challenge and checks on students' understanding are inconsistent. The sharing of good practice between teachers is insufficiently developed.
- Assessment and verification are timely, accurate and fair. Work is clearly marked and returned promptly, with comments which students find helpful and lead to improvement. In work-based learning, assessors possess good industrial and commercial knowledge and use it well during training sessions. Assessors provide a good blend of activities that meet individual students' needs well.
- The range of provision is satisfactory. In addition to part-time professional development courses for engineers, full-time programmes are available from entry level through to higher education for full-time students. Work experience is not a component part of all full-time engineering courses and measures to prepare students for employment are insufficient. The extensive apprenticeship programme is responsive to local industry needs.

- Links with local employers, schools and other agencies are good for the apprenticeship programme. A formal forum for employers is planned to influence the design of full-time provision to ensure that it continues to meet local needs.
- Care, guidance and support for students are satisfactory. Initial advice and guidance have been enhanced to ensure that students are on the right course and receive appropriate support. The tutorial programme provides support through a structured programme of health and well-being sessions. However, the system for responding to poor attendance and punctuality is slow and individual learning action plans lack detail and rigour.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Meetings and communication are routine and staff have access to attendance and punctuality data, which are used in planning and progress reviews. However, for full-time students, actions to improve retention to raise outcomes are slow and lesson observations have been delayed due to planning demands.
- The self-assessment report provides an insufficiently critical analysis of the provision; it tends to overstate strengths which contain areas for improvement. Consequently, target setting for curriculum staff is insufficiently specific, lacking rigour and a focus on student outcomes.
- Students work well together regardless of their background or ethnicity. They show respect for each other both in class and in social areas of the college. However, staff have an insufficient understanding of their responsibility in promoting equality and diversity, which are not actively embedded in all aspects of teaching and apprentice reviews. Female student numbers are low and strategies to increase them have not been effective.
- Resources for developing engineering skills to industry standard are satisfactory, with a good range of advanced manufacturing machines and the motor vehicle workshops are equipped to commercial garage standards. However, the current stock of workshop vehicles is dated and some newer motor vehicles are required to ensure that the students' experience remains up to date.

What does Kirklees College need to do to improve further?

- Increase success rates on underperforming courses to at least the national average by ensuring that areas for improvement are communicated to curriculum staff with appropriately challenging targets. Enhance the responsiveness of strategies to monitor students' attendance and closely evaluate their effectiveness.
- Raise the standard of teaching and learning in classes to ensure that checks on students' understanding are consistent and that students participate fully, by developing the sharing of good practice between teachers.
- Enhance the preparation of full-time students for employment by further developing employment-related activities and ensuring motor vehicle students' understanding and skills development keep pace with vehicle development by working on up-to-date vehicles.

- Ensure that staff have a clear understanding of their role in actively promoting equality and diversity in their teaching and contact with students. Review and develop recruitment strategies for female participation to increase numbers of women in the area.

Information and communication technology

Grade 3

Context

36. The college offers full and part-time provision at both the Huddersfield and the Dewsbury centres plus part-time courses at employer sites and a small amount in the community. At the time of the inspection, there were 228 students aged 16 to 18 and 133 adults studying programmes in ICT. Of these, 238 were on full-time courses and 123 were studying part time. The area also enrolled 144 adults on Train to Gain provision.

Key findings

- Success rates for students are now satisfactory, having improved on previous years. Students who complete on intermediate and advanced courses have high pass rates and a high proportion of results are high grades. However, the retention rate on courses below advanced level is low.
- The college provides good opportunities for students to improve their personal skills and qualities, such as problem solving, working in a team, improving self-confidence and self-esteem. Full-time advanced students also improve their economic well-being with additional qualifications in personal finance.
- Teaching and learning are good. A wide range of learning activities is used by teachers to engage students. In the better lessons, teachers plan effectively to cater for individuals' needs and use questions skilfully to check understanding and stretch students. However, opportunities for student contributions during some teacher presentations are insufficient.
- ILT is used well to support learning. Teachers make effective use of the virtual learning environment not only to facilitate individual learning in the classroom, but also to provide good and well-used systems for tracking progress, assessments and feedback, particularly at the Huddersfield centre.
- The assessment of Train to Gain students' performance is fair and frequent. However, progress reviews do not sufficiently reinforce and promote equality and diversity and so do not raise students' understanding of such issues. Feedback is sensitively given but the reviews do not sufficiently involve employers.
- Staff make effective use of the recently introduced electronic individual learning plans. Students in the full-time provision use them in many ways, including to self-assess and to set and review targets. They can also share their plans with parents.
- Courses are vocationally related and from entry level to foundation degree. The range of employer responsive programmes offered is limited, and does not yet meet the needs of local employers, with only Train to Gain programmes available. However, the college has used the Train to Gain programme well to meet the needs of specific groups.
- Support for students is good with a variety of support available, including extra sessions, counselling, use of audio files and resources such as laptops and good remote access to materials via the virtual learning environment. The new

approach using specific staff to intervene with 'at risk' students is having a positive impact on retention.

- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers now provide clear direction and have recently introduced changes to improve the curriculum and its delivery, including the implementation of a semester model which has increased the early completion of units. Equality and diversity are appropriately promoted throughout the college-based provision.
- Self-assessment is satisfactory. Course meetings are well structured with a clear focus on monitoring targets and improving performance, but the differences in the centres' results were not identified in the self-assessment report. Sharing of good practice in teaching is effective and the use of a teaching and learning coach is beginning to have a positive impact on teaching.
- The reliability of IT systems is poor. Although access to ICT resources is satisfactory, the slow speed of the network significantly hinders students' progress, particularly when they attempt to log on simultaneously.

What does Kirklees College need to do to improve further?

- Improve retention by ensuring that best practice is adopted across the provision to enable students to remain on course, and that their progress is effectively monitored.
- Review and develop work-based learning provision to ensure that it better meets the needs of students and employers and provides appropriate progression routes.
- Ensure that the review process for Train to Gain students involves employers to a greater extent and enhances students' understanding of equality and diversity by incorporating this aspect more fully in the progress review.
- Improve the IT infrastructure across the college to ensure that it copes effectively with the increasing requirements of the students and their courses.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Grade 3

Context

37. The college offers a range of full- and part-time programmes in hairdressing, beauty therapy and holistic therapies from foundation to advanced level. Currently 252 full-time students aged 16 to 18 and 79 full-time students aged over 19 are enrolled, along with around 300 part-time students, and 62 apprentices. A further 89 school students are studying foundation-level hairdressing and beauty therapy programmes.

Key findings

- Retention and success rates on many of the long programmes over the last two years have been unsatisfactory and below the national averages. Significant changes have been made to course provision and in-year retention has improved markedly. Apprenticeship success rates have improved and are now above national averages.
- Students are making satisfactory progress overall. Many make good progress developing a range of practical skills at all levels in both hairdressing and beauty therapy and develop their technical skills, personal confidence and employability skills. The standard of students' work is satisfactory.
- Students feel that the college environment is secure and safe. Students have a good understanding of their own duties and responsibilities in creating a safe environment. Staff ensure good promotion of health and safety in the practical sessions and the students understand the importance of hygienic working practices, although practice in the academy is inconsistent, particularly around the use of tools and equipment.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good links between the theory and practice are made clear to students in lessons and reinforce learning. Enthusiastic teaching, the appropriate use of praise and feedback encourage positive and effective learning. However ILT is not used sufficiently to reinforce learning and in some lessons direct questions are insufficiently utilised to check students' understanding.
- Assessment is planned well; students' progress is monitored and discussed within their tutorial sessions. Assignments are well presented and constructive feedback guides and supports students towards improving their skills. In some instances punctuality, spelling and grammar are not appropriately corrected.
- The range of provision is satisfactory. Teaching staff are fast-tracking the more able foundation-level students to complete their programme of study early and then to progress onto the next level. Enrichment activities are satisfactory and include a range of opportunities. However, some students are unaware of the cross-college activities. Work experience is not a component part of most of the full-time courses.
- Staff have developed good partnerships with local schools. The Year 10 students work towards achieving a hairdressing foundation level qualification and then progress onto a foundation-level beauty qualification in Year 11. Partnership working with employers is satisfactory and the college works flexibly

to accommodate employers' and students' needs by offering different modes of attendance for off-the-job training.

- Students receive satisfactory guidance and support. All full-time students receive both group and one-to-one tutorials. The students' well-being is improved through their tutorial sessions where relevant support is given, as well as information and guidance on matters such as sexual health, student life, health and safety and equality and diversity.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Communications are becoming more effective through regular team meetings where tutors regularly review the students' attendance and progress. Targets are then set and monitored. Staff are well qualified. Teachers regularly update their industrial skills and use their knowledge and expertise to inspire the students.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Students and teachers treat each other with respect and students understand that any form of discrimination will be challenged. However, session plans do not identify where equality and diversity can be promoted in teaching and learning and students' work.
- Students' engagement to improve provision is satisfactory. Some students are aware of the student voice and its coverage in tutorial sessions; other students say they were unaware of this process. All agreed that they are listened to and that swift action is taken to address their concerns and issues.
- The self-assessment report has identified key strengths and weaknesses, with robust actions put into place to address these. Action plans are clear and ambitious with targets that show how provision will be developed for the students. However, actions are not yet implemented fully and need to be monitored effectively.
- Resources and equipment are good and reflect industry standards. Students perceive a shortage of some equipment and resources at busy salon times.

What does Kirklees College need to do to improve further?

- Improve retention and success rates by ensuring the curriculum offer continues to develop and students are placed on the most appropriate courses to support their progress.
- Improve teaching and learning by sharing good practice and resources across the hair and beauty provision and developing staff training on the implementation of ILT into the curriculum and effective use of questions.
- Ensure all assignment work is appropriately marked to help students to progress and improve their grammar, punctuation and spelling to raise literacy standards.
- Promote good standards of health and hygiene in practical sessions in the academy by reinforcing the importance of training in this area.
- Improve the effectiveness of the student voice in the college by ensuring that all students are fully aware of the processes to capture their views.

Sport, travel and tourism

Grade 4

Context

38. Currently around 200 students study on sports, travel and tourism programmes, the majority of them being on full-time courses and aged from 16 to 18. Two courses cater for adult students. The majority of students are working towards vocational qualifications from foundation to advanced level. The majority of students are female, 22% are from minority ethnic groups and 21% have a declared learning difficulty and/or disability.

Key findings

- Student outcomes are unsatisfactory. Success rates over the last few years have been inconsistent and in 2009/10 declined significantly, particularly on sport and leisure programmes. On seven out of twelve substantive courses success rates were well below the national average. Success rates were low on all levels of provision and for both age groups.
- Retention rates are low. On the majority of sports programmes and on a significant number of travel and tourism courses in 2009/10 retention rates were significantly below the national average and declined significantly compared to the previous year. Many students do not make the progress expected of them based on their entry qualifications. Value added data are not used to inform target setting.
- Students who receive additional learning support significantly underperform compared with students without the support. The department has not analysed data to ascertain the reasons for this. Students from different ethnic and social backgrounds often do not achieve equally. Managers make insufficient use of management information to identify underperforming groups of students and to develop effective remedial action plans.
- The standard of current students' work is at the level that would be expected at this stage of their course. Their skills, knowledge and abilities evidenced in their assessed work, practical sports competencies, portfolios and displays are satisfactory. Attendance at lessons and punctuality in some observed sessions was poor. Lateness was usually challenged but at times was disruptive to learning.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In better lessons, teachers are enthusiastic, very well prepared and use a good range of resources to promote learning. Good use is made of adapted learning activities, that meet students' particular needs, and the pace of learning is good. In the good tutorial sessions, students effectively develop increased awareness of equality of opportunity and diversity.
- In the less effective lessons teachers provided insufficiently challenging activities for students, and too few opportunities to develop students' literacy and numeracy skills. Students had insufficiently challenging learning activities to stretch the more able. Assessment and feedback of progress to students is satisfactory.

- The availability and use of ILT resources to assist teaching and learning both in and out of the classroom are insufficient. Students have limited access to the central ILT resources and departmental resources are unreliable. Students experience difficulties in logging on. The use of ILT as a learning resource was not sufficient in most lessons observed by inspectors.
- Good development of partnerships enhances learning, provides access to industry facilities and enhances enrichment opportunities. Good use is made of local, regional and international partnerships which enable students to gain industry experience and develop their work-based skills in sport and travel. Access to local sports facilities enables students to complete assessments in a realistic working environment.
- The use of individual learning plans is not sufficiently developed; they vary in quality and most contain insufficiently detailed written feedback to students on progress and action planning. They show little evidence of coherent short-, medium- and long-term planning. Too much emphasis is given to short-term goals linked to students' course work. The electronic individual learning plan currently being piloted in sport is valued more by students.
- Leadership and management are weak. Managers have been slow to address identified concerns about success rates, retention, attendance and punctuality. Staff receive insufficient effective communications. Planning for the impact of the merger and the move to one site was insufficiently developed, resulting in difficulties for both staff and students. This also had a negative impact on the quality and planning of the student induction programme.
- Staff make insufficient use of data to improve outcomes for students. Managers have recently started to gather data to identify outcomes by gender and ethnicity but these are not sufficiently analysed to consider whether they are effectively narrowing the achievement gaps, for example of students with different post codes, and those with a learning disability and/or difficulty. Quality improvement plans, particularly at individual course level, are inadequate.
- The self-assessment process is sufficiently detailed and largely accurate in identifying course outcomes and strategies for improvement. However, the report overstates some strengths. It is largely descriptive, very wordy and lacks detailed analysis of data. Aspects identified for improvement are in line with inspectors' findings but not all issues identified have been sufficiently included in the quality improvement plan.

What does Kirklees College need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates on the large majority of courses, to the national average and above, by improving pre-entry information, teaching and learning and implementing timely support to assist students who are falling behind with their work.
- Improve teaching and learning by developing opportunities to share good practice. Provide professional development activities for tutors to ensure better use of ILT, literacy and numeracy development and support for students in all lessons. Develop greater use of different teaching and learning activities to challenge and meet the needs of all students.

- Ensure that individual learning plans become effectively used by extending students' remote access opportunities to their plan, providing consistent and effective support for their completion and developmental feedback on students' progress towards short-, medium- and long-term targets.
- Improve leadership and management of the curriculum area by providing frequent and effective communications between managers and tutors and focused support to develop management competencies. Ensure that data are used effectively to inform individualised targets and that the monitoring of progress towards these, together with any remedial action plans, is robust.
- Further develop the self-assessment process. Ensure course reviews clearly identify the development needs for each course and that individual action plans at course level are consistently completed by course leaders, and shared with, approved and supported by managers. Closely monitor progress towards improvements identified and ensure that links between individual course and subject area improvement plans are coherent.

Arts, media and publishing

Grade 4

Context

39. The college offers courses from foundation to advanced level including BTEC introductory, first and national diplomas, A levels, access to HE and some part-time provision for adults. Subject areas include media, performing arts and most art and design specialisms. The large majority of students, 641, are full time and aged 16 to 18. The number of adult students is reducing; currently 123 are aged 19 and above. The provision is offered at two college sites in Huddersfield and one in Dewsbury.

Key findings

- Many subjects have very low rates of success. Overall success rates have declined slowly for all students over a number of years to well below the national average in 2009/10. The biggest decline was for adult students. The course teams acknowledge that success rates for some minority ethnic groups have been poor and little improvement has yet been seen. Many students have been enrolled on additional courses but achievement on these has been very poor.
- Students' practical and written work is at the level expected. Some students talk confidently about their work and their expectations for academic and career development. Students on dance courses achieve high levels of practical skills. Vocal and instrumental skills on music courses are good. Students improve their technical competence but show insufficient critical self-evaluation.
- Students feel safe and use safe practices in both their practical studios and in the public spaces. The promotion of health and safety practices in all practical and workshop sessions is good. Specific guidance on health and safety is provided in notes for life drawing sessions.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The best lessons show high levels of student involvement; sessions are interactive and students participate fully in relevant and challenging discussions. Less successful sessions are too teacher led, limiting students' participation. Most schemes of work show what students are expected to achieve but often focus on content rather than the impact of activities on students.
- Several new initiatives have been put in place to improve teaching and learning and students' outcomes, including the appointment of advanced teachers and 'success tutors' who work with students who are identified as 'at risk'. It is too early to make a judgement on the effectiveness of these initiatives but early signs are positive with some courses having higher retention this year.
- The range and levels of courses are broad and provide good opportunities for progression. In many subjects students are able to access resources and teachers' expertise outside their timetabled sessions. Enrichment is satisfactory and helps to raise student aspirations. Some high profile opportunities are offered to photography students. Music students make regular performances at local venues which help to instil professional practice and organisational skills.

- Partnerships with schools and industry are satisfactory. One area of good practice is the offer of GCSE photography to students aged 14 to 16 from a diverse range of secondary schools. These students enjoy working together and benefit from staff with specialist expertise and excellent resources. Media students work regionally with the British Film Academy to help them develop professional practice.
- Initial assessment and on-course support for students are satisfactory. All prospective students at all levels benefit from a personal curriculum-based interview. At induction, all students are assessed for literacy and numeracy levels and additional support is implemented. One-to-one verbal feedback is detailed. However, this is not fully supported by written feedback in individual learning plans and on students' work, which mostly lacks information on how to improve.
- Resources are good. Art and design students work in bright, spacious and well-equipped studios that enable them to produce finished pieces in a wide variety of media and scale. Students at the Wheelwright centre are able to access tutors' and technicians' expertise and resources that are provided for HE courses. IT logins are slow and this sometimes restricts students' progress, although the digital technology resources are very good.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. Poor curriculum design has contributed to declining success rates in previous years. Students have been enrolled on many additional courses which did not meet their needs or interests. New curriculum managers are now raising expectations and have made significant revisions to the course offer and modes of attendance. They have clear plans to monitor progress and outcomes but it is too early to measure fully their impact, although early signs are positive.
- Measures to ensure students from different backgrounds achieve well are ineffective. Achievements for some minority ethnic groups have been well below those of other student groups. This difference has been recognised in the self-evaluation document but little impact of improvement has yet been seen.
- All staff have completed a short online training course in equality and diversity but this has not yet had an impact on actions to improve achievement for certain groups. However, in taught sessions and workshops, students from diverse backgrounds work freely and supportively with each other.
- Self-assessment and quality assurance processes are not fully developed to identify areas of underperformance. The area's self-assessment document is accurate in some parts, however it overstates some strengths. The judgements provide insufficient critical analysis of the key areas of activity.

What does Kirklees College need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates for students in all subject areas, by providing a particular focus on retention and achievement on additional courses, by improving pre-entry guidance, closely monitoring students' progress and implementing timely support systems to assist students who are falling behind with their work.
- Monitor carefully the impact of measures to improve achievement for students from minority groups. Regularly review the effect this is having on those groups that are identified as underachieving.

- Ensure target setting for students is more developmental and that targets within individual learning plans are more constructive, aid students in achieving at a higher level and focus on what they need to do to improve.
- Review the accuracy of the self-assessment report as a tool to ensure greater clarity in identifying key areas for improvement by involving staff representatives from the whole subject area.

Information about the inspection

40. Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and twelve additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's Vice Principal (curriculum and quality), 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 students 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 students and employers. They also looked at questionnaires students 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)
Kirklees College

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Student 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 Student responsive	19+ Student responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled students					
Full-time students	4841	0	3541	1300	0
Part-time students	5600	696	1091	2567	1,246
Overall effectiveness	4	3	4	4	3
Capacity to improve	3				
Outcomes for students	4	3	4	4	3
How well do students achieve and enjoy their learning?	4				
How well do students attain their learning goals?	4				
How well do students progress?	3				
How well do students improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	3				
How safe do students feel?	3				
<i>Are students able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	3				
<i>How well do students make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	3				
Quality of provision	3	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 students?	3				
How effective are the care, guidance and support students receive in helping them to achieve?	3				
Leadership and management	4				
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>	3				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of students?	3				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	4				
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 students?	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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