

Huddersfield New College

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 130539

Name of lead inspector: Bev Barlow HMI

Last day of inspection: 14 October 2011

Type of provider: Sixth form college

Address: New Hey Road
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire
HD3 4GL

Telephone number: 01484 652341

Information about the provider

1. Huddersfield New College is a sixth form college, established in 1974 and located two miles north of the town centre in the borough of Kirklees. Within Kirklees there is another sixth form college, a college of general further education, five local schools with sixth forms, six academies, a free school and a studio school. Around 80% of students at the college are recruited from the Kirklees district. The proportion of school leavers achieving five GCSE grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, at 53%, is slightly below the national average. Kirklees has a multicultural population of around 410,000 people, including 14% from minority ethnic backgrounds. The index of deprivation and relatively high unemployment levels place Kirklees in the bottom quartile of the local authorities in England.

2. The college has grown significantly in recent years and there are around 2,350 students currently enrolled. The vast majority of the college’s learners are full-time students aged 16 to 18 taking advanced-level courses. The college offers a wide range of AS- and A-level courses and has expanded its vocational provision at both advanced and intermediate level. A small group of students follow a foundation level business programme. Some 26% of students are from a minority ethnic group and 24% have disclosed a learning difficulty and/or disability. In 2010/11 half of the students were in receipt of the education maintenance allowance. The average level of students’ attainment on entry is below the national average in sixth form colleges.

3. The inspection looked at all of the provision offered by the college. Provision in mathematics and science; sport and travel; visual, performing arts and media; and English and modern foreign languages were inspected in depth.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
<p>Provision for young learners:</p> <p>Further education (16 to18)</p>	<p>2,294 full-time learners</p>
<p>Provision for adult learners:</p> <p>Further education (19+)</p>	<p>25 full-time learners</p>

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2
---	----------------

Capacity to improve	Grade 2
----------------------------	----------------

	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	1
Equality and diversity	2

Subject Areas	Grade
Science and mathematics	3
Sport, travel and tourism	2
Visual, performing arts and media	2
English and modern foreign languages	2

Overall effectiveness

- Huddersfield New College has many positive features but needs to address some key areas for improvement before it can reach its ambition to be outstanding. Most students achieve well, make good progress and leave college with valuable life skills that support them well for their next stage in higher education or employment. Success rates are very high on vocational programmes and A-level courses and have improved at AS level to the national average of similar colleges. A significant minority of A-level students do not always achieve their target grade. Teachers are enthusiastic and engage students in well thought-out activities; inspectors agreed that most lessons are good. Teachers now share good practice across subjects and new technology is used well to support learning. Students' progress is very closely monitored on vocational courses but the same rigour is not consistently applied across AS- and A-level subjects and as result some underperforming students do not benefit fully from the extra academic support available.

5. The college provides a safe and inclusive environment where many students thrive and develop in confidence. The college is very responsive in developing a curriculum to include more vocational choices and meet local needs. Personal support is outstanding; students value the access they have to a wide range of services and to the one-to-one support from teachers and personal tutors. Strong leadership has refocused staff energies on raising standards. Staff are supportive of the college's strategies for improvement, are aware of what actions need to be taken and are clear about their responsibilities in achieving them. The self-assessment process is robust and uses data well but the action plan is not sufficiently detailed or targets precise enough. Students are fully involved in decision making at all levels in the college.

Main findings

- Success rates have improved and are at the high sixth form college national average. Students achieve very well on BTEC and A-level courses. An increasing proportion of GCSE students achieve a high grade. However, too many students do not complete their AS course.
- Most students make good or outstanding progress in their time at college. Students on the foundation programme make excellent progress and around a third move through college and progress to university. The proportion of students achieving merit and distinction grades on most vocational courses is very high. Students at AS-level achieve good or better grades in line with their prior attainment but value added is low for a significant minority of A-level students.
- Students enjoy college and become more confident. They develop good personal and social skills, and relevant work-related skills to raise their aspirations. The quality of work is good, particularly on vocational courses, but too many A-level students do not develop sufficient analytical and critical thinking skills.
- Students feel very safe in the college and know that their views in relation to health and safety are taken very seriously. Their behaviour is exemplary. Students adopt safe working practices in practical sessions and around the college. Safeguarding is outstanding and is very effectively embedded throughout the college's work.
- Teaching and learning are good. Students' attendance in lessons is high. In the best lessons a good range of activities is used effectively to engage students and help them to succeed. In less effective lessons the learning objectives are not sufficiently clear and the most able are insufficiently stretched and challenged.
- Assessment and feedback to students are good but there are inconsistent practices in the setting of homework and preparation for external examinations. The virtual learning environment (VLE) and information learning technologies (ILT) are used well to support learning.

- A broad range of courses from foundation to advanced level support the college's inclusive mission and meet the needs of the local area. More vocational options are now available and students have the flexibility to mix academic and vocational courses. A good programme of extra-curricular activities and whole-college events enhance most students' learning. Sport enrichment is outstanding.
- The college is a key player in developing educational opportunities in the local area. It works well with an extensive range of partners and these links are of significant benefit to students. All vocational and many A-level students complete relevant work experience. Strong links with local high schools support transition arrangements and raise participation in post-16 education. An extensive range of services and links with external agencies promote student health and well-being and are effective in supporting students to stay on their course and achieve their goals.
- Initial information, advice and guidance are comprehensive and include taster days. The entry criteria to study AS- and A-level subjects are lower than in many other sixth form colleges but for a few students they are not adhered to at enrolment. Consequently, a minority of students are not always placed on the most appropriate course. Students' needs for additional learning support, including dyslexia, are assessed well and support is provided quickly; those who take up the support benefit considerably from it.
- Students are supported very well. Personal support is outstanding. Group tutorial activities develop students' life and employability skills and support progression to higher education or employment. Students value the one-to-one support from teachers and personal tutors. Academic support is readily available in the study centre but some students who are not achieving their grades do not attend. Students' progress is monitored very closely on vocational courses. Most students are aware of their target grades and what they need to do to achieve them.
- New processes to raise standards and improve student outcomes were introduced last year and, although there has been insufficient time for them to be fully embedded or consistently applied, they have supported significant improvements in achievement in most areas. A few targets are not sufficiently challenging but actions are rigorously monitored and the college knows exactly what it needs to do to improve performance further.
- Equality and diversity are promoted very well in an inclusive and welcoming environment. A culture of mutual respect and valuing individuals is prevalent across the college and successes are celebrated well.
- Students have excellent opportunities to make a positive contribution to their local community. They are appropriately involved in decision making at all levels in the college and are aware of actions taken and the resulting improvements. Students are involved in course reviews and effectively inform self-assessment. They have influenced assessment strategies, timetabling decisions and teaching approaches.

- The college's self-assessment process is robust; managers and staff are aware of what is required to further improve the provision. The self-assessment report is accurate in its grades but in places it is overly-descriptive: occasionally, expected norms are cited as strengths and the report does not always identify clearly the evidence base. Actions to support improvement are not always sufficiently sharp enough to give precise measurable outcomes.

What does Huddersfield New College need to do to improve further?

- Review information, advice and guidance arrangements, including entry criteria and guidance processes, to ensure students are on the right course and so that more remain on their course, particularly on AS-level courses.
- Embed the highly effective monitoring systems, used to support high achievement in vocational areas, consistently across all courses to improve the progress made by all students, particularly those on A-level courses. Monitor closely underachieving students and ensure they attend relevant support sessions.
- Share good practice in teaching and learning to ensure that learning objectives are clear and that the most-able students develop their critical evaluation and analytical skills to achieve high grades.
- Sharpen the recording of the evidence used in the self-assessment report. Ensure that all targets in the action plans are sufficiently challenging, specific and measurable so that progress is more rapid and the impact can be measured more effectively.

Summary of the views of students as confirmed by inspectors

What students like:

- helpful, friendly and enthusiastic teachers who go the extra mile
- the diverse community, where everyone is respected and valued equally
- the very safe and welcoming environment, where you are treated as an adult
- the support from staff, who encourage and help you to achieve your best
- interesting work in lessons and assignments
- the variety and flexibility in the courses offered
- high-quality resources and the on-line learning materials.

What students would like to see improved:

- the timetable so that there are fewer gaps during the day and more opportunities to participate in enrichment activities
- the timing of assignment deadlines so they are not grouped together

- better value for money in the refectory and vending machines
- the frequency of buses
- overcrowding in the dining area at lunch time.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

6. The college has made good progress in improving the quality of education since its last inspection. Success rates in 2010/11 are the highest achieved by the college. Senior managers have maintained the college's inclusive ethos to change the lives of young people in Kirklees. Refocused strategies to raise standards have been effective and staff are very clear about their accountabilities to meet targets. Students on vocational qualifications achieve very well and make outstanding progress. Success rates at AS level have increased to the average in similar colleges. A significant minority of A-level students are not achieving grades in line with their capabilities. Key improvements include: the curriculum changes to meet the needs of young people; improved group tutorials; outstanding partnerships; and a more robust self-assessment process. A strong focus on teaching and learning has improved the quality of lessons. Whilst the self-assessment report is accurate the action plans do not contain sufficient detail or precise enough targets to enable managers at all levels to monitor progress.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

7. Success rates improved in 2010/11, following a decline in 2009/10 and are now in line with the sixth form college average. The decline in 2009/10 is mostly attributable to a fall in retention rates, which are now satisfactory. Around 60% of students complete vocational qualifications. Success rates on vocational courses at both advanced and intermediate levels are high and most students achieve merit or distinction grades. The A-level success rate is high and at AS level it has improved by six percentage points and is now in-line with those of similar colleges. English language, French, media, film and music achieve consistently very good results but success rates in law, modern history, accounting and science subjects, although improved, are lower than in similar colleges.
8. Success rates on foundation level business are exceptionally high and students make outstanding progress. The vast majority progress to an intermediate level qualification; in recent years around a third have achieved an advanced level qualification and continued their studies at university. Around two-thirds of the very high numbers of students who resit their GCSEs achieve grade A* to C, a significant improvement since the last inspection. Success rates for different groups of students are monitored across the whole college and have led to improvements to reduce identified achievement gaps. Overall, students who receive additional learning support achieve as well as their peers, those on vocational programmes do much better, whilst those on AS- and A-level courses do not always achieve as well.

9. Students come from a diverse range of backgrounds; some have low aspirations and the college improves the life chances of many of these young people. The prior attainment of the A-level students is lower than that found in similar colleges. Most students make good or outstanding progress during their time at college, although a significant minority of students on A-level courses do not achieve the grades they are capable of, given their GCSE results. The progress of students on vocational BTEC courses is outstanding.
10. The quality of students' work is good and is particularly impressive in vocational assignments. However, the development of students' evaluative and analytical skills is not always sufficiently developed in A-level subjects. Students develop in confidence and improve their social and personal skills. They develop good study and work-related skills, which prepare them well for higher education or employment. Students' behaviour in lessons and around college is exemplary. Students' attendance is high and punctuality is good. They enjoy college and the progression between levels within the college is good. Progression from AS to A-level has improved significantly and is high. The proportion of students progressing to positive destinations, including higher education and apprenticeships, is good. Despite persistent follow-up a significant minority of students' destinations are unknown.
11. Students feel very safe in the college and have suggested many of the recent developments, such as ID cards to restrict access to buildings, and the visitors' safety guide. Safe working practices are adopted in practical subjects. Students feel that people from all different backgrounds are welcomed in college, that bullying or harassment are not tolerated, and that there is always someone to help them if they have a problem.
12. An outstanding range of services and opportunities promote students' awareness on how to stay healthy and many students participate in sporting activities. Students value greatly what is known in the college as 'The Open Door', which provides wide-ranging and confidential support. The service employs health practitioners and counsellors; it provides links to an extensive range of external agencies and promotes a range of eye-catching initiatives to promote students' well-being. Many students are actively involved in innovative college and local community events.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

13. The quality of teaching and learning is mostly good with a few pockets of excellent practice. Enthusiastic teachers and displays of student work motivate students. Teachers use a good range of activities to engage and challenge students. The best teachers use sharp and incisive questions to check students' knowledge and deeper levels of understanding. Students work very well in groups and can explain different concepts to their peers but occasionally not all students are fully involved in the tasks.

14. Information learning technologies and the college's VLE are used extensively to develop learning in and outside of lessons. For example, ILT was used very effectively in geography to show the impact of earthquakes and tsunamis. In a few lessons the focus of what will be learned is not always clear. Planned activities do not always provide sufficient challenge for the most-able students.
15. Assessment practices support learning and teachers use praise effectively to raise students' confidence. Teachers' feedback to students, in almost all areas, is clear and supportive with constructive comments to help students improve. However, the setting of homework on AS- and A-level courses is inconsistent. Students appreciate their teachers' support in lessons, through workshops and sessions in the study centre and the opportunity to attend other classes.
16. Improving the quality of teaching and learning is a very high priority. Good practice is now shared more consistently across subjects in the newly-introduced teaching and learning communities. Robust internal lesson observations are used well to develop teachers' skills and identify training and development needs. The college recognises that their own lesson observation records place too much emphasis on teaching and not enough on learning.
17. The college offers a broad and inclusive range of courses to meet the needs of students in the local area. The curriculum has evolved significantly in recent years and now includes a wider range of alternative vocational courses alongside a substantial number of AS- and A-level subjects. The college has recently revised the entry criteria for academic subjects and has alternative courses available for students who do not have the required GCSE results. The curriculum is very flexible and provides opportunities to mix academic and vocational options to meet students' career aspirations.
18. A broad range of weekly enrichment activities is offered, although timetabling does not allow all students to participate. Most students take part in and enjoy whole college events such the cultural Olympics day. Participation in recreational fitness activities, which are often influenced by students, are outstanding. Many students achieve relevant additional qualifications such as sports coaching, cabin crew and first aid. Many students gain valuable work-related skills; almost 700 students completed work experience or voluntary work in the local community in 2010/11. An increasing number of students develop good research and communication skills and successfully complete the extended project qualification. In 2011 a small proportion of A-level students gained the sixth form baccalaureate.
19. Subject staff arrange a wide range of visits and trips to enhance learning. Several subjects have themed weeks, such as the European week for language students and a sustainable 'Dragons Den'- style competition in art and business. Fund-raising events raise substantial sums of money for students' chosen charities.

20. Partnerships are outstanding. College managers are key players in the local 14 to 19 strategic partnership to develop a curriculum across Kirklees that meets local needs, raises participation in education and reduces the number of young people who are not in education or training. The college works well with local schools, other colleges and higher-education establishments. The college has increased in size in recent years and now has 23% more students than at the last inspection. An extensive range of employers, including international links, are used to provide valuable work-experience placements. A strong partnership with the local primary care trust has demonstrable benefits in improving students' awareness of leading a healthy lifestyle. Very strong links with local schools raise pupils' aspirations, support curriculum developments and transition arrangements. College students run art workshops and sign-language lessons, and they mentor pupils in local schools.
21. Initial information, advice and guidance are comprehensive. As an inclusive college, it has lower entry requirements to study AS level courses than in many similar places. However, for some students a vocational course would be more appropriate. Induction helps students settle into college quickly. Science and sport have now introduced an integrated vocational and academic induction programme to place students on the most appropriate course.
22. Through group tutorials students acquire valuable life skills. Foundation and intermediate level students complete a work skills qualification; advanced level students complete a drugs awareness and health and safety qualifications. Students value their one-to-one reviews with their tutor, when they discuss progress against their target grades. Individuals identified as underperforming are referred to subject-specific support in the study centre. However, attendance at these targeted sessions is not consistently monitored and the academic support is not always accessed by those who need it most.
23. Support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding and significantly improves their confidence and independence and they achieve as well as their peers. Transition arrangements are adapted to meet individuals' needs so that they settle into college quickly. Additional support, including a personal mentor, is provided promptly. All students are assessed for dyslexia during induction; students who access the support achieve well but some students choose not to take it up.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

24. The Principal and senior leadership team provide strong leadership and a clear strategic direction. The college's highly inclusive mission underpins all aspects of its work. A culture of mutual respect and valuing individuals is prevalent. Staff are ambitious to improve students' life chances and successes are celebrated. The college has good links with local partners and uses labour market intelligence well to develop the curriculum. New processes to raise standards were introduced last year but a few targets are not sufficiently challenging.

Whilst these are not yet fully embedded, actions are monitored rigorously and have led to significant improvements in most areas. Performance management is robust; staff are aware of what needs to be improved and are very clear about their accountability that is focused on students. Curriculum management is good.

25. Governance is good. Governors use their extensive professional skills to provide clear direction, challenge and support. Their understanding of the college's strengths, areas for improvement, potential opportunities and threats, is good. The Corporation value the student governors' full involvement and they use their position effectively to suggest improvements.
26. Procedures for safeguarding students are excellent. Staff recruitment processes are comprehensive and a single central staff record is in place. All staff have received basic awareness training and regular updates, with higher level training for relevant staff. Risk management is robust and health and safety are promoted strongly. Policies and procedures are comprehensive, clearly outlining measures taken to ensure the well-being of young people. The college, through its designated senior manager, liaises well with the local safeguarding children's board, the local authority, an extensive range of external agencies, the human resource manager and designated governor to support developments. Students are very clear that if they raise any issues these will be quickly and effectively dealt with.
27. The college promotes equality and diversity very well. It meets its legislative duties and has achieved several national recognition awards. The college is an inclusive and welcoming community with high levels of respect throughout the organisation. The college provides highly effective support for vulnerable students in many ways including the New College Diversity Club. This very successful initiative is led by students, who promote the activities and have written their own constitution. Thought-provoking displays and attractive postcards that promote a range of services are strategically placed and are easily accessible. Issues are raised and differences celebrated in lessons and through special events and themed weeks. The college uses data well to identify any underperforming groups and continually develops strategies that have been effective in narrowing any gaps.
28. Students at the college greatly value the fact that all staff are approachable and willing to listen and act on their feedback. Students have excellent opportunities to contribute appropriately to decision making at all levels. They are aware of actions taken and the resulting improvements. For example, students are involved in course reviews and have influenced assessment strategies, timetabling decisions and teaching approaches. Student focus groups are central to the teaching review process and inform self-assessment. Students are effectively empowered to take responsibility for their learning and welfare and are actively involved in negotiating additional bus routes. The elected student union represents students' views to managers and at a national level. The

student union arranges charity and social events which are supported well by students and staff.

29. The college's self-assessment process is robust. Managers and staff are aware of what is required to improve provision. Good access to reliable data enables middle managers and teachers to monitor closely students' attendance and performance and has led to improvements in most subjects. Senior managers monitor closely the minority of under-performing courses. The self-assessment report is accurate in its grades but in places it is overly-descriptive and it does not always clearly identify the evidence base. In a few places, the report identifies as strengths aspects of the college that is an expectation of what should be in place. Actions to support improvement need to be sharper with specific measurable outcomes in all cases. Effective monitoring systems have supported very good achievement on most vocational courses. Similar systems are being developed for academic courses to support improved progress for all students, particularly those on A-level courses.
30. The college has a very strong financial position and has embraced the sustainability agenda. High-quality resources are utilised well. Staff are well qualified and deployed effectively and efficiently. The college provides good value for money.

Subject areas

Science and mathematics

Grade 3

Context

31. Currently 1,221 students study mathematics and science courses. Two thirds are on A-level courses and 26% are from minority-ethnic backgrounds. The college offers AS- and A-level courses in mathematics, further mathematics, use of mathematics, statistics, biology, physics and chemistry, as well as BTEC certificates and diplomas in applied science, free-standing mathematics qualifications and numeracy, and GCSEs in mathematics, the use of mathematics and science.

Key findings

- Success rates on AS-level mathematics courses have improved considerably and are now good. On AS-level science subjects the success rates fell in 2010/11 and were low. Success rates on most A-level courses have improved and are satisfactory. The proportion of students achieving A* to C grade in GCSE mathematics and science are above the national averages. Students on intermediate and A-level vocational science achieve well: many obtain high grades and make good progress. At AS-level mathematics students make excellent progress but value added on A-level courses is low.
- Students enjoy their learning and attendance is good. They feel safe in college and follow safe working practices in the laboratories. Students develop teamwork and sound practical skills, but their ability to articulate their understanding of advanced scientific concepts is not sufficiently developed. Mathematics students present their working clearly and systematically in exercise books.
- Teaching and learning are good. A good range of teaching and learning activities includes the widespread and effective use of mini whiteboards to test individual students' understanding; interactive whiteboards to explore key concepts, using relevant topics; and paired working, where students improve their understanding by assisting their peers. However, there are limited examples of extra and more-challenging activities for the more-able students who have completed their work.
- Teachers use praise and classroom displays to engage and motivate students. Teachers often use effective questioning techniques and appropriate prompts to develop students' thinking behind their response. When teachers use open questions a few students tend to dominate discussions. Students receive good support from their teachers as they work on individual or group tasks but a few teachers do not always ensure that the students' full attention is engaged when speaking to the whole class to reinforce a key learning point.

- The mathematics and science curriculum and its delivery are regularly adjusted to respond to student feedback and better meet their needs. Common induction work now provides flexibility to enable those who are not coping with academic science subjects to transfer to a vocational option. Mathematics offers a diverse range of courses, including the use of mathematics at advanced and intermediate levels and the free standing mathematics qualifications for students who need to improve their mathematics skills for their other subjects.
- The college has recognised that AS-level sciences are not always the most appropriate courses for students with relatively low levels of prior attainment. In previous years too many students moved to other subjects after studying AS-level sciences. Entry requirements have been increased but for a few students these have not always been rigorously applied at enrolment. Supplementary courses such as data analysis for biologists are now a prerequisite to studying the subject. Potential mathematics students must complete pre-enrolment exercises so that they are better prepared for advanced level work.
- Assessment is satisfactory. Most teachers frequently check students' understanding in lessons and mark their written work accurately with appropriate feedback. Students are aware of their target grades and how to improve. Common assessment results are now stored on-line and supplemented by regularly set homework. Students value the resources and extra support materials available on the VLE, which they are able to use from home and in college.
- Academic support is good and students appreciate extra revision and catch-up sessions, which are available after college, at weekends and in holidays. Science and mathematics staff are regularly available in the study centre. Although this support is targeted at students who are not achieving their full potential the staff do not always monitor attendance closely and ensure that those who need it most are attending.
- Highly effective leadership has led to rapid improvements in mathematics although management strategies in science are less effective. More robust performance management is now in place. Self-assessment is broadly accurate but there are inconsistencies in the use of data. The science action plan is not sufficiently focused and too many targets were not achieved last year. Underperforming courses are correctly identified: appropriate actions have led to improvements although this needs to continue at a more rapid pace in AS-level science subjects.

What does Huddersfield New College need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates on AS-level science subjects by ensuring that students enrolled on these courses meet the entry criteria and complete additional relevant work to support their understanding of advanced science work. Share good practice between the science and mathematics departments, such as extending the use of pre-enrolment tasks.

- Ensure that lessons and assessment tasks provide stretch and challenge for the more-able students and encourage them to communicate using precise technical language so that more students achieve the grade they are capable of, given their prior level of attainment.
- Improve the monitoring of students' attendance at study support centre sessions to ensure the right students are benefitting from the extra lessons.
- Use course and student data to identify key areas for improvement. Ensure that the analysis of data links to action plans which contain clear targets and timely interventions. Regularly and rigorously monitor progress towards achieving targets.

Sport, travel and tourism

Grade 2

Context

32. Currently 382 students study sport and 96 study travel and tourism. Of these, 36 are studying courses at intermediate level and 442 at advanced level. Around two thirds are male students and 20% are of minority ethnic groups. Most students complete relevant additional qualifications.

Key findings

- Students enjoy their courses and achieve very well. Success rates are high on all courses except AS-level physical education and, despite recent improvements; it is still well below the national average. Most students study vocational qualifications and the vast majority achieve merit and distinction grades. Success rates on sports industry-specific qualifications are excellent. In 2010/11 around 170 students successfully completed a wide variety of coaching qualifications and all travel and tourism students successfully completed the cabin crew qualification.
- Most students make good or excellent progress on both intermediate and advanced vocational courses. However, too many students do not achieve their expected grade on AS- and A-level physical education courses.
- A supportive and competitive sporting environment produces outstanding sports academies in cricket, men's and ladies' football, basketball and rugby league. Academy students benefit from professional coaching and compete at a very high standard. Many achieve regional and national recognition as elite performers and in recent years several have progressed to American universities on sports scholarships.
- Students develop an excellent understanding of the sports industry, adopt safe working practices and acquire highly relevant coaching and instructing skills. Their contribution to the local community through coaching school children and organising sports events is outstanding. Students are confident when making presentations, their standard of written work is good and their behaviour is exemplary.
- All vocational students complete work placements across a broad variety of relevant sectors, including retail, hotels and restaurants, fitness studios, professional football clubs, museums and travel centres. Each year a few travel and tourism students participate in an exchange programme to Sweden.
- Teaching and learning are mostly good. Teachers have high expectations of their students. Lessons are carefully planned so that students with a wide range of abilities make good progress. Students are encouraged to carry out independent research to contribute industry-relevant examples in lessons. Travel and tourism students researched the services available in a variety of visitor attractions and produced a professional presentation for the group. In a

- few lessons, questioning techniques do not sufficiently encourage higher level thinking skills and there is an over-reliance on group work, which becomes repetitive.
- Information technology is used very well to support learning. Sports students used on-line resources to complete velocity and speed calculations for a 100-metre sprint race. Teachers effectively use video clips of sports injury to investigate the psychological impact of serious trauma and in a skill acquisition lesson students studied the movement analysis of the putting stroke in golf.
 - Assessment is well planned and varied, encouraging students to utilise a broad range of skills to achieve their full potential. Students' behaviour and the relationships between staff and students are excellent. In AS- and A-level physical education underperforming students are not monitored closely. Insufficient attention is given to ensuring that these students consistently receive and complete appropriate homework and tests in order to develop their examination technique.
 - The college provides a good range of vocational and academic programmes in both sport and travel and tourism. A variety of trips and residential visits enrich students' learning. The sport enrichment programme is extensive and includes suggestions made by students, for example, the introduction of Zumba. The facilities are very good and participation is high.
 - Academic support for learning and personal support are both good. Effective links with local schools encourage and support vulnerable students to progress to college. Achievement of students with specific needs is excellent. Specialist support workshops help students who are behind with work, need extra help, or want to improve their grades.
 - Managers promote high standards and expectations for staff and students. Curriculum teams review students' progress and discuss feedback from course representatives. Electronic monitoring systems encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers work closely with students at one-to-one reviews to help them to achieve high grades. Students are aware of their target grades and the progress they are making.
 - Judgements in the self-assessment report are mostly accurate, although the outcomes from lesson observation grades are over-generous. The quality-improvement plans do not include specific measurable outcomes. It is not clear how some actions will bring about the intended improvement or how this will be monitored.
 - The promotion of safeguarding and equality and diversity are outstanding. Students complete risk assessments as part of their coaching units and health and safety check sheets are used in practical lessons. The ethos embedded throughout the department positively discourages bullying and harassment, and celebrates the Olympic values of respect, friendship and excellence. Staff have taken positive actions to promote gender, disability and race inclusion and students work with local school pupils with disabilities.

What does Huddersfield New College need to do to improve further?

- Improve the success rates in AS-level physical education by ensuring students are enrolled on the right course.
- Increase the proportion of AS- and A-level physical education students that meet or exceed their expected grade. Monitor their progress throughout the year using consistent homework strategies to quickly identify students who are underperforming and take prompt action. Prepare students thoroughly for external examinations.
- Set precise targets in the quality-improvement action plan and ensure that identified actions are focused and lead to measurable outcomes.

Visual, performing arts and media

Grade 2

Context

33. Currently 1,182 students study art and design, design technology, media and performing arts courses. Most of the provision is at advanced level and includes academic and vocational options. Almost two thirds are female students and 17% are from minority ethnic groups.

Key findings

- Success rates are high on most courses. Pass rates are very high with a significant number of courses gaining 100% pass rates in 2011. However, success rates on BTEC intermediate level art and design, the national diploma in performing arts and AS-level drama are lower than those in similar colleges. On A-level art and design courses, students do not always make the progress expected of them when compared with prior attainment.
- The standard of students' work is good. For example, there is well controlled and sensitive dramatic performance work, exploratory and experimental textile and fine art work, well organised and professionally presented photography and graphic design, and proficient media and film outcomes. Students develop good research and effective self-critical analysis skills.
- Teaching and learning are good. Lessons include a good variety of activities but a few lesson plans lack sufficient focus on expected learning outcomes. Teachers use directed questions well to check learning and give all students the opportunity to contribute and develop in-depth responses. Information technology is embedded in course delivery and is particularly effective in musical theatre. In a minority of lessons teachers tend to talk too much and miss opportunities to encourage student responses.
- Assessments are well thought out, regular and thorough. Teachers' feedback to students is specific and detailed and makes it clear to learners what they need to do to improve. Students are aware of their target grades and how they are progressing against them. Optional and mandatory additional practical sessions are provided for those identified as needing extra help.
- Initial advice and guidance do not always ensure that creative art students are enrolled on the most appropriate course. Initial diagnosis of students' skills and abilities is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that students have the necessary level of practical skill.
- Very good professional-standard resources and work areas are maintained well and fully utilised. Students' work is displayed well throughout college. Exemplar work is celebrated and used to demonstrate the required high standards and inspire students.
- Support for students is very strong. Students value the extra help they get from their teachers and support workers. Individual student support needs are

identified early and provided promptly. All students benefit from a variety of regular drop-in workshops and opportunities to give them additional studio time and increased access to specialist resources.

- Very good partnerships with local schools and universities promote the arts and provide good enrichment activities. Workshops with a range of professional practitioners and good links with dance and theatre companies enhance the learners' experiences. Music students perform at local primary schools to encourage the development of music in the schools.
- Leadership and management are good. The course review process is robust: it has correctly identified underperforming provision and appropriate action is taken. For example, more vocational provision is being developed to better respond to the needs of students. Students' views are listened to carefully and have led to improvements in course delivery.
- Managers use data well to monitor subject performance. Staff are encouraged to try new teaching strategies and good practice is shared across subjects. The new electronic student-monitoring system is quickly identifying those who are not achieving their full potential, although it is too soon to judge its full impact.
- Students' behaviour is impressive and they demonstrate respect for each other and their teachers. Cultural diversity is actively promoted through assignments that encourage students to carry out wider research to investigate and appreciate the creative work of other cultures. The area is very inclusive and safeguarding is a very high priority.

What does Huddersfield New College need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates on BTEC intermediate level art and design, the national diploma in performing arts and AS-level drama, by identifying issues specific to these courses and taking prompt and appropriate action.
- Develop more robust initial advice and guidance procedures that include appropriate entry criteria and the assessment of students' practical skills in order to ensure they are enrolled on the most appropriate specialist creative art course.
- Improve students' progress by using effectively the new monitoring system to ensure they reach their full potential, and provide grade-improvement support so that the proportion of higher grades increases.
- Develop a more consistent approach to planning lessons so that all teachers are more specific and focused on what students will learn when planning activities.

English and modern foreign languages

Grade 2

Context

34. Currently 570 students study AS- and A-level English language, English literature, and English language and literature courses, and 185 students study GCSE English. The college provides AS- and A-level French, German and Spanish for 51 students. Almost 60% of students are female and 20% are from minority ethnic groups.

Key findings

- Success rates are consistently high on A-level courses and have improved on most AS-level courses to above the national average of similar colleges. All students studying A-level English literature, French, German and Spanish achieved their qualification in 2010/11. On AS-level German and A-level English language and literature courses, retention is low.
- Most A-level students make good or better progress although the proportion of students achieving high grades in A-level English literature, English language and literature, and German is lower than expected from their prior attainment. Students make very good progress in all AS-level subjects except Spanish. The proportion of students achieving a grade A* to C in GCSE English is good.
- Students enjoy their lessons, acquire confidence and are well motivated to produce good quality work. Teachers have high expectations and use praise well to raise students' self-esteem. In English lessons students understand the linguistic techniques of Tennyson and Miller and skilfully challenge each other's views of poetry. In modern foreign languages students have a good knowledge of language structures, develop their vocabulary well and communicate effectively.
- Teaching and learning are good. Students work productively in lessons. English workbooks are used effectively to help students articulate their views on drama. In French lessons, carefully planned activities develop students' very good speaking and listening skills. Group and pair work are often used well to develop students' skills of analysis and insight.
- Students feel very safe: they respect each other and value different views. Students are attentive during class discussions and demonstrate real curiosity and wider interests. In a few lessons, the work was not sufficiently demanding and teachers did not always provide opportunities to develop students' responses to questions.
- Assessment is good. Written work is marked thoroughly; teachers carefully annotate essays and give clear guidelines for improvement. In modern foreign languages, progress records are monitored closely to improve students' performance, although students are not always aware of their progress.

- A variety of trips and extra-curricular activities such as the college magazine, a debating society, creative writing and journalism clubs enrich students' learning although participation rates are variable. An overseas exchange programme and weekly sessions with a native-speaking language assistant improve language students' confidence.
- Support for students is good. Teachers respond well to individual requests to help students catch up. A good range of support materials is available on the VLE. Students with special learning needs are supported well in lessons.
- Induction is planned well. Students wishing to study AS-level English now complete a pre-enrolment task but it is too soon to judge its effectiveness in ensuring students are placed on the right course. The modern languages department provides taster courses in high schools to promote A-level courses.
- Students develop positive attitudes towards other cultures. Successful strategies have reduced the achievement gap of the few minority ethnic students who under-achieved in 2010. Foreign customs and traditions are frequently celebrated but occasionally opportunities are missed to promote debate on wider issues.
- Curriculum management is good. Managers demonstrate strong and positive leadership and intervene promptly to resolve difficulties. For example, the A-level English literature and English language and literature courses have recently been restructured. Staff work well together in their teams and share resources but the outcomes from lesson observations are not always used consistently to share best practice.
- Managers and staff are aware of the strengths and areas to improve, although the evidence in the self-assessment report is not always sufficiently precise. The targets and actions in the quality-improvement plan are vague and do not give sufficient clarity to enable staff to monitor effectively their impact.

What does Huddersfield New College need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that there are sufficiently demanding activities, in lessons and through homework assessments, so that more students achieve a higher grade.
- Improve retention on AS-level German and A-level English language and literature by ensuring that students are on the most appropriate course and those at risk of leaving college are monitored very closely.
- Systematically use the outcomes from lesson observations to provide more opportunities to share good practice.
- Ensure that clear robust actions are identified to remedy areas for improvement and that targets are specific enough to measure the impact of actions taken.

Information about the inspection

35. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's Deputy Principal, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding body, 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.
36. Inspectors used group and individual interviews to gain the views of students. They looked at questionnaires students had recently completed for the college. They observed lessons and assessments. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Huddersfield New 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	16-18 Learner responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners		
Full-time learners	2353	2353
Part-time learners	0	0
Overall effectiveness	2	2
Capacity to improve	2	
Outcomes for learners	2	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2	
How well do learners progress?	2	
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2	
How safe do learners feel?	1	
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	1	
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2	
Quality of provision	2	2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2	
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?	1	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2	
Leadership and management	2	
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2	
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2	
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	1	
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?	1	
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2	
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2	

*where applicable to the type of provision

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231 or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk