

Henley College Coventry

Partial reinspection report

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Introduction

1. Henley College is one of two medium-sized colleges in Coventry. The college recruits a high proportion of students from the most disadvantaged areas in Coventry. Unemployment and the proportion of the population who have no qualifications are above national averages. The number of Year 11 pupils living locally who achieve five A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, is significantly lower than average. The college offers provision in most subjects areas, with the exception of construction and social sciences.
2. Ofsted inspectors conducted a monitoring visit in September 2011 to explore the progress being made against the recommendations identified at the last full inspection in December 2010. At that inspection, overall effectiveness, capacity to improve, outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management were all judged as satisfactory. Of the four subject areas inspected, one was good, two were satisfactory and engineering was inadequate. This report comprises both the reinspection of engineering provision and a review of progress against three monitoring visit themes.

The outcome of the reinspection is as follows:

Subject area	Original grade	Reinspection grade
Engineering	4	2

Context

3. The college offers courses in mechanical and manufacturing engineering from foundation to advanced level. At the time of inspection 62 learners aged 16 to 18 and 11 adult learners were on full-time courses with a further 22 learners aged 16 to 18 and 87 adult learners studying part-time. Almost all learners are male. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds is similar to that of the local community the college serves.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners have significantly improved since the last inspection. In 2010/11 success rates for foundation and intermediate level learners were high but too few advanced level learners achieved their qualification. In the current year retention rates are high and tracking information shows that most learners, including those on advanced level courses, have achieved. Success rates for functional skills qualifications have improved markedly and are high.
- Learners make good progress and complete practical work to a high standard. They work diligently and safely in workshops and demonstrate confidence and competence in both producing machined components and in their use of hand tools. Learners' written work is to a satisfactory standard.

- Learners develop good vocational and employability skills. Their understanding of industry practice is significantly enhanced through a comprehensive range of visits to local manufacturers and an extensive work experience programme. Links with employers are good. All intermediate level learners attend work experience with local companies and some have been offered employment once they complete their course.
- Progression rates to further study and higher education are good. A high proportion of learners progress from foundation level through to advanced level study. Many advanced level learners progress to higher level study either at the college or elsewhere, although few enter employment directly.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers employ a wide range of strategies to engage learners. Practical lessons are interesting and enjoyable. Theory teaching is often lively, interesting and well structured. Learners are clear about their learning aims and participate well. Teachers use short quizzes well to check and reinforce learners' knowledge although these sometimes take up too much time.
- Teachers' questioning of learners in lessons does not always challenge the most able or encourage them to go beyond what is necessary to pass the qualification. The targets set for learners to achieve are not always sufficiently specific or challenging, especially for more able learners.
- Foundation level learners benefit from an engaging and enjoyable simulated work experience week. They willingly engage with the project and value the opportunity to use their skills and knowledge in a different environment. Learners benefit from experiencing realistic and varied job roles including those of supervisor, quality inspector, safety officer and production manager.
- Assessment is frequent and fair. Assignments are appropriate for the level of study and deadlines are clear. Work is marked promptly and learners say that the feedback they receive is helpful. However, not all teachers correct spelling and grammar and the feedback provided by teachers does not always sufficiently encourage learners to improve their work to achieve higher grades.
- The range of courses meets learners' and employers' needs very well. The introduction of an intermediate certificate and consolidation of advanced level courses provides learners with clear progression routes that help them to succeed. Theory and practical skills development now complement each other well and aid learners understanding.
- Learners receive good care, guidance and support. Initial assessment is used appropriately to guide learners onto the correct course and to identify additional support needs. Teachers are acutely aware of the individual needs of their learners and have appropriate strategies in place to support them. Learners with significant barriers to success, including homelessness, receive good support to enable them to continue with their studies.
- Leadership and management are good. Managers have responded well to the previous inspection and implemented a range of effective measures to improve performance. Managers have been successful in raising expectations and

promoting ambition among staff and learners. The staff team work very well together sharing ideas and supporting learners. Staff morale is high.

- Quality improvement arrangements are effective. The area has made good progress with all of the recommendations from the previous inspection and has improved the quality of provision and outcomes for learners. The self-assessment report is accurate and identifies clearly the areas for further improvement.

What does Henley College Coventry need to do to improve further?

- Encourage all learners to achieve to their full potential by setting more challenging and stretching targets. Ensure that questioning in lessons challenges the more able learners so they complete work to a higher standard and achieve higher grades.
- Ensure that all assessors correct learners' spelling and grammar and provide detailed individual feedback that enables and encourages learners to aim higher.

Additional Themes

Inspectors explored the following themes as part of this reinspection.

Self-assessment and improvement planning

How much progress has the college made in developing and implementing monitoring and evaluation practices that enable more rigorous self-assessment and more rapid improvement planning? **Significant progress**

The quantity and quality of management information has much improved since the last inspection. Information is more readily available and an extensive range of reports are now used to monitor course performance effectively. Curriculum managers are more rigorously held to account for the performance of courses for which they are responsible during frequent progress review meetings. A comprehensive range of data is used to monitor and evaluate course performance and to target intervention activity that enables more rapid improvement planning.

The self-assessment report for 2010/11 provides a realistic overview of college performance and the grades awarded for both cross-college aspects and for curriculum areas are generally well supported by evidence. Further improvements in monitoring and evaluation practices in 2011/12 provide the college with a wider range of evidence for use in self-assessment and enable more timely improvement planning in curriculum areas. However, the impact of monitoring and evaluation activity on improving provision is variable, with the rate of improvement being much greater in some areas than in others. College performance monitoring shows significant improvements in sport while performance in beauty therapy remains a cause for concern.

Outcomes for learners

How much progress has the college made in improving outcomes for learners since the last inspection? **Reasonable progress**

Overall success rates have risen since the last inspection and in 2010/11 were just below the corresponding national averages of similar colleges. Long course success rates improved for learners aged 16 to 18 at all levels but remained below national rates, significantly so at intermediate level. Success rates for adult learners on long courses improved at foundation and intermediate levels but declined at advanced level. Adult long course success rates are well above the national average rate at foundation level, significantly below average at intermediate level and below average at advanced level.

Success rates improved in six of the eleven areas where the college offers provision and overall long course success rates were above average in five subject areas and below average in five areas. On work-based learning courses overall success rates declined slightly in 2010/11 and were just above the national rate. Success rates on short courses and on key and functional skills courses were well below corresponding

national rates in 2010/11 but have improved in the current year. College data for the current academic year show an improvement in retention and attendance rates overall, although it is too early to judge what the impact might be on overall success rates.

Quality of provision

How much progress has the college made in enhancing arrangements to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching and learning?

Reasonable progress

Since the last inspection the college has enhanced arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning by introducing a wider range of quality assurance practices. Themed learning walks now provide the college with a useful insight into aspects of teaching and learning and complement the formally graded observations that continue to take place. Developmental observations have also been introduced that provide staff with useful advice and guidance that enable them to improve their practice and develop their pedagogical skills. The college continues to refine monitoring and evaluation practices and is reviewing arrangements for graded observations to provide an even more accurate picture of the quality of typical teaching and learning.

The college evaluates the information collected during monitoring activity well and has a clear understanding of the main strengths and areas for improvement relating to teaching and learning. Development activity is useful and well planned. College data for the 2011/12 academic year show that the quality of teaching and learning is improving while recognising that further improvements are required in the use of assessment for learning, the use of questioning techniques by teachers and in ensuring that all students are sufficiently challenged in lessons.

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