

Oldham Sixth Form College

Sixth form college

Inspection dates		26 February–1 March 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding-1
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- The new principal and governing body have a revised and highly ambitious vision for the college that is deeply rooted in raising aspirations and improving the life chances for students within Oldham and the surrounding areas. Their improvement plans are impacting positively.
- Outcomes on GCE A-levels are higher than in similar colleges.
- The college promotes tolerance and the appreciation of diversity among students very successfully. The college mission and ethos are inclusive and harmonious relations are fostered.
- Resources are very good and the Regional Science Centre is excellent.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. The college's 'professional learning communities' enable good practice to be shared and high-quality experiences to be provided for students.
- Vocational and cross-college enrichments are strong and develop students' personal skills.
- Monitoring of students' progress has been strengthened this year and is rigorous. Students' knowledge of their targets is good.
- Links to parents are very strong, enabling them to support students' progress.
- Careers guidance is good and results in a high proportion of students progressing to higher education, employment or training.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Learners' outcomes, including those for all groups of learners, are not consistently high across all subjects. Outcomes on a minority of substantial GCE AS-level courses are low.
- Too few lessons are outstanding.
- Teachers do not promote and develop students' English and mathematical skills to a consistently high standard across the college.
- Information on students' prior attainment is not always used effectively to plan lessons that meet the needs of all students to enable them to achieve their potential.
- Not all aspects of equality and diversity monitoring are undertaken with sufficient rigour.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Continue to prioritise improvements in teaching, learning and assessment by consolidating the work of 'professional learning communities', developing teachers' skills and sharing best practice to raise standards of teaching, learning and assessment from good to outstanding.
- Identify and support the language needs of all students so that they develop the skills they need for their current courses and future progression.
- Increase the use of information on students' prior attainment, including their language, literacy and numeracy skills, in order to plan a range of activities to meet the needs of all students so they achieve their potential.
- Implement fully the college's revised quality monitoring process in order to ensure greater consistency in performance across subjects, both in terms of the progress students make and their success in achieving qualifications and high grades.
- Narrow further the gaps in achievement by different groups of students, particularly the White and Black Caribbean heritage group, and differences between gender and ethnicity at qualification level by ensuring managers focus more closely on whether gaps are widening or closing over time. Additionally, ensure managers collate and systematically report all relevant equalities information, including the views of different groups of students, to enable the college to celebrate its successes and more sharply identify any particular issues that emerge over time.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Success rates on long qualifications declined in the three years following the last inspection. They improved considerably in 2011/12 but remain below their previous rate and the national average for similar colleges. ▪ Students' success rates on GCE A-levels are above the national average but on GCE AS-levels they are below national average with too much variation between subjects. Progression from GCE AS-levels to A-levels is low but improving. ▪ An increasing number of students study vocational courses. Students on BTEC courses are successful, although success rates on other vocational courses at intermediate and advanced level are too variable and some are below average. Students on most applied GCE AS-levels are successful and make good progress. ▪ Most students on GCE A-level courses and BTEC courses make good progress compared to their often low starting points. Overall, students on GCE AS-level courses and other vocational courses make the progress expected of them although on some GCE AS-level courses, especially in science, mathematics and business, student progress is too slow. Students of all abilities make rapid progress in A and AS level in English language, history, and physical education, and in AS level in psychology and sociology. ▪ Retention has improved over a three-year period and continues to improve in the current year. Attendance is high. ▪ Achievement between different groups of learners is varied. Most learners with a learning difficulty and/or disability perform similarly to their peers. Those learners in receipt of additional learning support are consistently successful. Overall, the gap between male and female learners widened very slightly in 2011/12 but more marked differences in success rates and high-grade achievement between genders exist at qualification level and between different minority ethnic groups. Value added data indicate females generally make better progress than males in academic subjects. Success rates for most minority ethnic groups improved to varying degrees 	

in 2011/12, although for the White and Black Caribbean heritage group success rates remained considerably below the college average for the second year.

- Progression to higher education is strong, including progression to prestigious universities. Enrichment opportunities are many and varied across the college and within curriculum areas. These enable learners to develop additional skills, confidence and expertise, and to learn about a wide range of opportunities. The grouping of students in most classes increases interaction and communication skills particularly effectively. Learners on both academic and vocational courses can undertake work shadowing, volunteering and mentoring, and become members of the student association, thus increasing their employability skills. The college actively links with industry and encourages positive role models to work with students.
- The development of literacy, language and numeracy skills is inconsistent across the college. All students who have not achieved GCSE English and mathematics are enrolled on re-sit qualifications, which have some poor success rates, or on a recently introduced alternative foundation course. However, the college does not routinely identify and support the language needs of students on advanced-level courses.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and contribute to increasingly positive outcomes for students. This reflects the college's ethos of maintaining a strong focus on learning and a determined approach to improving teaching and assessment. Recently introduced strategies for improvement are having a positive impact. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subject areas and receive good support to improve their skills and share best practice, for example, through the 'professional learning communities'.
- Teachers are enthusiastic, motivated and have high expectations of their students. They provide extensive support and encouragement, for example, in offering workshops, often in their own time, for those not making the required progress or to encourage and enable higher-performing students to achieve even better. Pastoral support for meeting students' personal needs is highly effective. A well-planned tutorial programme enables students to become independent thinkers and further develop their social and employability skills.
- Accommodation is of a high standard. Students benefit from a welcoming environment that encourages learning through displays in well-resourced classrooms. An increasing use of information and web technologies, especially the college's virtual learning environment (VLE), is used effectively and appreciated by teachers and students, ensuring easy access to learning and assessment materials.
- Most lessons are planned effectively and are purposeful, productive and sufficiently challenging. Teachers make good use of their expertise to help students link theory and practice and build upon previous knowledge. In the more successful lessons, learning objectives are clearly identified at the start and evaluated against progress. Teachers make effective use of information about prior attainment to plan a range of activities that meet the needs of all students in the class. Less successful lessons are teacher dominated and students are passive, while in other lessons random questioning by teachers allows the more-confident and able students to monopolise the lesson.
- Students are encouraged to become independent learners and teachers successfully plan collaborative learning opportunities in lessons. Students work productively in groups to complete tasks towards academic goals. For example, students in a health and social care lesson making a presentation, clearly identified the revision tools associated with the topic. The teacher's role successfully changed from giving information to facilitating and enhancing learning.
- Assessment of students' work is good and the college has significantly strengthened assessment processes. Teachers set regular course assignments which, in most cases, are effectively marked with constructive feedback and clear targets indicating areas for improvement. However, there is some inconsistency in the rigour with which mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar are tackled and how effectively language and literacy skills are developed.

- All students are screened on entry to identify specific learning needs. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities value the pre-enrolment assessment so that appropriate support is put into place from the start of their course.
- The majority of teachers set challenging individual targets for students that are rigorously monitored both by subject and personal tutors. Teachers assess carefully and systematically students' learning and progress through a variety of methods such as electronic tracking, regular progress reviews and tutorials. Students deemed to be at risk of underperforming are subject to a range of intervention strategies such as academic workshops and sessions on improving study skills and increasing motivation. The Russell Group tutor groups are successfully raising the aspirations of the more-able and high-achieving students.
- Contact with parents is very good and comprehensive information about students' progress is available on the college portal. Arrangements for monitoring students' attendance and progress are increasingly rigorous and effective.
- Students agree that the advice and guidance they receive is helpful. Significant changes have been made to course-entry requirements and these include more detailed information about possible choices. Career choices in science are promoted very effectively. Good opportunities exist for students to undertake work-related activities through work-experience placements, work shadowing and volunteering.
- Students enjoy their work and report that the college community is harmonious and tolerant and that it engenders equality of opportunity. Students gain significantly from trips, visits, specialist guest lecturers and a wide range of enrichment activities, all of which broaden their horizons. During inspection, a large group of history and politics students, on a trip to Berlin and Krakow, were learning at first-hand about contemporary issues. However, schemes of work and lesson plans do not indicate there is sufficient emphasis on promoting equality and diversity.

Science

Learning programmes for 16-18

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment in science require improvement. The college has comprehensive recovery plans to address weaknesses in outcomes and in teaching and learning, and staff are keen to make improvements. Outcomes, in particular on AS courses, remain a key focus for improvement. Students on A-level courses achieve in line with expectations. Data from the college's students- progress monitoring system show a positive trend in predicted results.
- Students are keen to learn. Some engaging, enthusiastic teaching motivates them highly and progress is good in these lessons. Students' contributions through the skilful use of probing questions are good, for example in one very effective lesson in which students explored the properties of carboxylic acids. In electronics, students developed a good sense of responsibility for their own learning. Some good peer support was observed, for example in a GCSE science class as they worked on shell diagrams of molecular structures.
- In the weaker lessons students do not have sufficient challenge and questions do not probe students' understanding enough or give them sufficient scope for practising using the language of the subject. In some lessons it was not clear how the teacher had planned to meet the different needs of students. In these lessons, some students were not sufficiently engaged in their learning and made slower progress.
- Students' learning experience is significantly enhanced through the Regional Science Centre. They enjoy superb facilities, which the well-qualified staff deploy effectively. The centre successfully caters for a wide range of partners. Teachers use interactive whiteboards and other technology effectively. For example, a video clip about Huntington's disease prompted thoughtful reflection in BTEC science, and social media are used to set challenges in physics. Students value the extensive resources on the college's VLE.

- Students are fully aware of their target grades and of their progress against them. This year, progress monitoring is significantly strengthened. As a result students have greater motivation to do better. Teachers and managers have ready access to information on the progress of individuals and groups, and on those students who may need extra support. The workshop provision is now better targeted at meeting those needs, although attendance rates at some are too low.
- Students have regular homework, which is marked and assessed, often against their target grades. Assessments are appropriately challenging and help students to understand the rigour of science examinations. Some students receive very helpful comments while others do not have enough information to ensure that they know how to improve. Some spelling and grammatical errors and examples of poor handwriting go unchallenged.
- A wide range of science-related enrichment opportunities, for example trips to CERN and engineering projects, support students' wider skills development. Teachers provide many opportunities for students to develop their mathematical and research skills. Specific activities during induction help teachers to assess additional needs but it is not always clear how this information influences their lesson planning. Arrangements to support the development of literacy skills are not promoted sufficiently.
- Better initial advice and guidance, including from subject specialists, has contributed to improvements, for example in the proportion of students staying on their course in biology. Good advice and guidance helps students effectively with their next steps into employment and higher education. Many progress to university and often to highly competitive courses. Promotion of careers in science is good throughout the centre.
- Students work well together and feel equally valued. The Regional Science Centre displays of students' successes reflect and celebrate the diversity of the student population. A 'Girls into Physics' group supports female students to progress in the subject. Schemes of work and lesson plans do not show that sufficient emphasis is put on promoting equality and diversity.

Social sciences

Psychology

Learning programmes for 16-18

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. This is reflected in the outcomes which, in most subjects, are also good. Both sociology and government and politics were outstanding at AS level as was psychology at A2 level. Outcomes in economics were inadequate in 2012. However, recent staff changes together with improvements to the course structure mean that current learners are now making good progress.
- Learners are encouraged to believe they can be successful. Teachers use a wide variety of imaginative activities to capture students' interest. In a sociology lesson on functionalist theories of education the whole class was told to come to the centre of the room and remember their primary school days. All sat cross-legged on the floor. When asked a question they raised their hands and began to address the teacher as 'Miss'. When the teacher rang a bell they all lined up. This powerfully illustrated to students the way that shared values are promoted through education.
- Students' attendance is good and they arrive punctually. Classrooms are suitably furnished with vibrant, stimulating displays. Good use is made of the learning resource centre and the study areas.
- Lessons are thoroughly planned and schemes of work are detailed. Most teachers meet individual needs through effective seating plans and grouping of students for specific activities. This enables students to be stretched and challenged in a variety of ways. In a geography

lesson the teacher had groups of students mark and feedback on each other's work interpreting population statistics. They did this maturely, conscientiously and accurately.

- Students make good progress. Teachers are enthusiastic and encourage an interest beyond the requirements of the qualification. Politics students analyse contemporary events. Sociology and psychology students can relate and apply theory to their own lives and communities. Geography students are actively encouraged to develop their wider, general knowledge, for example the reasons for the post-war baby boom.
- Learning beyond the classroom is good. A good range of trips and visits expands students' horizons. These include trips to factories, museums, universities and Parliament. Homework arrangements are good. Teachers provide workshops and revision sessions at lunchtimes, after lessons and during the holidays. However, the VLE is a repository of useful but rather unimaginative information and its use by teachers and learners is limited.
- Learning is monitored closely in lessons. Most lessons include peer- and self-assessment. In the best lessons this is frequent and imaginative. In a psychology lesson students' evaluations of the lesson were written on post-it notes and redistributed to other students who were responsible for devising an explanation to clarify the issues at the next lesson.
- Students are assessed regularly, both in lessons and through regular, carefully planned homework, returned promptly and usually with detailed feedback. However, this feedback is often restricted to identifying how closely the work is meeting the examination requirements. Although students are developing their oral English skills in lessons, less attention is given to develop their written English. Feedback on assessed work seldom indicates weaknesses in students' English or gives guidance on how to address these.
- Initial advice and guidance have improved to ensure students are clear about the content and demands of their chosen subjects, many of which are new to them. Students get good advice about progression opportunities. For example, students enrolled on the GCSE course in sociology and psychology have the chance to go to a local university to encourage them to appreciate the possibility that, with hard work, university is an option available to them.
- Staff foster excellent relationships between students from all sections of the college community through very good management of seating plans and grouping of students to work together. This is working very effectively. Students really appreciate the opportunity to get to know and work with students from different backgrounds.

English

Modern foreign languages

Learning programmes for 16-18

Good

- High-quality teaching, learning and assessment have resulted in good outcomes in English and modern foreign languages. In most subjects learners achieve aspirational targets, and in a minority of subjects they make outstanding progress. Where outcomes are weaker, this is reflected in a lower level of challenge in learning.
- Staff have high expectations of students. Students come ready to work and engage willingly and effectively with challenging activities. For example, in one English literature lesson students worked in groups to identify which three of eight differently nuanced statements best represented the themes emerging from the studied text. This prompted sophisticated discussion in which students shared their interpretations of the text and reached consensus among themselves. Lateness leads to minor disruptions of learning in a small minority of sessions.
- Support for students is good. For example, modern foreign language students access workshops run voluntarily by staff to support grammar and oral-skills development. Students make good use of subject workshops and subject-based study areas between lessons to improve their performance. Resources are good. Teaching spaces are attractively adorned with students' work

and learners place a high value on the weekly one-to-one conversation sessions with the foreign language assistants.

- Teachers generally make good use of the technology available. For example, in one modern foreign language session, the teacher made very good use of the interactive whiteboard to play vocabulary noughts and crosses, which fully engaged learners and aided retention of key words. In some sessions technology is not used imaginatively.
- Learning is thoroughly planned. In the best lessons learning objectives, based on individual student needs, are clearly articulated. Many learning activities are engaging and challenge and motivate learners to make good progress. In one outstanding and challenging English language session, students showcased the findings of their research into language concepts and set their own targets for the lesson that they pursued industriously. Much use is made of cooperative learning that supports development of students' personal and teamworking skills
- Enrichment is good in modern foreign languages and includes regular access to a foreign language assistant, and theatre and exchange visits. Exchanges include work experience, which has a very positive impact on students' employability and confidence.
- All students have target grades against which progress is regularly and formally monitored. Underperforming or at-risk students are identified and good support is arranged. Parents are well-informed of students' progress and any concerns the college has about underperformance.
- Much feedback on formally assessed work is detailed and effective in enabling students to improve. The best examples include thoughtful and personalised feedback, effective use of feedback proformas, which enable students to reflect on their own performance and submit improved material, and homework feedback proformas. However, there is too much variability in the quality and usefulness of feedback to students.
- Teachers expertly use an extensive range of often innovative assessment strategies in lessons to monitor students' progress. Strategies include the skilful use of questions and answers, formal spot quizzes for teacher marking, and collaborative group-work that enables students to learn exponentially. For example, in an English literature class pairs analysed a text for literary devices, shared their findings with another pair and learned from each other. Planning documents identify assessment opportunities although these are sometimes too brief. Correction of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors is not yet embedded in English classwork.
- Information advice and guidance are good. Students participate in visits to subject-specific open days at universities and a high proportion progress to higher-education courses, including those at prestigious universities.
- Equality and diversity are skilfully promoted through mixed-group work that promotes understanding of a wider range of perspectives.

Business

Learning programmes for 16-18

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved this year and are now good. BTEC students achieve as well as their counterparts nationally and students taking financial studies are also successful. Overall, students make the progress expected of them on the basis of their attainment on entry. With the exception of accounting, students' success rates in GCE AS- and A-level subjects were below those in similar colleges last year. The impact of well-targeted recovery plans is evident. Retention rates on all courses this year are very high and better than at the same stage in the previous year.
- Most of the lessons observed during inspection were good. Current students on all courses are making good progress. Students are highly motivated and most are fully engaged throughout the lesson. They enjoy their studies as many lessons are lively. Questions are often used

effectively to check students' understanding. Lessons are planned to ensure a good variety of teaching and learning activities.

- The consistency and quality of teaching and learning in law, particularly at AS level, has improved significantly this year following staff changes and are now good. Students demonstrate a good understanding of case law and teachers use visual images effectively to stimulate their thinking.
- Students make good use of information technology facilities in the well-resourced classrooms and at home by accessing the VLE. BTEC students demonstrate effective presentational skills in the preparation of assignments. For example, students make good use of information technology skills to annotate and illustrate break-even charts so they can be easily understood.
- Good arrangements are in place to enrich learning through a series of educational visits to carefully chosen companies that enable students to relate theory to practice. Students attend a business conference involving inspirational speakers.
- Students' progress is carefully monitored so that all are aware of any aspects of their performance that need attention. Teachers give good support to learners in class by frequently checking learning, asking probing questions and offering sound advice. Attendance is good.
- Assessment practice is good. Students have a clear understanding of their targets within the lesson and teachers provide very useful advice on how best to achieve target grades. Feedback by teachers on most assessed written work points out how the student could improve and usually includes the correction of spelling and grammatical errors. In one lesson good use was made of peer assessment to deepen students' understanding of the differences between analysis and evaluation. In most lessons there is good development of numeracy and literacy skills.
- The provision of accurate initial advice and guidance, alongside the setting of appropriate course-entry requirements, has improved significantly this year. Provision has been broadened successfully to enable students with an aptitude for courses in law and accounting to choose vocational advanced courses other than A-level where appropriate. Clear advice about progression to university, employment or apprenticeships is given in tutorials.
- Students' awareness of equality and diversity is raised, for example through a business conference in which guest speakers in key positions in business and from minority ethnic groups provide good role models. Staff also act as positive role models. Good management of learning by teachers ensures that different groups of learners work collaboratively in class. However, opportunities to promote equality and diversity are insufficiently planned into lessons.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The new principal and governing body provide a revised and highly ambitious vision for the college that is deeply rooted in raising the aspirations and improving the life chances of students in Oldham and the surroundings areas. The principal, along with senior managers, has carefully managed a much needed culture change, supported by an invigorated whole-college focus on quality, to address the three-year decline in success rates after the last inspection. As a result students' overall outcomes improved in 2011/12 and there are firm indications that the significant momentum of improvement has continued into 2012/13.
- Staff expectations are high and targets, for both the college and its students, are challenging. The college has met most of its targets in recent years but had a slight shortfall in its targets for outcomes in 2011/12. The significant improvement in the use of timely data, at all levels of management, to help review provision and set realistic targets has been pivotal in bringing about rapid improvements on underperforming courses. Staff morale is very positive.
- The governing body brings a wealth of experience to its role and oversees the college's finances particularly effectively. Accommodation and specialist resources remain at a very high standard and provide a stimulating and vibrant learning environment. Closer scrutiny of the college's

academic performance has enabled governors to ask more-challenging questions of managers and is ensuring much greater levels of accountability.

- Management actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning are proving much more effective. Managers have notably strengthened the process for monitoring the quality of lessons. This, along with increased systematic sharing of good practice between and across departments through the college's 'professional learning communities' initiative, has contributed to some marked improvements in key areas such as the monitoring of students' progress. Managers tackle staff underperformance very effectively through support and training or, when appropriate, capability procedures.
- The college's self-assessment process is fully established and broadly accurate in its evaluation of provision. Subject self-assessment reports are detailed and related action plans clearly identify areas for improvement. However, while managers intensely scrutinise all self-assessment reports as part of the college's validation process, in a minority of reports key strengths are overstated. In a few subject self-assessments reports this leads to staff being too generous in awarding an overall effectiveness grade.
- Managers now monitor underperforming courses meticulously through targeted recovery plans. In most cases, the number of students retained on these programmes has improved, notably for the current year. Students' views are collated from focus groups and questionnaires and used effectively in reviewing the quality of provision. Excellent arrangements exist to engage with parents, including through newsletters and the recently introduced parent portal.
- The college continues to offer a broad range of academic courses with an increasingly diverse range of vocational programmes across all subject areas. Changes to the structure of the college timetable in 2011, to increase the contact time students have with teachers, has contributed to the increasing number of students who make good progress.
- The college's partnership working to support the development of its curriculum is highly effective, particularly its collaboration with local schools. For example, the creation of the college's impressive Regional Science Centre in 2010/11 is successfully raising aspirations for many primary and secondary school pupils in the local area, as well as providing a hub for longer-term science education and development within Oldham. The joint development of GCE AS-level critical thinking courses in year 11 in local schools develops knowledge and skills and aids transition to the college. The college has productive links with a number of local universities and uses these effectively to prepare students for their next steps into higher education.
- The college promotes tolerance and the appreciation of diversity among students extremely successfully. Through the establishment of a harmonious learning environment and actively reinforced set of core values, it has very successfully fostered a culture of respect that enables students from a very wide array of backgrounds to interact very effectively. Students' behaviour is very good and they value the firm line taken by the college on any form of bullying. Students' awareness of wider equality themes, such as sexual orientation and gender identity, is effectively raised through induction, group tutorials and other specific events.
- The college frequently analyses and reports on the performance of difference groups of students. It correctly identified that gaps in performance between students of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and the White and Black Caribbean heritage group narrowed in 2011/12, although recognises the gap is still too wide for some of these groups of students. The monitoring of a few aspects of equality and diversity, such as reviewing the views of different groups of students, is underdeveloped.
- The college meets its statutory requirements for the safeguarding of students. All staff and governors receive appropriate training, including training on e-safety. Arrangements for monitoring health and safety are satisfactory. The college has enhanced its site security internally and, where required, supported improvements externally. For example, the college has successfully lobbied the local authority for a pelican crossing to be erected on a main road between two of its buildings to improve students' safe access. Students feel very safe and work safely in lessons.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Oldham Sixth Form College		
Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-18 Learning programmes
Overall effectiveness	2	2
Outcomes for learners	3	3
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Science	3
Social Sciences	2
Psychology	2
English	2
Modern foreign languages	2
Business	2

Provider details

Oldham Sixth Form College	
Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 2,212
	Part-time: 0
Principal/CEO	Jayne Clarke
Date of previous inspection	April 2008
Website address	www.osfc.ac.uk/

Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)								
Full-time	0	0	58	0	2,152	2	0	0
Part-time	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Number of learners aged 14-16	n/a							
Number of community learners	n/a							
Number of employability learners	n/a							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	None							

Additional socio-economic information

The College is a single, town-centre campus, spread over four buildings, the first of which was built just over 20 years ago. The college cohort is diverse in terms of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The cohort taken as a whole would be placed in the lowest 17% of sixth-form college student cohorts in terms of the index of multiple deprivation. Average GCSE scores on entry are below the national average for sixth-form colleges. Eight of the college's nine Oldham-partner schools have GCSE results of five A* to C (including English and mathematics) below the national average. Both the proportion of the population with no skills and unemployment levels are higher in Oldham than for Greater Manchester and the United Kingdom and the proportion holding degree-level qualifications is lower.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Anne Taylor HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the vice principal as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to collect the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the subject areas listed in the report above.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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