

Dudley College of Technology

General further education college

Inspection dates		25 February–1 March 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
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:

- Standards have improved since the last inspection and are now above average on courses for learners of all ages and at all levels. Apprentices achieve very high success rates.
- Learners in the college and in the workplace develop good specialist skills which support their high rates of progression into employment and more advanced studies.
- The college is an inclusive and harmonious environment in which learners value their opportunities and take personal responsibility for their own success. It provides outstanding accommodation and resources to support learning.
- Learners benefit from consistently good teaching, learning and assessment, which combined with excellent guidance and support, enables them to make good progress.
- The Principal, governors and senior managers have led the college through the successful development of the Dudley Learning Quarter, improving the quality of provision for learners of all ages in the community that the college serves.
- Partnership work is outstanding. The college works productively with employers and other education organisations to provide a broad and appropriate curriculum which matches local and regional needs.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Learners' success rates and the progress they make in relation to their starting points are good but could be improved still further.
- The vast majority of lessons are good and only a minority are outstanding.
- Attendance requires improvement.
- Although most curriculum management is good there are a few areas where recent improvements have yet to have sufficient impact.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency with which teachers reinforce learners' understanding of English and mathematics so that learners can make quicker progress.
- Develop more effective on-the-job training for all apprentices by planning the provision with employers for the whole apprenticeship programme and ensuring that mentors are present in the workplace to contribute to assessment and provide more guidance for learners between assessment visits.
- Improve attendance by ensuring that all teachers reinforce the importance of good attendance more rigorously.
- Ensure that targets for teachers, which have been agreed through performance review, are clearly related to increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching, learning and assessment.
- Ensure that teachers of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive appropriate training so that they are ready to provide good specialist support for the increasing number of learners with complex needs.
- Promote learners' understanding and tolerance of diversity within their lessons by sharing more fully the excellent practice that exists in parts of the college.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Success rates are above average on courses at all levels and for learners of all ages. The improvement has been most marked on advanced level courses where the rate has been much quicker than that at similar colleges.
- Success rates for learners on employer responsive programmes showed a marked increase during 2011/12. The number of apprentices has increased significantly in line with national priorities, their success rates are high and the vast majority complete their qualifications in good time.
- Learners enter the college with qualifications which are appropriate for their chosen course, although not always with the skills and confidence that they need. They then make good progress on vocational courses and in the workplace and quickly develop good specialist skills. They achieve high levels of success in national and regional skills competitions and their achievements are celebrated widely throughout the college. Learners on AS-level programmes make slower progress but those who successfully graduate to A-level achieve very well.
- Learners take their studies seriously and support each other to achieve their best. They enjoy coming to college, their behaviour is excellent and their attendance has improved. However, self-assessment has correctly identified that attendance still requires improvement because a minority of teachers reinforce the importance of good attendance more strenuously than others. Learners appreciate the needs of others and demonstrate excellent levels of participation in volunteering activities.
- Learners achieve very well in additional specialist qualifications, helping them to extend their skills and improve their employability. Learners who follow functional skills courses achieve good outcomes in both English and mathematics, but do not always progress quickly enough to higher level qualifications in English and mathematics. Less than half of the learners who follow GCSE courses in English and mathematics achieve a grade A*-C.

- No significant differences exist in the success rates of different learners, grouped according to their age, gender or ethnic background. The progress made by learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has improved and these learners now achieve at least as well as their peers.
- The majority of learners aged 16 to 18 complete their courses successfully and progress to more advanced courses, employment or into higher education (HE). Very few learners fail to make appropriate progression.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment reflects accurately the good and improving outcomes of learners. Relationships between teachers and learners are respectful and constructive. However, although the vast majority of lessons are good the proportion of outstanding lessons is relatively low and inspectors also observed a few inadequate lessons.
- Teachers and support staff are well qualified and experienced. Teachers of vocational subjects add credibility and enjoyment to their lessons through their up-to-date knowledge of trends in industry and current best professional practice. Assessors and workplace tutors have developed their skills and achieved higher qualifications than normally encountered in apprenticeship provision. Accommodation and resources to support learning, particularly in vocational areas, are outstanding. Learners value their access to the college's virtual learning environment (VLE), but it remains underdeveloped as too few subjects use it to provide opportunities to extend learning.
- Teachers plan well so that their lessons engage learners fully and promote good progress. However, the latest version of the college lesson plan is too simplistic to promote effective practice in lesson planning. Most work-based teaching and learning is also good; trainers demonstrate appropriate professional standards and link them to what is expected in learners' job roles.
- In good lessons teachers use information and learning technology (ILT) in stimulating ways to capture learners' interest and stimulate their thinking. They use directed questioning well to check and extend learning. In many lessons teachers find inventive ways to recap previous learning and evaluate what learners have gained from the lesson.
- In the minority of lessons requiring improvement, teachers demand too little from learners, talk for too long and answer their own questions. In these lessons, there is insufficient variation in questioning or learning activities to provide the right amount of challenge to learners across the ability range. Functional skills lessons help learners develop their English and mathematical skills, but there is too much variability in how well teachers reinforce these skills in lessons. Planning and structuring of apprentices' on-the job learning in the workplace are insufficient and there is not enough encouragement of independent learning to stretch the more able learners.
- Assessment is good. Teachers and work-based assessors ensure learners have an accurate understanding of the requirements of each assessment and what determines different levels of success. Most teachers provide helpful and often detailed feedback designed to help learners improve their work, but they do not always correct spelling and grammatical errors. During workplace visits, assessors provide learners with good support and guidance on assessment and how to prepare their portfolios. However, they do not always leave learners with targets or activities which provide them with sufficient direction and challenge between visits.
- Learners benefit from excellent initial advice and guidance which ensures that they enrol on the right course and at the right level. Staff are very good at identifying factors that might impact on learners' ability to attend or achieve so that any issues can be resolved from the outset. Effective induction arrangements help learners settle into the college quickly.
- Learners who find learning difficult receive excellent additional support. The take-up of learning support by learners identified as likely to benefit from it is very high and it enables learners to

make at least as much progress as those who do not receive it. The deployment of support assistants is effective and learners value the excellent resources available to them in the centrally-located drop-in centre. Staff mentors and student 'buddies' are available to help learners improve their work and to stay motivated. Guidance on progression into HE and employment is good.

- Tutorials are good and enable teachers to monitor learners' progress very effectively. Individual learning plans (ILPs) include a wide range of information about each learner's progress and this enables teachers to highlight concerns and generate detailed reports on progress for parents. However, targets within ILPs are largely confined to completing work and meeting deadlines, a shortcoming that is equally evident in progress reviews for work-based learners. In a positive move towards providing work-based learners with a more comprehensive college experience, apprentices now have tutorials when attending college for off-the-job training.
- Teachers use their detailed knowledge of individual learners well to provide equality of opportunity in managing learning. However, they do not always create or take enough opportunities during lessons to extend learners' knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity.

<p>Health, social care and early years</p> <p>Learning programmes for 16-18</p> <p>Learning programmes for 19+</p>	<p>Good</p>
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- Although success rates are average, inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment that were consistently good. Retention rates declined in 2011/12, but current indications are that they have since increased. Learners enjoy their work, make good progress in lessons and develop good skills to support them in work placement and subsequent employment.
- Teachers know their learners well and mostly plan effective lessons to meet their different needs. They use a good range of practical activities to add interest to lessons and provide learners with opportunities to develop their practical skills. However, in a minority of lessons teachers provide insufficient opportunities for learners to contribute their own ideas from personal experience and apply what they already know.
- Teachers have high expectations and use praise and encouragement well to motivate learners. They mostly use questioning well so that by the end of lessons learners demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic being studied and can explain and justify their reasoning; for example by linking activities for children to the relevant aspect of the curriculum. Teachers develop learners' creative skills through craft activities and encouraging them to produce work which is attractively and professionally displayed.
- The development of learners' English is good. Teachers encourage learners to use dictionaries and glossaries of technical terms and this helps them to increase their vocabulary and use words confidently. However, the opportunities for learners to develop their mathematical skills are fewer so that this aspect of their work requires further improvement.
- Teachers assess learners' work thoroughly and accurately. They return work promptly with constructive feedback that tells learners what they have done well and how to improve their work still further. Learners in work or on work placement receive detailed assessments which incorporate the views of their employers.
- Learners receive excellent care, guidance and support. Tutorials provide a highly effective way of monitoring their attendance and progress. Any remedial actions required are identified quickly and carried out promptly so that learners' good progress can be maintained. Learners who are experiencing difficulties sometimes have a mentor or learner 'buddy' to provide valuable extra help with organising their learning.

- Learners receive good initial advice and guidance which ensures that they are placed onto the most appropriate course. Learning support assistants work well with teachers and provide outstanding support in lessons for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those who need extra help to complete their work successfully.
- Equality and diversity have a high priority which is demonstrated through the content of the curriculum and the positive attitudes of teachers. Learners treat each other with respect and there is a high level of tolerance and acceptance of the needs of different groups of learners.

Engineering	
Learning programmes for 16-18	Good
Learning programmes for 19+	

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and contribute well to the high proportion of learners who achieve their learning outcomes. Learners' work is of a very high standard. They produce highly detailed engineering drawings and use computer aided design software well to produce three dimensional and scaled projections.
- Learners are enthusiastic, take pride in their work and quickly develop very good levels of practical skills. They produce some interesting design work and always check that the specifications of their finished work are within agreed tolerances. Mechanical engineering learners have made a range of foundry products such as fine metal grilles and brackets for public display at the Black Country Living Museum.
- Teachers plan the vast majority of lessons well so that learners are able to understand the theory that underpins the work they do in practical sessions. This helps them gain confidence and make good progress. Teachers use effective coaching techniques to encourage learners to work independently and challenge more able learners during both classroom and practical sessions. The very good learning resources are mostly used well to engage learners, but in a few less successful lessons teachers make too much use of visual aids and learners lose interest.
- Initial assessment is thorough, ensuring that learners follow the most appropriate qualification and at the right level. The identification of additional support needs is prompt and accurate. The provision of learning support for the duration of the programme is excellent. Learners receive excellent support from their tutors. Arrangements to monitor learners' progress are comprehensive and work well. Most individual learning plans receive regular updating and show accurately how much progress learners are making but sometimes long-term learning objectives are insufficiently challenging.
- Assessment is good. Teachers set relevant and interesting assignments and mark learners' work carefully. The majority of marked assessments provide learners with easily understood guidance on how to improve their work and learners are fully aware of their current standards.
- Learners receive insufficient support with improving their standards of English and mathematics. Written work can be resubmitted allowing learners to improve their grades, but teachers frequently leave spelling and grammar uncorrected. Teachers miss opportunities in theory lessons to extend learners' understanding of how to use their literacy and numeracy skills accurately.
- Learners receive good advice on progression and this helps the majority of them to progress into employment or further training at a level which is consistent with their skills. Learners are able to gain valuable industry experience to help them prepare for future employment through the college's effective partnerships with local engineering employers.

- Learners have a satisfactory understanding of equality and diversity. They treat each other with respect and support each other well. Learners have a good understanding of health and safety and adopt safe working practices during practical sessions.

Engineering and manufacturing

Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and reflect accurately the high success rates and rapid progress that apprentices make. Teachers and assessors are well qualified and help apprentices to develop good personal and social skills alongside industry standard skills in the workplace. Apprentices receive appropriate instruction on all relevant aspects of health and safety and work with good regard for their own safety and that of others.
- Apprentices gain good theoretical knowledge in college lessons which helps them to achieve a secure grasp of their industrial skills. For example, in one lesson apprentices learned how to wire and pipe electro-pneumatic actuators in the cascade configuration from schematic drawings. Teachers make good use of visual materials to support learning, but do not always check that learning is taking place. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not focus their questions sufficiently so that neither they nor the learners are clear about the standard that learners have reached. Apprentices receive satisfactory support to improve their standards of English and mathematics.
- Apprentices mostly receive good support to help them progress well. Teachers and assessors give freely of their time to provide additional help to apprentices who need it, but workplace reviews do not provide sufficient targets to stretch and challenge apprentices or maximise the opportunities to develop their skills between assessor visits. Tutorials provide good opportunities for apprentices to develop more general life skills such as understanding personal finance. The college's personal development officers for apprentices provide good pastoral support.
- Assessment is good. Assessors work closely with apprentices to ensure that appropriate evidence is gathered and portfolios are of a high standard. Assessments are rigorous and marked work is returned promptly and with useful written comments to help apprentices improve still further. Assessors generally ask probing questions to check progress and understanding.
- The college works effectively with employers to ensure that apprentices have sufficient opportunities to meet assessment requirements and achieve their qualifications within the expected timescale. Observations in the workplace cover a broad range of relevant activities including milling, casting, metal testing and engineering maintenance. On one visit, an apprentice used a spectrograph confidently to establish the quality of the metal used in production whilst on another visit the apprentice carried out urgent repairs on a large scale automated distribution system.
- Initial assessment and guidance are good and ensure that all apprentices follow an appropriate framework. Subsequent and effective monitoring of progress occurs at regular intervals through workplace visits and weekly tutorial sessions. Apprentices receive good guidance about how to progress to further qualifications including undergraduate programmes in HE.
- Apprentices show respect for each other and work well together. However, teachers do not give sufficient emphasis on promoting equality and diversity in lesson planning and workplace visits. A minority of teachers and assessors have an insufficient understanding of their responsibility to promote equality and diversity.

Building and construction and construction crafts**Apprenticeships****Other work based learning**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good which explains the increasing proportion of learners who are completing their courses successfully. Apprenticeship programmes are preparing learners well for their careers. For example, an intermediate plumbing apprentice had already completed gas industry approved qualifications early in his course and was able to decommission, reinstall and commission central heating boilers.
- In the wider range of adult workplace qualifications, experienced trade operatives in the glass installation and manufacturing industry are gaining formal qualifications for the first time, thus improving their employment prospects and enhancing the reputations of the companies they work for.
- Teachers are suitably qualified and experienced and use their knowledge well through regular site visits to ensure that learners are aware of, and reproduce current best practice in their practical work. In a heating and ventilation class, the teacher related recent industrial knowledge to the planning and calculating of pipe sizes in domestic waste systems. The college has excellent resources to support learning and the development of learners' practical skills.
- In the most successful theory lessons, learners benefit from well planned activities which stimulate learning but in a few classes teachers do not check to ensure that learners are able to progress to more advanced work. Learners receive good support in improving their standards of English and mathematics in the college and in the workplace they demonstrate good application of numeracy skills, for example in the calculation of quantities of plaster required to cover an area.
- Staff plan the assessment of learners' performance in the workplace well. Assessors provide careful briefings so that learners understand what is expected of them and feedback is timely and thorough. Assessors use a good range of direct observation to support their judgements about progress. Increasingly effective use is made of ILT, including video capture to support evidence collection and accurate assessment.
- Promotion of health and safety is of a high standard both in the workplace and at the college. Staff monitor rigorously the strict rules covering the wearing and use of safety boots and other protective equipment. In the workplace assessors check that learners are working in accordance with safe working practices and that the work environments are safe to operate in.
- Tutorials provide good support for learners, which they much appreciate. As well as highly effective monitoring of their progress in construction, tutorials provide good opportunities for learners to increase their understanding of more general topics such as the development of rights and responsibilities, personal health awareness and safeguarding. Initial advice and guidance are good.
- Staff promote equality and diversity well through their attitudes, behaviour and high expectations. However, sometimes the individual learning needs of learners in theory lessons are not met and the opportunity to develop and broaden learners' views and understanding of diversity in lessons is underdeveloped. Staff do not use progress reviews in the workplace sufficiently to promote equality and diversity.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy**Learning programmes for 16-18****Learning programmes for 19+**

Good

- Success rates are increasing and outcomes for learners are good. The majority of learners develop very good commercial skills and make good progress. Learners demonstrate their specialist skills through high levels of success in national competitions. Attendance is good and progression to more advanced courses or into employment is very high.
- Teachers are well qualified, experienced and enthusiastic. Learners say, and inspectors agree that they receive very high levels of support and positive encouragement from staff to achieve their academic and personal goals. The excellent accommodation provides a distinctive hair and beauty industry standard salon.
- Teachers plan lessons well and include a range of innovative and motivational learning activities, including the creative use of ILT, which provide plenty of challenge for learners. Teachers state learning objectives clearly and learners often set or select their own individual tasks to complete in the lesson which are consistent with these objectives. However, in a few weaker lessons a minority of learners were inactive at times and less motivated. Most learners access additional learning via the VLE.
- Assessment is accurate and fair. Practical NVQ assessments are good. These often require mixed teams of hairdressing and beauty therapy learners to provide the range of services and treatments to clients for assessment. This mixing of teams also improves learners' employability skills. Assessors provide detailed written and verbal feedback on learners' work. Internal verification is satisfactory and meet awarding body requirements.
- Staff monitor learners' progress very well. Learners are well aware of their progress and actions needed to improve, although the new electronic tracking system is not in full use. The frequent updating of targets continues to provide learners with a good level of challenge. Learners receive appropriate advice and guidance with effective signposting to other learning opportunities if appropriate.
- Initial assessment is thorough and in hairdressing includes the use of dexterity testing. Accurate identification of learners' learning needs occurs at an early stage and individual support is put in place promptly if it is required. Diagnostic testing effectively identifies learners' appropriate level of functional skills, but although learners then receive very good support to develop their English, links to mathematics within vocational lessons are underdeveloped and opportunities to reinforce numerical concepts including volume and ratio are often missed.
- Staff promote equality and diversity themes well and activities including the recent diversity competition encourage learners' respect for their clients and peers who come from different backgrounds than their own. Learners are courteous and well behaved towards staff and each other and feel safe within the college environment. Lessons are mostly inclusive and support learners' individual needs on sensitive issues. However, some naturally occurring opportunities to embed further equality and diversity in vocational settings, such as the effect of temporary colours on Asian hair, are underdeveloped.

Visual arts**Learning programmes for 16-18
Learning programmes for 19+**

Outstanding

- Success rates are very high and the majority of learners achieve grades that are above their original predicted grades. Attendance is good, learners' behaviour is excellent and punctuality is exemplary. Learners progress successfully into employment or HE, frequently after progressing through courses at foundation and intermediate levels. The standard of learners' practical work is always good and is often outstanding.
- The outstanding new purpose-built accommodation provides a vibrant and highly creative learning environment for learners. The college's excellent technical resources, including digital software, cameras, plastics, ceramic, textiles, wood, metal and glass, enable learners to adopt a highly effective multi-disciplinary approach to creative practice and to produce excellent outcomes.
- In graphic design, learners produce commercial designs to a good professional standard. Projects such as an interactive history of typography develop learners' multicultural and historical awareness alongside their developing skills in design. Learners studying fashion create innovative and imaginative designs to demonstrate their excellent understanding of materials, pattern, colour and texture. Sketchbooks and design samples demonstrate an intelligent development of ideas and themes to create highly personal portfolios of work. Fashion drawing is strong and enables learners to create convincing project proposals.
- Learners on art and design courses make good use of technical resources such as those to support the college's specialism in glass making. Learners build impressive prototypes and final pieces of work that often demonstrate unusual combinations of materials. In photography, learners are taught to understand camera skills and composition alongside digital processes so that they do not have to rely on post-production editing software.
- Teachers are passionate about their subjects and work hard to provide a positive and productive learning atmosphere in lessons. Learners respond well to their efforts and frequently make rapid progress. Teachers make good use of their own experiences as professional artists and designers which helps to add to the realism of their lessons and to prepare learners for work or further learning. Functional skills are taught well and learners make excellent progress in developing their standards in English and mathematics.
- In the minority of weaker lessons, teachers do not always require learners to record key learning points and there is insufficient development of communications skills so that contributions to discussions, debates and presentations are not always as productive or critical as they could be. In AS-level fine art, lessons lack structure and purpose so that learners only make satisfactory progress.
- Assessment is comprehensive and informative. Learners receive daily informal feedback and have regular tutorials and formal assessments to help them improve and to achieve higher grades. Learning support is good. Teachers make effective use of information about learners to ensure that there is a consistent focus on meeting their needs.
- The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is excellent. Learners are regularly involved in applying their skills to high profile external projects such as major health campaigns and an international conservation project.

Independent living and leisure**Learning programmes for 16-18****Learning programmes for 19+**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and this is reflected in the good progress that learners make in improving their employability, social and personal skills. Success rates on foundation courses are high and many learners progress onto higher level vocational courses. Learners develop good work related skills in their practical vocational training and work experience and know how to work safely.
- Teachers are skilful at using open questions to help learners to think and reflect before answering and use learners' own experience well to stimulate and enliven discussions. During a successful tutorial, learners were encouraged to think more carefully before buying a pet, taking into account the costs involved and the time it takes to look after the pet's needs.
- The development of learners' functional skills is good but is most effective when related to practical activities such as weighing out ingredients in cookery or identifying the percentages required of different food elements to make up a food mixture for animals.
- Progress is slower in the minority of lessons where teachers do not take into account the different levels of ability of their learners when planning activities. In a few cases more able learners are not provided with enough challenge and have to wait for others to complete their work before moving on to the next task. At other times, less able learners find work too difficult to complete without constant prompts.
- Initial assessment is satisfactory and provides useful information about learners' personal and social skills and their individual support needs in lessons. Learners who need it receive very effective specialist and individual support. For example, signers enable deaf learners to participate fully in learning activities and learners with autism the college issues with a green card to indicate to teachers when they need time out to become calm.
- Target setting and the tracking of learners' progress varies considerably. Tracking of academic progress is satisfactory but sometimes targets are too broad and individual learning plans do not include the most relevant learning targets. Reviews are often overly descriptive and do not provide sufficient commentary about how well learners are progressing. Personal support for learners is very good.
- Additional learning support is good but at the inspection the provision of specialist speech and language support for learners with severe communication difficulties and staff expertise to meet the needs of future referrals from special schools with more complex needs required further development.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good and enables learners to integrate and participate fully in the life of the college. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities take part in a good range of enrichment, student union events and disability awareness raising activities.

Business management and administration**Learning programmes for 16-18****Learning programmes for 19+**

Good

- Outcomes for learners are good. Success rates on most courses are high and increasing. Learners make good progress in developing appropriate vocational and workplace skills. The vast majority of learners aged 16 to 18 attend well, but the attendance and punctuality of older learners requires improvement. Progression to more advanced courses and employment is excellent.
- Teachers plan lessons well and identify clear learning objectives for each lesson. The best lessons are lively and engaging and link theory and practice well to improve learners' understanding. In one particularly effective business lesson, learners were able to evaluate quickly the effectiveness of a website to promote a product. They then applied this learning to their own chosen business areas so that they were able to develop a good understanding of business language and concepts.
- In AS and A-level lessons teachers make sure that learners understand what the requirements of the final examinations are, but do not always probe learners understanding sufficiently, and occasionally allow undeveloped or incomplete responses to pass unchallenged.
- Teachers mostly use questions well to ensure that lessons proceed at a good pace and that learners understand their work but in a minority of lessons, too much time is taken up with questions that are not sharply focused so that the pace of learning slows and learners lose interest. In a few lessons, the number of learners is too low for group work and teachers rush their explanations rather than allowing learners to develop their own knowledge.
- Assessment is good. Assignments are relevant to the world of business and include such imaginative activities as conducting a 'Question Time' event with local MPs. Teachers return marked work promptly and mostly include comments that enable learners to improve their work. However, in business administration some comments were too cursory to be useful. Formative assessment in lessons is mostly good and teachers use it well to motivate learners. They support the development of learners' English and mathematics very well.
- Support for learners is good. Weekly tutorials have a strong focus on monitoring progress and learners have a clear understanding of how well they are doing. Target setting for individual learners is satisfactory. The online system for tracking the progress of learners is well developed, but the use of target grades has not had a significant impact on learners' achievements because the targets are not always sufficiently stretching.
- Learners requiring additional help at the beginning of their course receive excellent support both in and outside of lessons so that they are able to keep up with an appropriate pace of learning and play a full part in lesson activities.
- The promotion of equality and diversity in the classroom and throughout the curriculum is satisfactory. However, while some teachers explore fully issues of globalisation or different cultural practices in lessons, others do not so that they sometimes miss opportunities to extend learners' understanding.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The Principal and governors have established a clear and ambitious strategic direction for the college which is understood and endorsed fully by staff. Their vision promotes a culture of high aspiration and achievement for Dudley and the regeneration of its town centre. The Dudley Learning Quarter boasts an impressive campus which learners take great pride in. The recently opened Dudley Sixth and Evolve buildings provide outstanding accommodation that enhance the environment and provide excellent resources for academic and vocational learning.
- Governance is good. Governors have considerable expertise and a good range of skills. They operate within a secure framework for governance and receive detailed and accurate reports on the college's progress towards meeting its strategic objectives. As a result, and in association with the strong college senior management team, they have successfully managed two concurrent building projects, completing them on time, within budget and to very high specifications.
- Curriculum management is largely effective, but senior managers have correctly identified that its quality varies and they have support mechanisms in place to ensure that curriculum management is consistently very good in the future. The performance of apprenticeship programmes over the past three years has improved significantly during a period of rapid expansion. The reorganisation of the college to provide a dedicated staff team for apprenticeships and workplace learners has given staff a clear sense of purpose and this enables employers to work with the college in a more direct way.
- Senior managers give a very high priority to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The teaching observation scheme is comprehensive and observations during the inspection were a close match to the college's own observations. Subject learning coaches provide carefully targeted and effective support. Actions to improve the overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment have been successful, but managers are aware that the proportion of outstanding lessons is low.
- The management of staff performance is rigorous and fair and makes a significant contribution to improving the college. Expectations are high and outcomes from performance management link clearly to pay, progression and to staff development. Staff feel well-supported by the procedures and morale is high, but staff targets are not clearly related to increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching.
- Self-assessment uses a wide range of evidence and data analysis and is broadly accurate. Governors, managers and staff are well aware of strengths and areas for improvement, and managers' action planning is leading to measurable improvements in most areas. The grades awarded at this inspection match those in the self-assessment report.
- Engagement with learners is outstanding. Learners are extremely positive about all aspects of college provision. Managers and staff have an excellent record of listening carefully to learners and acting on their views to promote improvement. Learners' representation is an impressive feature; the students' union has trained course representatives to speak on behalf of other learners.
- Partnership working is outstanding. The college plays a prominent role in local and regional collaborative initiatives with employers, other colleges, schools and local authorities in meeting the skills needs of the area. The college engages particularly effectively with employers in planning, designing and providing innovative training programmes. Dudley Sixth is an innovative partnership with schools to provide a wide range of academic programmes to meet the needs of the local community. It is in its first year of operation and is already demonstrating significant recruitment. However, it is too early to judge fully its impact on learners' outcomes.
- The college provides an inclusive environment for learning in which learners make good progress regardless of their background. The calm and studious atmosphere throughout the

college is an accurate reflection of the mutual respect and tolerance that exists between learners. Managers monitor equality and diversity well but has they have identified further work is needed to embed fully equality and diversity in teaching and learning.

- The college meets fully its statutory responsibility in relation to safeguarding. Arrangements are comprehensive and enable staff to identify quickly any learners, or groups of learners who are at risk. Support for these learners is good. Staff promote health and safety in classrooms and workshops.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Dudley College of Technology									
Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 Learning programmes	16-18 Learning programmes	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Other work- based learning	Employability	Foundation Learning	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	2		2	2	2	2		2	
Outcomes for learners	2		2	2	2	2		2	
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2		2	2	2	2		2	
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2		2	2	2	2		2	
Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment									Grade
Health and social care									2
Early years and playwork									2
Engineering									2
Manufacturing technologies									2
Building services									2
Construction crafts									2
Hairdressing and beauty therapy									2
Visual Arts									1
Independent living and leisure skills									2
Administration									2
Business management									2

Provider details

Dudley College of Technology	
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	14+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 2,979
	Part-time: 8,160
Principal/CEO	Lowell Williams
Date of previous inspection	May 2008
Website address	www.dudleycol.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)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	352	211	486	356	1,252	335	7	38
Part-time	63	593	103	2,285	125	489	46	318
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	286	945	127	540	14	37		
Number of learners aged 14-16	247							
Number of community learners	395							
Number of employability learners	259							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ DJS Training and Consultancy ■ J & D Training Solutions ■ Lean Education and Development ■ Succeed. 							

Additional socio-economic information

Dudley College of Technology operates from three main sites and serves the boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell and the wider hinterland of the Black Country. It is located in an area of high social deprivation where the unemployment rate is above the national average. The number of pupils in Dudley and Sandwell schools attaining five GCSEs at A* to C including English and mathematics is below average. Around 23 % of learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds; a proportion which is three times that in the local population.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Lindsay Hebditch HMI

Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and eight additional inspectors, assisted by the director of learning 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 gather 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 sector subject areas listed in the report above.

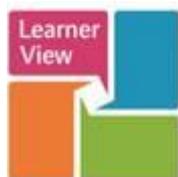
What inspection judgements mean

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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