

# Newcastle-under-Lyme College

## General further education college

<b>Inspection dates</b>		<b>25–29 November 2013</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good-2</b>
	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:

- Managers and staff meet learners' individual needs particularly well, they provide them with a supportive culture which is welcoming to all and outstanding accommodation and resources.
- Learners' success rates have increased substantially in the last year and are particularly high on foundation and intermediate level courses and advanced vocational programmes.
- Learners develop very good personal, social and employability skills, which enable them to progress well into employment or higher education.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, including very good use of information learning technologies (ILT) to improve learning.
- Managers and staff provide outstanding support and care for learners.
- Effective leadership and governance promote high expectations for learners and enable managers and staff to respond successfully to local needs.
- Robust performance management results in improvements in teaching, learning and assessment, and learners' success.
- Good partnerships enable managers and staff to meet the needs of employers and the local community and helps learners progress into local employment.

#### This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- In a minority of underperforming A-level programmes, not enough learners pass their exams and gain high grades or achieve as expected.
- In a few subject areas, not enough learners develop good English and mathematics skills.
- A few teachers do not always sufficiently stretch and challenge the more able learners to reach their full potential.
- In a few instances, the evaluation of individual courses does not always provide sufficiently detailed actions to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

## Full report

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
  - include activities in lessons that extend all learners and particularly stretch the more capable learners
  - routinely improve learners' English and mathematics skills in the context of their normal teaching
  - make the most of opportunities to develop learners' understanding and experiences of equality and diversity as they occur naturally in lessons, so that they appreciate their importance in the context of their own studies.
- Improve course review and evaluation so that managers can identify and implement actions to raise the standard of teaching, learning and assessment in the courses for which they are responsible.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
------------------------------	------

- The proportion of learners successfully achieving their qualifications improved substantially in 2012/13 and this is above the national average. Learners of all ages have high success rates on foundation and intermediate programmes and adult learners also succeed well on advanced programmes.
- At advanced level, the majority of learners undertake two-year vocational programmes, where success rates increased substantially in 2012/13 and are high; however, despite increases in the last year, AS level and a few A-level programmes have success rates which are around the average, mainly affected by a minority of underperforming subjects.
- Most learners on vocational programmes gain high grades. However, learners taking AS and A-level courses gain fewer high-grade passes than the average. Despite improvements in the last year, value-added data indicates that learners succeed at least in line with expectations on vocational courses and slightly below expectations on A level programmes.
- Apprentices aged 16 to 18 have very high success and most achieve their framework within the planned time. Success within the planned duration for apprentices aged 19 years and over is good, but for custodial officers and team leaders is poor, which has had a negative impact on the overall success for all apprentices. Success within the planned timescale for those learners on workplace NVQ programmes, declined in 2012/13, and are below the national average.
- Progression between the different levels in the college is good, with nearly half of all learners from entry/foundation level courses progressing to intermediate level, and two-thirds of students progressing from intermediate to advanced level. A high proportion of learners, progress from advanced level programmes to higher education.
- White British learners and learners from minority ethnic groups perform similarly. Both groups have improved at the same rate in the last year. Over the last three years, female learners have had success rates which are higher than males with the gap narrowing slightly in 2012/13. Learners with disabilities and/or difficulties have succeeded better than other learners.
- Learners' work is good. For instance, visual and performing arts learners' work in classrooms and their finished pieces is predominantly good, showing learners' sound and growing understanding and use of craft, technical and creative skills.

- Teachers develop learners' employability skills well. The college has a town centre shop, which learners use to display and sell their work. For instance, foundation learners produce and price cards, decorations and other artefacts for sale. Visual art and fashion students sell framed photographs, and individually designed scarves and bags. Over 100 students have sold items in the last few months while developing entrepreneurial and employability skills.
- Learners develop very good personal and social skills. For example, learners in sport amongst others, develop high levels of self-esteem through gaining sporting excellence as a result of their involvement in the elite coaching academy. In work-based learning, apprentices develop the aspirations to progress to higher levels of learning by undertaking technical certificates at a higher level than is required by their frameworks.

<b>The quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	Good
---	------

- Managers and staff have very high expectations of learners and raise their ambitions by setting high, motivational targets. They reinforce these high expectations by very good use of excellent resources, outstanding support and good teaching, learning and assessment. The excellent college building, displays of learners' achievements and highly positive messages contribute greatly to the good success and progress of learners.
- Teaching is very good in practical lessons where teachers expertly demonstrate excellent skills that learners emulate and learn from. For example in a construction lesson, the learners produced precision joints of a professional standard through carefully following what they saw and the clear, precise instructions given.
- Apprentices acquire high levels of vocational skills. The attention to safe practices is rigorous. In one learning activity, apprentices kept to the correct techniques and procedures when they successfully reassembled an engine, they were able to explain design faults that demonstrated clear insights and understanding gained in a short time.
- Engaging, lively and often inspirational teaching by teachers in art, design and media leads learners to develop good and highly practical skills and insights. Learners in film studies, for example, develop the ability to evaluate sophisticated techniques and use technical language very well and comfortably through stimulating and dynamic teaching and discussions such as on the 'film noir' genre.
- Lesson planning is careful and thorough and results in learners enjoying their work and making progress in lessons. Learners in English lessons, for example, work together effectively on different texts applying a range of literary appreciation techniques that enable them to demonstrate their acquisition of high levels of skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers make good use of the information on each learner in producing thoughtful activities that involve them well in learning. However, in a few instances, they do not always have suitable or sufficient extension work for the more capable learners.
- Teachers manage learning very capably. They start lessons positively and punctually and students respond well to this approach by coming prepared and ready to learn. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers do not always manage the time in lessons effectively enough. This leads to hurried endings to lessons and occasionally insufficient time to check what learners have learned.
- In the large majority of effective lessons, teachers use a variety of interesting methods that thoroughly involve learners; they make effective use of the excellent resources and in particular very good use of ILT and interactive whiteboards that enliven teaching and learning. Learners with learning difficulties enjoy using these boards in identifying unusual objects and their uses as well as learning how to spell. The virtual learning environment (VLE) is a good resource, used widely by learners enabling them to learn independently and check assignments remotely.

- The development of English and mathematics in apprenticeship programmes is good and taught expertly in the context of their learning. The appointment of English and mathematics coordinators has helped teachers to develop and improve teaching of English and mathematics in lessons, but this is not taught across all areas sufficiently well enough.
- Teachers assess learners’ work regularly and carefully. Marking is accurate and helps learners improve. Through helpful and constructive feedback the majority of learners have a clear view of what they need to do to improve and how. Teachers carefully monitor this through subsequent tracking of their progress. Feedback on the progress of learners to employers and parents is helpful and informative. The introduction of assessment weeks for A-levels has led to learners improving their examination techniques.
- Assessment of learners’ needs at the start of courses is thorough. Liaison with local schools is highly effective and results in learners making smooth entry to college. Particularly effective is the identification of vulnerable learners at the application stage and prompt recording of needs lead to timely, personalised and effective support. This help and the careful, regular monitoring enable learners to concentrate on their studies and make excellent progress.
- Learners receive outstanding care and support. Managers and staff provide a highly effective and comprehensive range of specialist support services, including finance, careers, health, counselling and welfare support, and chaplaincy. A particularly well-planned tutorial programme and strong mentoring support compliment these services. A very good enrichment programme that includes, for example, tackling domestic violence and motivational speakers such as a Paralympic sportswoman raise expectations and motivate learners in their studies.
- Information, advice and guidance are good. It provides clear, informative details to learners at the start of and during their courses, and by giving good advice on progression opportunities enables them to make informed choices on their next steps. Managers and staff have developed excellent links with employers, local schools and the local authorities.
- Teachers develop learners’ understanding of equality and appreciation of diversity well in the majority of subject areas and in lessons. They do this effectively in the context of the subject and take good account of the backgrounds of learners and their individual needs. However, not all teachers are sufficiently confident to spot and take naturally occurring opportunities to promote and reinforce equality and diversity.

<p><b>Health and social care</b></p> <p><b>16-19 study programmes</b></p> <p><b>19+ Learning programmes</b></p>	<p>Outstanding</p>
---	--------------------

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding which leads to the vast majority of learners successfully completing intermediate and advanced level qualifications in health and social care. Learners successfully gain employment in health and social care settings or they take higher-level courses before taking up professional roles, for example in nursing or social work.
- Learners receive excellent care, support and guidance. Teachers have a good range of qualifications and experience which they use well to provide illustrations to enliven lessons. Carefully planned activities help learners to gain the professional skills they need to work in the health and social care sector.
- Learners benefit from very effective practical sessions, for example on manual handling and hand washing hygiene. Learners also have opportunities to work alongside health and social care professionals in workplaces, and take part in training with specialists from the Newcastle Safety Partnership. For example, learners gained awareness about domestic violence and abuse of elderly people at a joint seminar hosted with the College.

- Facilities are outstanding and learners benefit from studying in specialist classrooms dedicated to health and social care studies. Learners use the latest technology confidently to support their learning. For example, a group of advanced-level learners used the internet well to research the terms socio-medical and bio-medical in a sociology class.
- Teachers accurately identify learners' starting points and agree clear and challenging targets with learners which they record on electronic individual learning plans. Learners and personal tutors use these well to provide a clear structure for the regular tutorial reviews. More able learners use the outstanding opportunities which the health and social care academy provides, to take on a wider range of activities to keep them engaged and motivated. For instance, undertaking practical activities supported by the local hospital training team.
- Assessment of learning is particularly good. Learners' work is marked promptly and teachers give clear feedback that enables learners to make good progress to gain the higher grades needed for university entrance. For example, teachers use engaging and interesting activities to test learning by using a television style quiz to test their knowledge on the completion of unit.
- Most learners successfully gain functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. However, learners find it difficult to track their progress, as teachers do not always include their English and mathematics targets on the electronic individual learning plans.
- Very good pastoral and academic support ensures that learners reach the highest standard they can. The majority of learners work hard to develop good personal, social and professional care practice skills. They research individual areas of interest and are encouraged by teachers to build on their prior experience and as a result, a number of learners have successfully gained voluntary and paid part-time work with local care sector organisations.
- Teachers provide learners with good opportunities in lessons and assignments to explore and understand the issues behind discrimination and stereotyping, as well as gaining good awareness of wider equality and diversity issues. However, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for learners to explore the care practices and preferences of people with different backgrounds to prepare learners well enough for work in culturally diverse workplaces.

## Science

**16-19 study programmes**  
**19+ Learning programmes**

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, which is in line with the proportion of learners who successfully complete their qualifications; this was well below the national average in 2012/13. At inspection, in-year retention and learners' attendance have improved on the last year.
- In the better lessons, teachers use a variety of stimulating activities resulting in learners being motivated and making good progress. Teachers reinforce theory with practical work very well, to hold learners' interests and foster their enjoyment.
- Learners develop good mathematics and information technology skills in lessons, especially in physics, where they use simulations to establish the relationship between force and acceleration. Learners make good use of the excellent resources and laboratory equipment.
- In the minority of less effective lessons, the teacher talks too much in the main part of the lesson, causing some learners to lose interest. Teachers do not plan sufficiently well nor use individual profiles effectively, which results in them not meeting the needs of individual learners. The pace of learning is slow and teachers do not use directed questions, resulting in only modest progress.

- Teachers assess learning well. They give effective and timely feedback on assignments and set homework around past paper questions or revision for monthly tests. Teachers effectively track learners' performance by recording and sharing assessment marks online. Managers monitor these to ensure early intervention with learners who are at risk of not succeeding.
- Teachers have improved and now use robust methods to set challenging targets and review learners' progress. Managers and staff have also improved information, advice and guidance, ensuring that learners are on the right course. Learners receive good guidance and support to aid their progress. Teachers routinely discuss targets with learners and intervene or change aspects of the course as a result. As an example, after these reviews teachers may direct learners to undertake compulsory additional support.
- Tutorials and pastoral care for learners are good. Personal tutors provide effective support for learners with progression, study skills and personal development. The one to one meetings provide effective advice and guidance for university applications and careers.
- Learners benefit from a large number of enrichment events that allow them to gain further understanding and promote their interest in science topics. They attend the weekly science club, external master classes and workshops, which promote well a greater awareness and interest in science.
- The VLE is well developed and comprehensive. It contains presentations, worksheets and exam resources for learners. These support independent learning and are very popular with learners. Learners have good access to computers and laptops in the department, as well as other online resources.
- Teachers do not promote equality and diversity consistently in lessons. They do not use naturally occurring opportunities to promote, or create awareness of, issues around equality and diversity. Learners feel safe and teachers integrate them well into the department.

## Engineering and motor vehicle

### Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and the large majority of apprentices succeed within planned timescales. Teachers and assessors are experienced and well qualified. In both engineering and motor vehicle lessons, teachers prepare well and draw upon their own workplace experiences to illustrate complex concepts and make learning interesting.
- The large majority of engineering and motor vehicle teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan lessons well and effectively link theory and practice using a wide range of techniques to motivate and engage learners. For example, solving mathematical formulae to ascertain angles they relate well to the measurement and manufacturing of the components apprentices make at work. In the better lessons, teachers make good use of targeted questions to challenge and improve learners' knowledge and understanding, and many make particularly effective use of ILT to support and promote learning.
- In a few lessons, a minority of learners make insufficient progress because teachers do not sufficiently prepare extension activities. This restricts the degree to which the more able apprentices are fully stimulated, engaged and challenged. For example, in one lesson, the more able solved complex equations in good time, but then had to wait for the remaining learners to complete the same equations. Teachers in weaker lessons do not engage learners well and do not draw upon apprentices' wide range of experiences in the workplace to stimulate discussion and reinforce concepts.
- Engineering apprentices develop good practical skills and use milling machines, lathes, drills and welding equipment confidently and safely in the well-equipped engineering workshops at the college. The workshop for motor vehicle studies at the subcontractor's site is appropriately

equipped with older, but suitable hand tools, engine blocks, lifts, extraction equipment and vehicles.

- Staff promote health and safety well in all practical lessons and in the workplace. Apprentices and learners taking traineeship programmes develop skills to a high level very quickly in the workplace and workshops. Employers value the positive impact this has upon their own production. Employers are very supportive and ensure learners develop a full range of relevant skills. One engineering employer has arranged for eight apprentices to learn basic German language skills and presentation skills to improve their ability to converse with key clients and read essential documentation.
- Most practical assessment is good. Assessors carry out regular and frequent assessments in the workplace, provide good support and keep employers informed about outcomes from progress reviews. Most learners benefit from clear and detailed oral feedback, particularly in practical settings, on how to improve their work. However, much written feedback after assessment is cursory and does not explain how learners can improve. Targets set for learners at reviews are too often set for completion by the next review. Assessors do not set enough short-term challenging targets to motivate and encourage learners to progress more quickly.
- While the development of learners’ mathematics skills within lessons and practical activities is good, teachers do not routinely correct errors in their use of English in written assessment work. They do not always highlight learners’ spelling mistakes and leave poor use of punctuation and grammar unmarked.
- Monitoring of learners’ progress, often using the electronic tracking system, progress reviews and workshop progress charts, is good. In the very well-equipped engineering workshops, learners use a board that displays planned targets for the session and progress against those targets. Managers and staff work well with the subcontractor to develop observation of teaching and learning. As a result, the effectiveness of teaching and learning has improved.
- The college and the subcontractor’s staff work effectively with employers to ensure that they meet the requirements of employers’ businesses and to ensure that training and assessment arrangements meet the needs of apprentices and learners taking traineeship programmes. Assessors and highly skilled and experienced workplace mentors offer a wide range of good vocational and personal support to learners to ensure that they stay motivated and interested in their training.
- Teachers and assessors promote equality and diversity well on highly visible and eye-catching posters on the walls of classrooms, corridors and workshops at the college. However, they miss many opportunities to integrate equality and diversity into workplace assessment, progress reviews and lessons.

<p><b>Sport, leisure and recreation</b></p> <p><b>16-19 study programmes</b></p> <p><b>19+ Learning programmes</b></p>	<p>Outstanding</p>
--	--------------------

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding, which leads to high success rates that are substantially above national averages for the majority of vocational courses. However, success rates for the small number of A-level courses are low. Learners’ attendance on most courses is very good and they make excellent progress in their lessons, enjoy learning and achieve their learning aims and sport and fitness goals.
- Teachers strongly encourage and support learners to achieve the highest grades possible in their work. Aspirational teaching encourages a significant number of learners to progress into higher education in sport or associated courses, such as sports therapy, psychology or physiotherapy.

- All learners have particularly strong levels of confidence, communication skills and are highly self-motivated to learn. Most have developed high levels of self-esteem through achieving excellence in their chosen sports discipline as part of the college's academy of sport.
- Learners benefit from high expectation and levels of engagement from their teachers and coaches who promote exemplary standards in sports disciplines and fitness through outstanding levels of care and support. Staff support learners well in exceeding standards in both practical and classroom activity. In return, learners respect staff and view them as role models.
- Learners appreciate the excellent support that teachers' provide. They are readily available when learners need help with their work, whether it is an additional one to one or remote support. Teachers use their high levels of vocational qualifications and expert coaching expertise to plan lessons and practical sessions that are both engaging and motivating for learners. Staff are particularly good at illustrating key learning and coaching points and extending learners' knowledge.
- Teachers use a wide variety of innovative teaching methods including creative use of technology to demonstrate complex theories relating to exercise and sport. Teachers are good at applying theory to practice by using practical demonstrations during lessons, particularly the reinforcement of key learning points such as exploring the structure of the heart and its function or laws of motion and force in movement.
- The organisation and management skills of teachers and coaches are extremely effective and provide learners with excellent opportunities to develop strong leadership and practical management skills, which help individuals in leading mini coaching and fitness sessions as part of their coursework or sport team training. Learners work extremely effectively and independently in groups when working on case studies to test theoretical principles and engage each group in using higher-level critical thinking and analytical skills to solve complex tasks.
- Through the excellent availability of ILT and VLE resources learners develop high-level presentational skills and carry out detailed research to help them gather information to finish assignments and present their work. Particularly effective group work enables learners to be involved in critical analysis, providing clear feedback to each other, aiding development of learners' higher-level critical thinking skills.
- Staff thoroughly complete initial assessment test results and comprehensive group profiles to ensure learners are on the appropriate level course to meet their individual learning and personal goals. Teachers check learners' progress regularly during lessons and in tutorials to confirm that teaching, learning and assessment are providing the right level of support to help learners make good progress.
- Learners' benefit from very comprehensive, helpfully written and verbal feedback on their work through teachers' use of the VLE and during tutorials. Tutorials take place regularly to check learners' progress, review assignment feedback and provide clear specific guidance to help each learner understand how to improve their work.
- Teachers develop English very effectively in most lessons by providing engaging discussions on the high level of English learners need to use when writing assignments and aspiring to higher grades. Teachers regularly check that learners understand how to spell complex and technical terms. During tutorials, teachers focus on how to develop good writing skills for assignments and improve learners' understanding of how to describe, interpret and analyse information when completing work.
- In most lessons, teachers do not respond to naturally occurring opportunities to promote equality and diversity. However, in a few lessons, teachers develop well learners' understanding of the importance of recognising and respecting individual preferences in sport and exercise. Teachers and coaches ensure that all learners have a strong understanding of safe working practices. Safeguarding is good and all staff and learners meet health and safety statutory requirements. Staff and learners pay great attention to safe practice in sport, applying principles of training and in planning of fitness sessions effectively.



## Independent living and leisure

**16-19 study programmes**  
**19+ Learning programmes**

Outstanding

- Outstanding teaching learning and assessment contributes to learners successfully achieving above the national average in their main qualification and having outstanding success in functional skills at entry level. Progression is good between levels of learning and staff have excellent expectations that contribute effectively to learners' progression. Learners make exceptionally good progress in their personal development and build high levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff understand the needs of learners exceptionally well and inspire them to produce high standards of work. Staff use well the detailed learners' profiles on behaviour and medical assessments to identify learners at risk and to monitor attendance closely, which helps learners develop a positive attitude to learning.
- Learners experience a wide range of enrichment opportunities within and beyond their immediate community through projects that promote employability. This leads to significant improvement in their levels of confidence, advocacy and personal and social skills.
- Teaching and support staff use their knowledge of young people with disabilities very effectively. For example, learners on the autism spectrum participate in a cross-college group, which regularly enables them to share experiences and socialise in safe surroundings within the college and the community. They access specific services including the dedicated screenings of films in the local cinema, which they may not otherwise do.
- Teachers plan lessons effectively to meet the needs and interests of all learners, relevant to their age groups and abilities. They use small steps in learning to help them make good progress. The vast majority of teachers use technology creatively to good effect to reinforce learning well. For example, teachers use smart board resources and short video presentations to demonstrate and emphasise learning points visually.
- Teachers use questioning skilfully and to help learners become independent thinkers. For example, learners devised a game as part of team-work for employability learning. They took responsibility for designing instructions for use by others, identifying potential problems and effectively suggesting solutions. Teachers at end of lessons summaries refer to group learning activities, but do not always identify individual learning outcomes to inform future planning.
- Initial assessments accurately identify learners' starting points. These are highly effective in placing learners at the appropriate levels of learning. An extended period of assessment effectively builds on functional skills needs to provide a comprehensive view of learners. This leads to outstanding support to encourage independent learning and access to facilities and services.
- Assessment for learning is outstanding. Learners receive thorough feedback in a timely way on written work to correct mistakes in spelling and grammar. Highly effective explanations improve sentence structure, develop vocabulary and identify informal and formal aspects of communication. Individual learning plans effectively identify specific needs and teachers routinely share learners' targets with support staff to ensure good progress.
- The development of English, mathematics and information technology skills is excellent. Frequent references made to the work-place enable learners to value and understand the context of functional skills learning. The promotion and value of reading skills is highly effective with most learners participating in the national Six Book Reading Challenge. The college achieved a highly prestigious bronze certificate as part of a national competition.

- Care guidance and support are outstanding. Learners receive high levels of pastoral support and staff effectively plan experiences to promote personal independence. For example, travel training develops the necessary skills to attend work-placements and be an active member the community.
- Teachers use good examples of visual displays to promote positive equality and diversity messages. Learners respect each other and are courteous at all times. However, teachers do not develop equality and diversity in lesson planning sufficiently to promote a wider understanding of equality issues.

## Accounting, finance and administration

### Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and lead to overall and timely framework success rates for apprenticeship programmes, which are above national averages, particularly in business administration.
- Teachers and assessors are highly committed and enthusiastic and have high expectations of learners. Learners respond very positively. They are well motivated and as a result succeed, and most progress to higher-levels of study.
- Teachers plan and prepare their lessons thoroughly. In off-the-job training, learners experience a range of engaging activities. Teachers often use case studies well to help link theory to commercial practice, and they align classroom work to examination and assessment requirements closely.
- Learners enjoy their lessons, which are brisk and purposeful. They work conscientiously and productively and make good progress. They support each other well in paired and small group work. Teachers check learners' progress through questions, tests, quizzes and observations, but do not always challenge the more able sufficiently. In a minority of lessons, teachers rush through activities too quickly, do not summarise key points clearly and do not give learners enough time to reflect.
- Staff manage workplace training very well and learners benefit greatly from their employment experiences. Employers are very supportive, and learners do well at work, growing in confidence, self-esteem and in social interaction with other people. For example, administration learners in a building society described clearly to the assessor how to manage an upset client in the office.
- Most learners show initiative and take on further responsibilities. In an industrial research company, for example, an intermediate-level business administration learner developed an updated template for technical reporting. Accounting learners devise easy to use balance sheets for voluntary organisations and a few learners are attending external audits with their employers across the country, which is improving their expertise.
- Assessments and reviews in the workplace are good. Learners receive regular and frequent visits from their assessors, and they are clear about the specific components and assessment requirements of their programmes. Assessors talk with employers and ensure that learners have good opportunities to gather a wide range of evidence to meet accreditation requirements.
- Learners receive good oral feedback and detailed and constructive written comments on their progress. Teachers and assessors return marked work promptly and learners know what they need to do to improve. Most individual targets are clear and precise, and assessors discuss with learners and employers how to meet them. Assessors use the college's new online tracking system to record individual learners' progress efficiently and this helps to maintain high timely success rates.

- Support for learners is good. Information, advice and guidance are comprehensive and assessors ensure that learners are on the appropriate level of course. They identify and support learners' additional needs well. Staff are very responsive to individual learners' requirements and help them on a wide range of issues to enable them to succeed.
- The development of English and mathematical skills is good. Teachers correct grammar, punctuation and spelling carefully, and learners use professional terms accurately and confidently. Administration learners are very aware of the need to write reports, letters and emails to clients, customers and colleagues correctly and they do this in a professional manner. Learners have many opportunities to enable them to improve their mathematical skills in accounting and administration lessons.
- Teachers promote equality and diversity well in specific units within courses. Learners show respect and sensitivity to each other and to their work colleagues. Teachers recognise and value everyone's contributions in lessons. Assessors encourage learners to consider equality and diversity in the workplace. Administration learners, for example, are skilful in helping customers with English language difficulties. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to explore equality and diversity aspects as they occur naturally in lessons and assessors do not always probe learners' deeper understanding in reviews.

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management</b>	Good
---	------

- The principal and senior managers have a very clear ambition for the college to achieve excellence, and they communicate this effectively to staff. They set challenging targets for the performance of staff and for the success of learners, and monitor progress towards their achievement rigorously. In the last two years, managers have made improvements to the college's strategy to raise standards in all areas of provision, which have resulted in an increase in success rates across the college.
- Governors successfully challenge senior managers to improve the college's performance. They have a wide range of relevant expertise and receive regular training that enables them to undertake their role successfully. They contribute effectively to developing the college's strategy, and are clear about what managers need to do to improve outcomes for all learners. Governors participate fully in the life of the college. They visit lessons, attend college events, and often act as mentors for learners aspiring towards a career in their specialist area.
- Management of staff performance is robust and leads to improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. All teachers have clear targets for the success of their learners and the quality of their teaching. Managers at all levels closely monitor the performance of teachers and take appropriate actions when needed to improve performance. Teaching and support staff undertake a wide range of training that helps improve their skills and achieve their performance targets.
- Learners benefit from excellent accommodation and resources. The attractive and well-resourced buildings at the college's main site provide a very high standard environment for learning. Learners enjoy coming to college and speak positively about their access to a wide range of specialist resources, which supports their learning well.
- Accurate evaluation of the college's key strengths and areas for development enables senior managers to make many improvements quickly and successfully. Managers introduced annual teaching, learning and assessment reviews to evaluate all subject areas using a wide range of evidence including observations, learners and employers' views, and information about learners' progress and success. However, in a few instances, subject managers' evaluation of individual courses is not always thorough, and does not always identify specific actions to improve teaching, learning and assessment sufficiently.

- College managers and staff work with a wide range of partners to develop provision that is responsive to the needs of the local community and employers. These courses help learners gain the skills and qualifications that they need to progress into employment locally. The college also provides a wide range of opportunities for learners to gain experience of work and to contribute to the local community. For example, participation by the college in the local strategy to improve the town centre provided opportunities for learners on visual and performing arts courses to display their work and perform at events at venues across the town.
- Managers and staff are very successful in ensuring that all learners, whatever their background, are able to participate in learning. A bursary scheme provides financial support to over a third of full-time learners without which many would not be able to attend college. Good planning by managers ensures that learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have the opportunity to progress successfully from school to courses at the college. Managers and staff work closely with local schools to ensure that it is able to meet learners' support needs as soon as they begin their course.
- Managers and staff successfully promote respect for all students whatever their background and lifestyle. Staff and learners celebrate diversity through workshops and events. For example, the student union organised events to celebrate religious and cultural festivals, and different life styles. Posters and information guides provide useful advice for learners including gender equality and disability equality. Staff receive relevant training in equality, diversity, and promoting an inclusive approach to their work.
- The college meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding, and managers and staff provide a supportive and safe environment for learners where they can develop their independence and confidence. All staff who work directly with learners receive training in recognising when and how to refer potential safeguarding incidents. Learners have comprehensive information and guidance on staying safe as soon as they join the college and staff reinforce this throughout learners' time at the college.

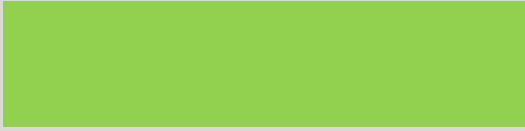
## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

<b>Newcastle-under-Lyme College</b>				
<b>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</b>  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	<b>Overall</b>	<b>16-19 study programmes</b>	<b>19+ Learning programmes</b>	<b>Apprenticeships</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	2	2	2	2
Outcomes for learners	2	2	1	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	2	2	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	2	2	2

<b>Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Health and Social Care</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Engineering</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Motor vehicle</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Sport, Leisure and Recreation</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Independent living and leisure skills</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Accounting and Finance</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Administration</b>	<b>2</b>

## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	General further education college							
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16+							
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	Full-time: 3,500							
	Part-time: 6,048							
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Karen Dobson							
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 October 2007							
<b>Website address</b>	www.nulc.ac.uk							
<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>								
<b>Main course or learning programme level</b>	<b>Level 1 or below</b>		<b>Level 2</b>		<b>Level 3</b>		<b>Level 4 and above</b>	
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
<b>Full-time</b>	357	48	499	49	2,696	191	0	0
<b>Part-time</b>	385	1,050	123	723	26	356	1	77
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	11		2		N/A			
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	208	194	142	404	4	44		
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	22							
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Part-time</b>	22							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Marson Garages (Wolstanton) Ltd</li> <li>▪ Staffordshire Operator Training Ltd</li> <li>▪ Construction Skills College</li> <li>▪ Babbington Business College Ltd</li> <li>▪ Manchester Metropolitan University</li> <li>▪ Inspire2Coach Ltd</li> <li>▪ Ucoach Ltd</li> <li>▪ Newstead Wood School (Bromley Tennis Centre)</li> <li>▪ WM Tennis – Now Impact Tennis</li> <li>▪ The Lawn Tennis Association</li> </ul>							

- 
- The Coach Academy (Sports) Inc Ltd
  - The Academy for Performing Arts.

## Contextual information

Newcastle-under-Lyme College is a tertiary college, the only one of its kind serving Staffordshire and the single biggest provider of education for learners aged 16 to 18 in North Staffordshire; the college recruits in almost equal numbers from the Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme areas, which both have high levels of socio economic disadvantage. The college offers a range of vocational and academic courses, including a substantial programme of apprenticeship training; workplace learning for young people and adults, adult classroom based learning, higher education and provision for the unemployed. Two-thirds of learners undertake advanced level programmes. The proportion of pupils achieving five or more grade A\*-C GCSEs including English and Maths in 2012 was similar to the national picture for Staffordshire but 8% below for pupils from Stoke-on-Trent.

## Information about this inspection

<b>Lead inspector</b>	William Baidoe-Ansah HMI
-----------------------	--------------------------

Five of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the director of curriculum and performance as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the college'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 college. 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>

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



Learner View is a new website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to [www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk)

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

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

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

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

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014