

# London Electronics College Limited

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		11–13 June 2014
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

## Summary of key findings for learners

### This provider requires improvement because:

- The proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications, despite an increase over the last three years, remains too low. Too few learners make the progress of which they are capable and achieve high grades.
- Too few lessons are good or better. In too many lessons, teachers do not set clear objectives for learners to enable them to make good or better progress. Too many learners do not attend regularly, and on time, which hinders the progress they make.
- Teachers do not monitor the progress of learners well enough and do not set specific targets for improvement when learners' progress is too slow. More able learners are not set targets to achieve the high grades of which they are capable. Managers have not closed the gap in achievement between different groups of learners.
- Managers insufficiently evaluate the quality of provision and the resulting report is over optimistic. Consequently, they do not set or monitor appropriate actions to bring about sufficient improvements to courses and to learners' outcomes.
- Performance management does not focus sufficiently on key priorities for improvement. Managers do not set sufficiently challenging or appropriate targets for improving teaching.

### This provider has the following strengths:

- The large majority of learners complete their courses and the proportion of learners achieving qualifications at level 1 and 2 has significantly improved.
- The progression of learners into employment or further training having achieved their qualification is good.
- Learners develop good skills guided by teachers during their practical lessons that will benefit them in employment.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring teachers have the skills to plan and teach lessons that enable all learners to make the progress of which they are capable and achieve qualifications with grades that reflect their ability and potential.
- Increase the proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications by setting aspirational and achievable target grades and timescales for completion. Ensure that teachers and managers regularly monitor the attendance and progress of all learners and intervene swiftly when they are at risk of falling behind their expected rate of progress and target grades.
- Develop the tutorial process to help learners better understand the progress they are making and set them specific targets for improvement, both to ensure they achieve their qualifications with the grade of which they are capable and to enable them to achieve qualifications in English and mathematics. Ensure teachers and tutors set learners targets to improve attendance and punctuality where necessary.
- Ensure managers make an accurate evaluation of the quality of provision in the self-assessment report and set specific actions to improve all aspects of the provision, especially teaching, learning and assessment. Ensure managers regularly monitor the progress towards achieving improvement actions and intervene promptly when progress is too slow.
- Ensure that all staff have clear and challenging targets for improving the learner experience in their appraisals.

### Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Although the proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications has increased over the last three years, outcomes for learners require improvement. The vast majority of learners complete their courses, but too many do not achieve a qualification and the proportion of learners who achieve a high grade is too low.</li> <li>▪ Learners who study qualifications in engineering are more successful than their peers who study qualifications in subjects including electrical installation, design and information and communication technology.</li> <li>▪ The proportion of learners who achieve qualifications at levels 1 and 2 has increased significantly over the last three years and is comparable to similar providers. However the proportion of learners who achieve qualifications at level 3 has remained consistently low over the last three years.</li> <li>▪ Learners' achievement of qualifications in English and mathematics is improving but still requires further improvement. Very few learners who study GCSE mathematics achieve an A* to C grade and a low proportion of learners achieve functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics.</li> <li>▪ Teachers help learners to develop their personal and social skills well. Learners are polite, respectful of each other, their teachers and their learning environment. They develop practical skills that will help them progress to employment, such as how to present effectively. However, too many learners do not attend lessons regularly, and on time, despite a number of appropriate initiatives introduced by managers.</li> <li>▪ Learners on courses in engineering maintenance improve their diagnostic and repair skills significantly whilst on work placements with local and regional employers. They gain a better understanding of the world of work and a small minority gain part-time work as a result of the progress they make in their placements. However, the opportunity to complete a work</li> </ul>	

experience placement to broaden their understanding of different types of jobs in their chosen industry does not extend to all learners.

- Managers have yet to implement effective actions to address gaps in the achievement of different groups of learners. Currently, female learners significantly outperform their male peers; learners with declared learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not do as well as those without, and learners from White British backgrounds achieve better than those from a minority ethnic heritage. Most of these gaps have existed for several years and are not yet closing.
- The progression of learners to further training, higher education or employment as a result of achieving their qualifications is good. However, managers do not have information on the destinations of all learners to enable them to assess the effectiveness of the courses they offer on learners' career choices.

### **The quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. This reflects an increase in the achievement of qualifications that has not been rapid enough over time and remains too low.
- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent. In the better lessons, learners learn through practical activity which they find interesting and stimulating and, as a result, they make good progress. For example, in an analogue systems fault finding lesson, teachers reinforced learners' understanding of system components and their functions through the use of test data learners had gathered from televisions in the workshop. Learners worked enthusiastically to complete these tasks, the more able completed work of greater complexity.
- In less effective lessons, teachers do not clearly state the aims and objectives of the lesson, they fail to set clear achievement targets and restrict questioning to a limited number of learners. As a result, lessons lack pace, are uninspiring and learners do not make good progress.
- Punctuality and attendance require improvement. In the majority of classes fewer than half of learners regularly attend and this has been the pattern for some time. As a result, too many learners have gaps in their learning and fail to achieve their qualification. The punctuality of learners is endemically poor and initiatives such as the free breakfasts provided by the college have not led to improvement.
- The quality of support and advice learners receive from tutors requires improvement. Tutors do not always receive sufficient information about the progress learners are making and, as a result, they fail to set relevant and specific short and medium term targets for improvement. Teachers do not agree target grades with learners at the start of their course and, subsequent actions to develop their learning are insufficiently challenging.
- The quality of assessment is good. Teachers use a variety of assessment techniques which are fair and clearly structured. However, in a few cases, the internal verifier failed to identify teachers' inadequate assessment questions, which resulted in learners having to complete further work.
- Learners' written work is satisfactory. The majority use technical vocabulary well and spell technical terms correctly. Learners develop their mathematics well through completing a wide range of relevant calculations in lessons and in assignment work. In a lively GCSE mathematics revision class, learners competed to answer past questions about solving algebraic equations. Teachers used each learner's answer as the basis for discussion and improvement of learners' understanding.
- The quality of teachers' written feedback to learners on the standard of their work and the correction of the use of English is not good enough. A minority of teachers annotate assignments with detailed comments, but these do not always help learners improve their grades or the standards of their written English. Teachers support the few learners who attend functional skills classes in English and mathematics well.
- Learners develop an adequate range of skills and knowledge; however, insufficient employer links result in no work experience opportunities for level 2 or level 3 learners who are studying

electronics or information technology. This reduces their chances of gaining employment. Learners who are studying level 3 electronic engineering maintenance courses attend work experience with local employers, including a major mobile phone company, and this improves their employment prospects.

- Learners attend local exhibitions and manufacturers' publicity events where they gain wider knowledge of industry practice. A local agency attends the college to assist learners in curriculum vitae writing and personal presentation which helps them to improve their job search skills.
- Advice and guidance for learners prior to starting their course are satisfactory. Teachers enrol learners on courses appropriate to their prior knowledge, experience, aspirations and qualifications. Teachers identify those requiring extra help early and direct them to specialist classes; however, attendance at these classes is poor. Students make good use of the laptops and books that are available on loan.
- Resources in classrooms are satisfactory and teachers are suitably qualified. However, the specialist workrooms they use are shabby and require tidying and decorating to reflect a modern industrial environment. The learning environment is cluttered with outdated equipment on benches and on display, both in classrooms and around the college.
- The virtual learning environment is in its developmental stage and teachers are not all using it well to support learners and their learning. Where teachers use it well, they require learners to log on, to draw down or submit assignments and this, together with email submission, assists in a speedy turn round of their marked work. However, teachers who do not use the virtual learning environment take longer to mark and return learners' work.
- Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. For example, when designing assignments, teachers use a range of workplace equality scenarios that are relevant to all learners, which reinforces the meaning of equality of opportunity. However, teachers fail to incorporate naturally occurring opportunities to promote diversity in their lessons. Consequently, learners' understanding of diversity does not significantly improve.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Managers have been successful in raising achievement significantly for students on level 1 and 2 courses. However managers' actions have not yet brought about a sufficient increase in the proportion of learners successfully completing their qualifications for the college as a whole, or made sufficient improvements in teaching, learning and assessment since the last inspection. Too many issues from the last inspection and subsequent monitoring visit remain.
- The Directors and the Principal provide good vision for the college and its role in meeting the needs of employers. They have adapted the curriculum to match changes in technology and employment opportunities in the Greater London area. However, managers have not fully embedded in operational plans, the expectations they set out in the strategic plan. Staff insufficiently understand managers' expectations. The self-assessment report contains a very brief mission statement, which lacks a clear focus.
- Good links exist with a range of external agencies to support learners who may find themselves in difficult circumstances and managers use these links well. Learners benefit from the range of additional personal support available during the day and into the evening. Many learners have complex domestic and personal problems and a good range of initiatives are available to support them.
- Course reviews and annual meetings to discuss academic standards lack focus on improving both outcomes for learners and the standard of teaching, learning and assessment. Managers do not set challenging targets for improvement for teachers. As a result, not all teachers or managers take enough responsibility for managing and implementing improvements to the provision.

- Targets set by managers are not specific enough to bring about improvement. The Principal has informed staff and discussed with them the performance of courses through his regular briefings. Despite this, some staff have not yet taken effective action to bring about rapid improvement in teaching, learning and assessment.
- The Directors and the Principal monitor finance very effectively, but the monitoring of academic performance requires improvement. Directors do not request or receive enough information, in an easy to interpret format or in a timely manner, to enable them to monitor progress against key performance targets. This significantly impedes the degree to which they can effectively challenge the Principal and senior managers and hold them to account for their actions.
- Lesson observations do not focus sufficiently on what learners learn in lessons and whether they are making sufficient progress to complete their qualification. Observers over grade many lessons and see normal practice as outstanding or good. Feedback to teachers does not focus sufficiently on how learning might be improved. Managers do not prioritise actions to improve teaching and learning sufficiently, a key factor in too many lessons requiring improvement.
- Performance management is not sufficiently rigorous or effective. In 2012/13, all staff received a formal performance appraisal; however, objectives within appraisals do not focus enough on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The majority of appraisal targets are insufficiently urgent or specific. Staff undertake a range of external and internal training and examples include managers sponsored to follow degree level courses or to achieve higher level professional qualifications. Too little training focuses on improving teaching, learning and assessment.
- Managers at all levels do not implement self-assessment and quality assurance processes effectively enough to achieve rapid and sustained improvements. Managers monitor underperforming courses but do not use data well enough to maximise the impact of any actions taken. The lack of access and understanding of data has impeded managers' ability to review and monitor progress. Managers and teachers do not routinely use the wide range of performance data to inform their view of college performance.
- Managers accurately identified several of the key areas for improvement in the self-assessment report for 2012/13, but they did not give sufficient weight to these in determining overall grades. They also failed to identify important areas for improvement around the proportion of learners completing their qualification, attendance and punctuality. Managers have an over optimistic view of the provision.
- Managers gather and consider learners' views frequently through questionnaires and learner forums. Suggestions and feedback from learners have led to the purchase of additional resources and adaptations to the building. They review learners' feedback as an integral part of self-assessment. Managers collect employer views through surveys; however, the use of this information and employers' involvement in self-assessment are underdeveloped.
- The college offers a wide range of courses which reflects the changes in technology and local and regional employment opportunities. Managers regularly review courses to maximise employment opportunities for learners. Insufficient opportunities for all learners to gain work experience however remain a key area for improvement
- The production and use of equalities data and information are underdeveloped. Directors, managers and teachers have not monitored the achievement of different groups of learners effectively or implemented actions to close the gaps in achievement for different groups. They do not sufficiently analyse the progress or success of learners from different ethnic heritage groups or those who need extra help with their learning.
- The college meets its statutory requirements for the safeguarding of learners. Managers and teachers provide a safe welcoming environment for learners. The number of reported accidents and bullying-related incidents each year are very low. Managers monitor health and safety adequately; however, teachers do not always promote good health and safety practice in lessons.

## **Record of Main Findings (RMF)**

## London Electronics College Limited

<b>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</b>  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	<b>Overall</b>	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
Outcomes for learners	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
The effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-

<b>Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Community Learning</b>	3

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	19+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	160							
Principal/CEO	Mr Malcolm Spalding							
Date of previous inspection	April 2009							
Website address	www.lec.org.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	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	-	26	-	56	-	30	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	-							
Part-time	-							
Number of community learners	-							
Number of employability learners	-							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							

## Contextual information

London Electronics College Limited is located in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and was founded in 1892 to provide training to post office managers in telegraphy. Courses are currently offered in engineering and information and communication technology from level 1 to level 5. All learners are aged over 19 and four fifths of learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with a significant minority being recent immigrants to the United Kingdom. Learners are recruited from London and the Home Counties, with approximately one fifth coming from the local borough. About four fifths of the current learners are unemployed. The level of unemployment in the local area, however, is slightly lower than the rate for London.

## Information about this inspection

<b>Lead inspector</b>	Richard Pemble HMI
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One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the vice principal, as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to 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 relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision.



## 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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