

# The Marine Society College

## Specialist designated institution

<b>Inspection dates</b>		8–10 October 2014
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Inadequate-4</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Inadequate-4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Inadequate-4
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Inadequate-4

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider is inadequate because:

- outcomes for learners on GCSE and A-level programmes are inadequate and the number of learners who complete their programme and achieve their qualification is very low
- teaching, learning and assessment on GCSE and A-level programmes are inadequate; too many learners make slow progress and the large majority on GCSE courses remain in training for long periods of time
- managers' monitoring of subcontracted provision is inadequate and they do not focus on the quality of learning and how well individual learners' progress in their studies
- target setting for learners is ineffective and tutors do not identify those learners who are making slower than expected progress and do not ensure that they are helped promptly when falling behind in their learning
- managers have not taken sufficient action to eliminate weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. They do not use data effectively to monitor and improve learning or to accurately assess learners' skills before they start their programme
- managers do not collect data about learners' next steps on completing their qualifications and they do not have enough information to judge whether the courses they provide are appropriate for the maritime industry
- the college's safeguarding of learners on GCSE and A-level programmes requires improvement, as managers do not ensure that partner organisations check their staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with vulnerable learners.

#### This provider has the following strengths:

- many learners produce work of a high standard and develop effective skills in using information technology
- specialist careers guidance staff understand the needs of maritime employers well and give learners good information
- a flexible and well-organised system ensures that learners have a wide range of locations worldwide in which to take their examinations.

## Full report

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

- Increase the number of learners who successfully complete their GCSE and A-level programmes, by accurately establishing learners' starting points to ensure that all are on the most appropriate course, and are clear about the course content and examination requirements.
- Ensure that all teaching, learning and assessment are good or better, through improving tutors planning and setting of individual targets for learners giving them the best opportunity to achieve their qualification, with high grades.
- Ensure that all learners make good progress in their studies, by requiring tutors to swiftly alert managers when learners make slower than planned progress, thus allowing for prompt additional help and guidance to enable learners to succeed.
- Improve managers' use of data to monitor learners' progress effectively, identifying and acting upon any differences in their performance, therefore improving the quality of learning. Make better use of data to monitor the subcontractor's and tutors' performance and make certain that managers take swift action to tackle underperformance.
- To ensure that the courses offered by the college are the most suitable for the maritime industry, take immediate steps to collect and analyse information on the qualifications and employment that learners gain as a consequence of their studies.
- With immediate effect, ensure that the college's safeguarding of GCSE and A-level learners improves, by requiring partner organisations to adequately risk assess their staff and tutors to determine whether they are suitable to work with vulnerable adults.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Inadequate
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- The college provides education and training for learners who work within the maritime industry. The focus of this inspection is GCSE and A-level provision; the most popular courses are GCSE English and mathematics. All learning is carried out, assessed and completed by distance learning through the college's subcontracted partner. Over the past three years, the proportion of learners who complete their programmes and achieve their qualification successfully is very low. Too many learners make slow progress in completing their studies. Managers do not focus sharply enough on the individual progress learners make. They do not take corrective action to help those learners who fall behind in their studies, those who take extended breaks in their learning or those who fail to start their programme of study promptly.
- A very small number of highly motivated learners, mostly from the Royal Navy, make rapid progress with their learning. They attain very high examination grades at GCSE and A-level. However, tutors do not ensure that the large majority of learners complete their qualification and pass their final examination with good grades.
- Many learners produce high standards of work and can apply their new skills well. Learners develop effective skills in using information technology. They use the internet confidently when completing research activities and understand how to keep themselves and others safe when online.
- Most learners improve their English and mathematics, and the small numbers taking foundation English and mathematics qualifications achieve these successfully. Learners are able to apply grammatical concepts correctly and use mathematical skills well to undertake accurate calculations.

- Managers do not monitor the progress of individual groups of learners in sufficient detail to know whether all learners achieve equally well. Managers do not identify precisely why learners in the Royal Navy are more successful than the majority of learners in the merchant navy and therefore have not taken steps to ensure that all learners achieve equally well. Managers and tutors do not have accurate information on learners' individual starting points to plan learning and assessment adequately or to measure their individual progress effectively. Learners who require extra support with their studies do less well, particularly those who need more time to complete their examinations.
- Managers do not have sufficient information to know the impact the college is having on learners' current or future employment or career prospects. They do not adequately record the progress learners make between different levels of study or know how many learners progress to better-paid employment or higher education.

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

Inadequate

- Teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate because managers and tutors are not effective in enabling learners to make good progress in their studies and to achieve well. Weaknesses identified in teaching, learning and assessment at the previous inspection remain. For example, managers still do not monitor learners' progress thoroughly throughout their studies.
- Planning for individual learning and assessment is poor. Staff do not establish learners' starting points in sufficient depth at the beginning of their study, in order to plan their learning well. They do not identify those learners who need additional help to complete their qualifications successfully.
- College staff are not always sufficiently clear about the content of courses and examination requirements when providing guidance to learners before they enrol. Consequently, too many learners enrol on to a course with unrealistic expectations and fail to start their learning promptly. Too many do not enter the final examination.
- Assessment of learners' assignments and coursework is thorough. Tutors make effective use of praise and encouragement to motivate learners. Tutors mark work promptly and many give detailed feedback that helps learner to improve their work.
- Tutors do not set suitable individual targets for learners to ensure that all learners make good progress. They do not identify to managers those learners who are not actively learning or who are making slower than expected progress, so that learners can receive additional help.
- The more experienced tutors make effective use of the well-designed distance-learning materials to support independent learning and adapt the materials well. For example, in science subjects, tutors adjust practical work to allow learners to complete experiments effectively without access to a laboratory.
- Many learners on GCSE and A-level courses develop good skills and knowledge and demonstrate a sound understanding of their subjects. Science learners demonstrate their understanding of chemical equations, and mathematics learners use complex algebraic formulae to solve problems. Learning materials for science and mathematics promote the use of specialist terminology well by providing glossaries of common scientific terms.
- While many tutors pay careful attention to improving learners' English skills when marking work, not all possess the necessary information technology skills to do this successfully online, which delays feedback to learners.
- Careers advice and guidance for learners are effective. Specialist careers guidance staff understand the maritime industry well and help learners to explore the learning and career options available to them. Learners are able to identify what further qualifications they require and clearly plan their next steps.
- The college aims to meet the particular needs of seafarers and allows learners from all backgrounds to participate in formal learning. Teaching materials are sensitive to the diversity

found among learners. Learners benefit from good access to course textbooks and online materials that support their studies well.

### The effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, the college's grade for overall effectiveness has declined because outcomes for learners and teaching, learning and assessment of GCSE and A-level programmes are now inadequate. Managers have not taken sufficient action to improve the weaknesses identified previously. They do not make good use of data to monitor learners' progress successfully or to improve teaching, learning and assessment.
- Management of subcontracted provision is inadequate, resulting in too many learners making slow progress. Managers do not hold the subcontractor responsible or take sufficiently swift action to provide help for those learners who fall behind in their studies. Managers have taken recent steps to improve the availability and quality of data used to monitor learners' success, but it is too soon to judge the impact of these actions.
- Trustees of the college have a clear vision to promote formal qualifications and skills to the maritime industry. However, they have insufficient knowledge of the quality of learning carried out on their behalf to ensure that it is at least good. They are not aware that many learners make slow progress and do not take their final examinations. They do not know that the subcontractor performs poorly.
- Managers' actions to ensure that all learners receive high quality teaching, learning and assessment are poor. Managers and staff do not review all aspects of provision, including the subcontractor, through self-assessment of performance. Managers do not use data effectively to measure the performance of the subcontractor and other partners. The views of learners and employers are not used to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Managers do not set targets for improving the quality of learning and assessment.
- The college's learning programmes broadly meet the training needs of most employers in the maritime industry. The college provides academic and vocational training to seafarers who have limited access to accredited learning. However, managers do not collect sufficient information on the employment gained, or courses that learners undertake when they have completed their studies, to know accurately whether the programmes offered are the most appropriate.
- Senior managers, trustees, and staff ensure that equality and an understanding of diversity are strong features of the work of the college. Courses are widely available and positively promoted to seafarers internationally. The highly efficient organisation of examinations means learners can take their examinations at the headquarters in Lambeth, at sea or at a wide range of locations worldwide. Financial help to support seafarers in their studies is generous and used by many learners.
- The college's safeguarding of learners requires improvement. While learners have a high level of awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe while working online, the college does not ensure that its partner organisations undertake the appropriate risk assessment to ensure that their tutors and staff are suitable to work with vulnerable learners.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### The Marine Society College

<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>4</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Outcomes for learners	<b>4</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>4</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>4</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4

<b>Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Community learning</b>	<b>4</b>

## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Specialist designated institution							
<b>Age range of learners</b>	19+							
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	81							
<b>CEO</b>	Mr Martin Coles.							
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	February 2009							
<b>Website address</b>	<a href="http://www.ms-sc.org">www.ms-sc.org</a>							
<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>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+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	-							
<b>Full-time</b>	-							
<b>Part-time</b>	-							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	264							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	-							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ National Extension College</li> </ul>							

## Contextual information

The Marine Society College of the Sea is a designated specialist college in the London Borough of Lambeth, founded in 1756 to encourage recruitment to the Royal Navy. The college provides tuition and educational services to professional seafarers. These include: tutor-supported self-study programmes at levels 2 and 3 (mainly GCSE and A-levels); information, advice and guidance; registered public examinations centres; and a library facility for ships. The college contracts with an external subcontracted partner to provide tuition for GCSE and A-level courses. This inspection focused on the GCSE and A-level courses. Degree level courses and scholarships were not in the scope of this inspection.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Julie Steele HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the Director for Lifelong 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 individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

## 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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