

# London Vesta College

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		4–6 March 2015
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
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:

- managers' planning of learning does not include learners and employers sufficiently well or develop learners' understanding and knowledge beyond the requirements of the apprenticeship qualification
- more able learners are not always challenged sufficiently to make rapid progress and complete their qualification swiftly
- teachers' written feedback to help learners improve their work is not always sufficiently detailed or helpful enough to enable learners to improve their standard of work
- vocational resources and materials are not used well by teachers to aid and improve learning, or to develop learners' ability to work on their own
- managers' actions to ensure that all aspects of the apprenticeship programme are of a high standard are insufficiently effective, and self-assessment reporting is not focused on teaching, learning and assessment.

### This provider has the following strengths:

- a high proportion of learners achieve their apprenticeship
- learners working towards a functional skills mathematics qualification make good progress and achieve well
- learners achieve high standards in their practical work and develop good communication skills and attitudes to work that quickly make them valued members of the workforce
- good independent careers advice and guidance benefit many young people in the local community
- partnerships with employers are effective in ensuring that learners benefit from training that meets local skills needs.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of learning by ensuring that teachers extend learners' understanding beyond the qualification requirements and use training resources effectively to help learners develop their skills as independent learners.
- Ensure that teachers' written feedback to learners is clear about what they need to do to improve the standard of their academic work.
- Improve managers' planning of learning by involving learners and their employers fully in all stages of the learning process; ensure that assessments and work set by teachers match better the learning needs of all learners, particularly the more able, to make sure that all learners complete their qualification in an appropriate timescale.
- Review current arrangements for monitoring teaching, learning and assessment and make sure managers continually focus on the impact their actions are having on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- The London Vesta College (LVC) provides advanced apprenticeship qualifications to learners in the information technology and telecommunications sector and to those working within business administration. Most learners are aged 16 to 18 and work towards gaining an advanced level apprenticeship in information and communication technology (ICT). LVC also provides training on behalf of a large north London college.
- Over the past eighteen months, the large majority of learners have achieved their apprenticeship qualification and completion within the expected timeframe is high. Those learners working towards an advanced apprenticeship in ICT do particularly well. However, only a very small minority of learners studying a business administration apprenticeship are successful; LVC no longer offers apprenticeship programmes in business administration.
- Learners who are working towards a functional skills mathematics qualification do extremely well and achievement is high. The small numbers of learners who have previously achieved a high grade A\* to C in GCSE English and mathematics before beginning an apprenticeship, continue to develop their skills further once they commence their training.
- Learners develop good practical skills whilst at work and rapidly make a substantial contribution to improving their employers' business. For example, many are quickly able to diagnose operating faults in computer hardware and take the appropriate corrective action. Learners match correctly and replace the motherboard when repairing computers and deal with a broad range of customers' questions confidently and professionally.
- The few of more able learners do not have enough opportunity to make rapid progress towards completing the technical element of their qualification, and work set in class for all learners does not always link well to the individual requirements of their job role.
- Learners cooperate with fellow workers and become effective team members because of their training. Learners grow in self-confidence and are able to solve both work-related and other challenges in their personal life; one learner spoke eloquently of how he had the courage and confidence to challenge his bank to correct an error it had made in his personal banking.
- Few differences in achievement exist between various groups of learners; those from Asian or White British background do particularly well. However, the small numbers of learners from an Arab or an African background do not achieve as well as their peers.

- Managers prepare learners well for interviews, carefully matching them to potential employers who are passionate about providing high quality apprenticeships to young people. Many learners, often with limited or no previous experience of the world of work, take their first steps towards a successful career through studying an apprenticeship with LVC.
- Learners' progression into sustained employment on completing their qualification and into higher paid roles with greater responsibilities is good.
- Learners are very safe whilst at college. Managers ensure that the college provides an inclusive culture where learners' respect for each other and their teacher is evident.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Inspectors sampled in depth a wide range of learning and visited lessons, reviews and other learning activities, both at LVC and in employers' premises.
- Assessment meet the requirements of the awarding body. Most learners work for employers who are committed to ensuring that their apprentices develop good skills whilst in the workplace. Although the majority of current learners achieve their qualification, teachers do not help learners to take personal responsibility for completing their learning early or extend learners' technical knowledge beyond the narrow requirements of the apprenticeship qualification.
- Teachers' development of learners' English and mathematics skills is highly effective. Learners understand the importance of acquiring good skills to enable them to secure good jobs and progress in their chosen career. Those learners with limited mathematics skills make good progress and achieve their qualification well. Learners who start their programme with good levels of English, ICT and mathematics develop their skills further through targeted tasks and activities when in college, for example undertaking stock control analysis and the numbers of product parts covered by manufacturers' warranty.
- Managers' planning of learning is insufficient to ensure that all learners make rapid progress in achieving their qualification. Learners and their employers are not always clear about what work learners need to complete to achieve their qualification, and the timing of assessments in the workplace does not always meet their ongoing learning and development needs effectively.
- Teachers use their industry experience to make learning subjects such as information technology (IT) security protocols interesting and relevant to learners and develop their confidence effectively, for example by discussing disaster recovery systems used by international ICT companies. Teachers use their detailed personal knowledge and the findings from initial assessment of learners' starting points well to make certain that most learners complete their training successfully.
- Teachers do not encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning and development or to make effective use of the good quality vocational training materials which are freely available at the college. Learners are not encouraged to make notes of their learning, research the subjects they are studying more widely or develop their understanding of their subject by reflecting on how it relates to their job role and current employment.
- Teachers' assessment of learners' work is frequent. However, assessors and teachers rely too heavily on providing oral feedback on work through discussions with learners and do not provide sufficiently clear and detailed written feedback to help learners improve.
- Good independent careers advice and guidance are effective and provided free of charge to members of the local community as part of managers' commitment to helping young people in London into apprenticeships and employment. Potential learners not suited to a career in ICT are guided effectively to other appropriate local training providers.
- Learners improve their understanding of all aspects of equality, and learn to value diversity well. Through discussing topical subjects, for example call centre operations, they learn how to manage a wide range of potentially argumentative customers with respect and courtesy. As a

result, they understand thoroughly how challenging customers may be, particularly when customers have little IT knowledge and/or limited spoken language skills.

## The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers are intensely committed to providing sustainable employment through high quality apprenticeship training to young people in London. In the first 18 months of providing apprenticeship programmes, managers have ensured that most learners achieved their qualification and remained in full-time employment after completion. However, while learners develop good vocational skills at work, managers' planning of learning is not yet sufficiently comprehensive to ensure that all learners make rapid progress in completing every aspect of their qualification. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet good.
- Learners benefit from the very effective partnerships managers have developed with employers across the London Local Enterprise Partnership area who provide much needed opportunities for them to develop the high standard of technical skills in software and digital development that is required by the ICT sector. Managers' research and analysis have identified accurately local skills shortages, ensuring that LVC offers programmes that meet these needs well.
- Managers have designed a three-month pre-apprenticeship course to prepare learners with limited spoken English and/or low level mathematics qualifications effectively for the demands of an apprenticeship. Whilst on their apprenticeship programme, ongoing discussions with assessors ensure that learners understand their possible careers paths well, preparing them for higher-level studies, university and self-employment.
- Observations of teaching, learning and assessment have not been effective in raising the quality of learning to a good or better standard. Observers' feedback to staff, following observations of assessments, reviews and learning sessions, does not focus sufficiently on the progress individual learners are making or on the development of their technical skills and knowledge. Managers' developmental advice to teachers following observation of learning does not inform subsequent staff training.
- Managers' self-assessment of provision is inclusive and considers the views of learners and employers well when making judgements. The self-assessment report, while recording accurately many of the key strengths and areas for improvement, places insufficient focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment. Quality improvement planning does not indicate how managers will accurately identify and measure the impact of their actions on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Managers and staff protect learners effectively from harassment, bullying and discrimination. Learners and staff represent well the diversity of the vibrant local community and the range of local businesses. The college is a welcoming place to work and study. However, managers do not routinely monitor the performance of different groups of learners effectively, in order to identify and reduce any gaps in achievement.
- The safeguarding of all learners is good. Managers and staff place a good emphasis on e-safety and learners know well how to keep themselves and their clients safe. The single central register confirms appropriate checks on staff are in place. Staff have undergone appropriate training in safeguarding, are well aware of their responsibilities, and know what actions to take should an incident arise. Managers deal with safeguarding concerns very effectively.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### London Vesta 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>3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Outcomes for learners	<b>2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
The effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-

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

Type of provider	Independent learning provider								
Age range of learners	16+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	16								
Principal/CEO	Dr Nathan Vela								
Date of previous inspection	N/A								
Website address	www.vestacollege.co.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+	
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18		19+		
	-	-	8	1	-		-		
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:	None								

## Contextual information

London Vesta College, a small work-based training provider, is located in Whitechapel, East London and offers advanced level apprenticeships to employers in the information technology and telecommunications sector. The proportion of school leavers in East London who achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C is lower than the national average; unemployment in East London is higher than the national and London average. This was the first inspection of London Vesta College which has held a direct funding contract with the Skills Funding Agency for 18 months.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Julie Steele HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), assisted by the Director of Education and 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. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements 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 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:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012)

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