

Lowestoft College

General further education college

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| Inspection dates | | 02 – 05 December 2014 |
| Overall effectiveness | This inspection: | Requires improvement-3 |
| | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement-3 |
| 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 college requires improvement because:

- too much teaching and learning requires improvement and teachers in classes do not always pay sufficient attention to students' different abilities
- observations of teaching, learning and assessment do not focus sufficiently on the extent of learning taking place in classes
- too few students on the study programme benefit from external work experience
- quality assurance targets and actions have not had a consistent impact on all subject areas
- English and the development of literacy skills are not sufficiently embedded in vocational subjects
- the planning and promotion of diversity within subjects, to help prepare students for life in modern Britain, is weak.

This college has the following strengths:

- a high proportion of apprentices complete their frameworks in the planned time and gain employment
- a high proportion of students in engineering and health, public services and care complete their qualification successfully
- staff provide good pastoral and personal support particularly for vulnerable students
- good enrolment and induction arrangements place students on appropriate programmes
- managers have strong links with local and regional partners to meet local enterprise partnership priorities and the needs of employers
- governors and leaders have taken decisive action to restructure the college's management and increased the pace of change in addressing underperformance.

Full report

What does the college need to do to improve further?

- Teachers should ensure that information from assessments at the start and during a student's course informs planning for individual learning appropriately and that lesson activities meet the needs of different students well. Teachers should use the detailed information on individual students' needs to provide learning that is sufficiently challenging for all to make good progress.
- Ensure that every course has strong links with local and community organisations and businesses so that all students on the study programme have the possibility of receiving meaningful work experience that will prepare them for work.
- Increase the impact of the observations of teaching and learning by ensuring a better focus on learning so that observers identify detailed and specific actions to improve teaching and learning rapidly.
- Ensure that managers set targets to improve performance that are sufficiently precise and their reports on progress focus on the impact of actions they have taken.
- Ensure that teachers develop creative ways of exploring what it means to be part of a diverse society through subject material and discussions in classes, to broaden and deepen students' understanding of diversity.

Inspection judgements

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| Outcomes for learners | Requires improvement |
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- Two thirds of the provision at Lowestoft College is for students aged 16 to 18 on vocational study programmes at levels 1 to 3. The remainder of the provision is split evenly between adult classroom-based learning and the growing apprenticeship programme. Large numbers of students are studying English and mathematics qualifications at level 2 and below.
- The proportion of students who successfully complete long courses has been similar for the last three years and continues to require improvement to be good. Success rates were broadly similar at each level. Most students aged 16 to 18 start their programmes with lower than average qualifications. The majority make expected or better progress and achieve in line with sector rates. The proportion of adults who successfully complete both their long and short qualifications has declined over the last three years and is low.
- Success rates are too variable. Half of subject area rates have increased, but the other half are declining. Students in health, public services and care and engineering, areas with large student numbers, succeed particularly well. However, nearly a third of students on other courses such as science, mathematics and information communication technology (ICT) have much lower success.
- The proportion of students who successfully complete functional skills in English rose marginally in 2013/14, but remains low and the proportion who successfully complete functional skills in mathematics has declined over the last three years and is very low. English GCSE success rates increased slightly in the last year to slightly above the national rate, but Mathematics GCSE success rates declined and are below national rates.
- The proportion of apprentices who complete their programme successfully improved substantially in the last year, and is high. The proportion who achieve in the planned time is also high. Engineering and health and social care, with the largest numbers of apprentices, have particularly high success rates. However, other subject areas such as hairdressing and beauty therapy and business administration have low rates of success.

- Managers monitor the performance of different groups of students effectively. Areas for improvement remain in ensuring that adults perform as well as students aged 16 to 18 on college-based courses. Female students aged 16 to 18 have performed consistently better than male students over previous years, but the gap narrowed in the last year. Overall, students from minority ethnic groups achieved less well when compared to white British students over the past few years. However, the performance gap narrowed in 2013/14. Students with a declared disability perform slightly better when compared to other students.
- Over half of students on courses at entry, level 1 and level 2 progress onto higher-level courses within the college and just over half of all students on courses at level 3 enter employment or go onto further or higher education. Most apprentices achieve their ambition of employment. Attendance at the college is adequate.
- Most students on the study programme develop good personal and social skills. Students' practical skills are mostly good, particularly in hairdressing and beauty therapy at level 3 where teachers encourage them to achieve high professional standards. In visual arts, students receive encouragement to work independently and produce some very good work. However, in a minority of visual arts and hairdressing classes, teachers do not always promote and reinforce the highest professional standards.
- The study programme does not develop students' employability skills well. In 2013/14, very few students on the study programme undertook external work experience. Managers are currently working towards the vast majority of students on the study programme receiving meaningful work experience. Managers and staff have also refocused much of the enrichment activities to broaden students' skills to support their vocational course. For example, in an enrichment class childcare students made arts and crafts objects related to festivals so that they could create interesting activities for children in their work placements.

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| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
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- Teaching, learning and assessment required improvement at the last inspection and this remains the case. Senior managers place a strong and clear emphasis on the improvement of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. However, classes seen during the inspection had inconsistencies in quality across the college.
- In too many lessons, teachers use poorly developed questioning which does not effectively either test or develop students' knowledge and understanding at a level appropriate to their individual needs. In better lessons, teachers plan well and include a range of activities which meet students' needs. They use questions and answers very effectively, building students' skills, encouraging them to find information for themselves and moving them towards independence in learning. For example, the teacher in a first-year bricklaying class helped students to design a perfectly square structure through a series of carefully targeted questions.
- Staff use the results of tests carried out as part of initial assessment along with details of individual student's strengths and barriers to learning to develop detailed course profiles. However, due to teachers not always using the profiles effectively to plan activities and tasks that stretch and challenge all students and extend their skills, progress for a minority of students is slow. In the better lessons, teachers use this information well to motivate and involve all students and to encourage them to exceed their personal targets for their course grades. Teachers in vocational areas and English teach apprentices well and make good use of information about their prior achievements to design appropriate learning programmes for them.
- Staff who observe and evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment do so accurately and identify areas for improvement effectively. However, the majority of observation reports give too much weight to the teacher's presentation and less to the effectiveness of the learning for all students in the group.

- Initial assessment has improved and it is now more rigorous. Staff now organise enrolment and induction to ensure that they place students on the right course and they receive appropriate support. Specialist English and mathematics staff are available at enrolment to help identify and arrange support for students’ needs. Students can transfer between courses, with guidance from staff, during the first six weeks of their programme to make sure that they are on the right course.
- The use by staff of a newly established electronic individual learning plan to record and monitor students’ progress and targets is not yet fully developed and staff and students do not use it consistently across the college. Staff do not record the results of tests to determine students’ specific support needs or link to this information. Most students are aware of their personal learning targets, but these are not always sufficiently specific or have a clear date for completion.
- Pastoral support for students is strong. Student support services provide a wide and good range of provision to help students manage personal barriers and stay on programme. All staff in the student services centre have qualifications in information, advice and guidance at an appropriate level and give students support and help throughout their programme. Staff have very good relationships with students and provide them with good models of professional and personal behaviour. Most students’ behaviour in class and around the college is mature and staff encourage students to work together effectively to build a range of personal skills.
- Assessment practices require improvement. Written feedback in a minority of subject areas and for a minority of students in other areas is timely and detailed. In other subjects, it is too brief to help students improve, and a few staff take too long to return work. Assessment for apprentices is mostly good. Teachers embed mathematics well in the majority of courses and make effective links to vocational requirements. Teachers do not embed English or the development of literacy sufficiently in the majority of courses. Most check that spelling and grammar in students’ work is accurate, but a minority of learning materials have spelling and grammatical errors.
- The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons was an area for improvement at the previous inspection and it remains so. The college is an inclusive environment and students readily become part of this welcoming culture. However, few teachers develop students’ understanding of living in a diverse society in lessons, through their subjects well.

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| <p>Hairdressing and beauty therapy</p> <p>16-19 study programmes 19+ Learning programmes Apprenticeships</p> | <p>Requires improvement</p> |
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- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, which matches students’ outcomes. More students achieved their qualifications in 2013/14 than previously although success rates remain below the national rate on the majority of programmes. Students’ practical skills are at the level expected for this time of year for courses at level 1 and level 2, but they are good for courses at level 3. Students on hairdressing courses at level 1 and beauty therapy courses at level 3 are making good progress.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers do not plan sufficiently to meet individual students’ needs. These lessons lack structure. Planned teaching and learning activities are limited and the pace is too slow to maintain students’ interest. Teachers in these lessons fail to make effective use of questions and answers to test students’ knowledge and understanding.
- In the better lessons, teachers use questions and answers well to challenge students. They take good account of students’ prior knowledge and starting points in the planning of activities, to

meet their individual needs, engaging and encouraging them to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers use their up-to-date knowledge and experience to support students well in practical lessons. A few teachers expect high standards, but this is not consistent across the subject area.

- Too few clients are available for students to practise on and increase their opportunity to gain assessment. When students do work with clients they display a mature, confident attitude, communicate well and gain valuable skills in relating to customers. All students have to participate in work experience, but the time they receive for this is not enough to develop and extend their employability skills.
- Resources to support teaching and learning are good. Students benefit from modern salons, which have a wide range of industry-standard equipment. Most rooms have good access to ICT which, in the better lessons, teachers use effectively. However, theory rooms are not large enough to accommodate a minority of the larger groups comfortably.
- Staff identify students' starting points adequately. However, teachers do not take sufficient account of this as they routinely enrol all hairdressing students on courses at level 1 regardless of previous qualifications. Students value the regular reviews to keep them on track. Teachers keep them informed on their progress and what they need to do next. In a few instances, the targets teachers set are not challenging enough to ensure that students make progress within a planned or realistic timeframe.
- College career events, well supported by employers, ensure that students receive good information on qualification progression routes and employment opportunities. However, too few students progress from courses in hairdressing at level 1 to level 2 or from beauty therapy courses at level 2 to level 3 to ensure their sustainable employment in the industry. Those students who do complete courses at level 3 gain employment.
- Feedback to students requires improvement. Teachers provide regular feedback for most students. Feedback on written assignments is inconsistent, too often failing to explain what students need to do to improve. Teachers' verbal feedback is supportive and informative, often giving students tips for improving their work.
- Apprentices have good access to assessment opportunities in the work place to support their progress. The co-ordination between 'on the job' training and the college's teaching is limited, resulting in learners not benefitting fully from each learning opportunity and making the progress of which they are capable.
- Vocational teachers plan effectively to improve students' numeracy skills and link these skills to the specialist subject well. Teachers pay good attention to correcting spelling, grammar and punctuation inaccuracies on written assignments, but they do not focus sufficiently on the development of students' literacy skills in lessons.
- Support for students is good. In beauty therapy, teachers provide additional specialist support classes for students at all levels with or without identified support needs. They offer all students the opportunity to attend additional practical lessons if they have missed any or if they fall behind in their studies.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Students are respectful to each other and work well together. Students have a good practical understanding of how they would change their treatments to meet a diverse range of client needs. However, in theory lessons, teachers do not always fully explore equality and diversity topics to prepare students for life in modern Britain.

Visual Arts

16-19 study programmes 19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. As a result, the proportion of students successfully completing their programme has been low over the past three years. A recent review of the impact of information, advice and guidance, combined with more stringent enrolment procedures, has resulted in the number of students who have withdrawn from courses being much lower than at the same point a year ago.
- Teachers are not sufficiently assertive or insistent about what is acceptable studio practice. For example, too many students are reluctant to remove constraining outdoor clothing and accoutrements even when they are working with intricate tools and potentially messy materials. Teachers do not always stretch and challenge their students with sufficient vigour.
- Teachers are well qualified and display good subject knowledge. In the better lessons, teaching is fast-paced and teachers use questioning well. Teachers often use information learning technology effectively and varied, timed tasks in order to stimulate and sustain the interest of students. For example, teachers immediately engaged students on a course at level 2 by using amusing internet video clips on the use of colour in various trade logo designs. In the better lessons, students are able to manage their own learning, work independently and apply newly acquired skills.
- The location of the specialist accommodation has an adverse effect on learning. Sometimes students have to travel considerable distances to access necessary resources and the rooms allocated away from the main art and design suite are dingy and uninspiring. Nonetheless, most students are developing skills and techniques, take pride in what they record and a minority produce excellent sketchbooks. Teachers know and care for their students. They quickly identify issues that affect learning and well-being and arrange appropriate support. Students appreciate such concern.
- The assessment of students' starting points is much improved. Staff identify additional support needs effectively and teachers are more thorough in ensuring that students are now on the course most appropriate to their abilities and ambitions.
- Assessment is good. It is thorough, helpful and supportive and contributes towards students making progress. Teachers match their judgements to assessment criteria well and students know what they need to do in order to improve. They make good use of peer assessment and one awarding body is particularly positive about the subject area's assessment procedures. A minority of teachers, commendably, personalise their assessment decisions with supplementary letters sent to the homes of their students which are supportive and encouraging.
- Teachers are quite demanding in ensuring that students use the correct word orally and are quite assiduous in correcting spelling and grammar, but do not always help themselves through basic spelling and grammatical errors in their own hand-outs and written assessments. They embed mathematics into teaching where possible and highlight its vocational relevance. For example, in one surface pattern lesson, students had to work out the number of minutes that were available compared to the number of targets they wished to achieve before the end of the session.
- Current course information does not contain sufficient information about teachers' and employers' expectations and professional practice. However, initial information, advice, guidance and support for students are better. These help to motivate students to succeed in their learning and progress within the college. Students confirm that their experience of college life often exceeds their initial expectations.

- The promotion of equality and diversity requires improvement. Planning documentation shows little evidence of the promotion of diversity, with the exception of bland statements such as 'looking at artists and designers from different cultural backgrounds.' However, teachers recognise the differing abilities and needs of students in their planning and teaching. Behaviour in lessons is mostly respectful and students have strong female role models on the teaching staff.

Foundation English

16-19 study programmes

19+ Learning programmes

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because teachers do not challenge students sufficiently to make rapid progress in lessons. Although a majority of students on functional skills courses at level 2 and GCSE qualifications complete successfully, students on courses at entry and level 1 succeed less well.
- Teachers collect information on students' existing knowledge of English and mathematics well and create detailed profiles which include their learning needs. However, in the large majority of lessons teachers do not use this information to develop students' English skills further; as a result students are not set challenging targets and too many make slow progress.
- In a few lessons, teachers take into account the skills students require and provide clear and precise details of what they need to do to raise the standard of their work. Teachers encourage students to use more complex vocabulary, proof read their work using dictionaries and use complex sentences to demonstrate their understanding of the use of English.
- Teachers mostly use learning support assistants well in lessons. Most instruct support staff well and identify students whom they are required to support so that students receive encouragement to proof read their work, and develop ideas and concepts such as definitions of new words; as a result, they write good sentences with prompt feedback. In a few lessons, students make slower progress, because teachers do not sufficiently identify how learning support assistants can help those who require additional support.
- In the better lessons, teachers make good reference to students' main vocational programme, use materials that motivate them to partake in discussions and develop their reading and writing skills. For example, in a few GCSE lessons, teachers develop students' skills of analysing text by using real life examples which students are able to relate to and are memorable to them.
- In functional skills lessons, teachers do not always provide students with precise and accurate feedback on the tasks that they are completing. Verbal feedback is usually detailed, but written feedback is often perfunctory. In the large majority of GCSE English assessments, teachers provide accurate feedback of the formal assessments so that students can easily speak about their own progress, and identify how they can develop better writing skills, such as using punctuation, writing complex sentences and using a wider range of vocabulary.
- Teachers do not develop students' mathematical skills sufficiently in most English lessons. Teachers support students well in developing employability skills. They help them to consider employment opportunities and encourage them to write letters for employment by identifying their own skills in order to create their curriculum vitae.
- Teachers promote equality well in lessons and seek opportunities to encourage students to be considerate of others and, as a result, behaviour in most lessons is good. In a few lessons, teachers develop students' broader understanding of diversity. For example, in a GCSE English lesson, students read an article about the kind of books children in Africa have access to in

comparison to those in England. However, most teachers do not attempt to help students gain a deeper understanding of the diversity in modern Britain through their teaching.

Foundation mathematics

16-19 study programmes

19+ Learning programmes

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement with students beginning to develop the mathematical skills to complete their course successfully, which is an improvement on the previous years of low success in this subject.
- In weaker lessons, teachers do not plan activities adequately to meet the differing abilities of students, fail to challenge the more able, or leave less able students, who lack reading fluency, struggling to complete tasks. They make this worse by having too little variation in learning activities and a slow pace, which results in students becoming bored and disengaged.
- In good lessons, teachers plan well and include a good range of activities. They balance explanations and practical activities so that students are interested, become proficient in using techniques, recall knowledge, grow in confidence and are able to work independently. A few teachers use effective questioning to challenge students and require them to answer using subject-specific words. This is not consistent across the college.
- Resources are good and when teachers use them effectively, they inspire students and enable them to improve learning. For example, in one lesson, the teacher suddenly announced, "There's been a robbery!" as an introduction to a task on ratio. Consequently, the teacher captured students' interest and created renewed energy in the lesson that resulted in work of a high standard.
- Students show initiative and take responsibility for their learning. For example, a group realised they had not understood the purpose of the task and rather than ask the teacher they worked it out for themselves through reading the instructions and then coming to a common agreement on a way forward.
- Teachers' assessment of student work requires improvement. Both written and verbal comments are not always precise about what students should do to achieve the requirements of the qualification or improve their skills. Often students do not take account of teachers' comments. In a minority of lessons, students self-assess and the teacher follows up areas of weakness. Teachers' verbal feedback during lessons is supportive and encouraging.
- Teachers now more carefully assess students at the start of their course to identify their skill level. Both foundation and GCSE teams have introduced a more rigorous approach to assessment that includes regular testing and feedback. This is having some impact on accelerating progress, such as in a GCSE class where most students have made at least one grade improvement since September. However, this is not consistent across all groups and it is too early to demonstrate sustained impact.
- Staff have improved the provision of information, advice and guidance to support students in making the right choices for their career aspirations. As a result, students have an increasing understanding of the demands of their courses and current students are on the right programmes.
- Teachers do not highlight literacy skills within their lesson sufficiently and students have limited opportunities to take part in enrichment activities that broaden learning. Teachers do not plan for or promote diversity in lessons. However, classrooms provide a welcoming and positive environment in which staff and students work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- During the period after the inspection in June 2013, senior managers did not resolve sufficiently the areas for improvement identified at that inspection and as a result, outcomes for learners and teaching, learning and assessment continue to require improvement.
- In July 2014, acknowledging the slow pace of change, governors took decisive action by appointing a new interim principal and restructuring the college's senior management team. Since this decision, the pace of change has increased dramatically. Governors and senior managers have developed a comprehensive recovery plan to bring about much needed improvements to the quality of provision and the financial stability of the college and are in the process of making large-scale changes to the colleges' management and operational structure.
- Managers have introduced many new systems and procedures over the last few months that are starting to have a positive impact in a number of subject areas, but it is too early to judge the effect of these changes throughout the college.
- Governors have become increasingly involved in checking the quality of provision and have a good understanding of the key challenges facing the college, for instance through participating in observations of teaching and learning and college-wide self-assessment activities. They are acutely aware of the importance of raising performance levels quickly so that they are at least consistent and in line with other similar colleges. They receive detailed reports on a regular basis and are becoming more adept at scrutinising the quality of provision using a wide range of data.
- Managers have strengthened the management of staff performance through the introduction of robust performance reviews and a range of quality assurance activities. Most staff now have appraisal targets linked to improving teaching, learning and assessment and the outcomes for learners. The newly introduced systems for raising performance have started to improve retention, attendance and teaching, learning and assessment. However, not all staff targets for improvement are consistently precise or contain measurable outcomes by which managers can hold staff to account. The improved focus of leaders and managers on ownership and accountability is starting to have a positive impact on the college.
- The self-assessment report is largely accurate and identifies most key areas for improvement. Managers have identified problems with teaching, learning and assessment over time, but have not resolved these fully. The quality of subject area self-assessment reports varies considerably. Most are too descriptive and do not identify the strengths and areas for improvement, which results in the setting of imprecise targets for improvement. Staff are improving their skills to raise standards for students. They have access to and are required to attend a range of development events tailored around both individual and college areas for improvement. Managers place greater emphasis on the sharing of good practice.
- Leaders and managers have increased the focus on the development of study programmes and all students aged 16 to 18 enrol on appropriate English and mathematics courses. GCSE and functional skills classes have priority over timetabling to ensure lessons take place at a time helpful to learning and attendance. The provision of work experience in the study programme requires improvement.
- Partnership working is good. Senior leaders and governors work closely with partners to develop provision that meets the needs of local residents and the priorities for employment. They use local and regional employment and economic data to plan for, and offer, a curriculum that prepares students for current and future employment demands. For example, managers and subject staff have worked with industry to develop programmes for oil and gas, offshore wind and nuclear power and as a result have been awarded substantial funding to develop this provision further.

- Leaders and managers have successfully developed apprenticeship programmes, which have steadily increased in numbers over the last few years. Most learners on apprenticeship programmes achieve their qualifications within planned timescales and employers are able to select a programme that suits their business needs.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is underdeveloped and remains an area for improvement. In too many lessons, teachers fail to build on opportunities to promote aspects of diversity. However, the promotion of equality through mutual respect results in a positive classroom environment that is contributing to learning. Achievement gaps between different groups of students are reducing.
- Safeguarding of learners is good. Managers have thoroughly reviewed policies and procedures to ensure that they comply with legislative requirements. Detailed analysis of safeguarding issues has resulted in the development of themed events such as the raising of drug awareness and the need for safer internet use. Governors and staff receive timely training on their safeguarding responsibilities. Managers and staff maintain good links with specialist external agencies to protect vulnerable and at-risk learners. Leaders and managers have prepared programmes in conjunction with the police to train students from foreign countries on what constitutes acceptable behaviour in England. Students have access to training programmes that raise their awareness of the signs of extremist behaviour.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Lowestoft College

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

| Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Grade |
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| Hairdressing and beauty therapy | 3 |
| Visual Arts | 3 |
| Foundation English | 3 |
| Foundation mathematics | 3 |

College details

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| Type of college | General further education college | | | | | | | |
| Age range of learners | 16+ | | | | | | | |
| Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year | 2,513 | | | | | | | |
| Principal/CEO | Ms Jo Pretty | | | | | | | |
| Date of previous inspection | June 2013 | | | | | | | |
| Website address | www.lowestoft.ac.uk | | | | | | | |
| College 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+ |
| | 226 | 88 | 629 | 337 | 275 | 174 | 0 | 13 |
| Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age | Intermediate | | Advanced | | Higher | | | |
| | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | | |
| | 132 | 74 | 158 | 186 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Number of traineeships | 16-19 | | 19+ | | Total | | | |
| | N/A | | N/A | | N/A | | | |
| Number of learners aged 14-16 | N/A | | | | | | | |
| Full-time | N/A | | | | | | | |
| Part-time | N/A | | | | | | | |
| Number of community learners | N/A | | | | | | | |
| Number of employability learners | N/A | | | | | | | |
| Funding received from | Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency | | | | | | | |
| At the time of inspection the college contracts with the following main subcontractors: | | | | | | | | |

Contextual information

The college serves the population of Lowestoft, the district of Waveney, and North Suffolk. The minority ethnic population of Waveney is 2.3%. The proportion of pupils in Waveney schools attaining five GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics is below the averages for Suffolk and England. The proportion of qualified residents in Waveney is lower than the East of England and national averages for all qualification levels. The unemployment rate in Waveney is higher than that for the East of England and higher than the national rate. The 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivations shows Waveney to have higher levels of deprivation than other districts in Suffolk. The proportion of employment in manufacturing in Waveney is higher than the national average. The other highest areas of employment are in hotels, restaurants, public administration, education and health.

Information about this inspection

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| Lead inspector | William Baidoe-Ansah HMI |
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Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the Quality and Learning Improvement Manager 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 relevant 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>

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