

Gateshead College

General further education college

Inspection dates		8–12 June 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Outstanding-1
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
Outcomes for learners		Outstanding-1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding-1
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Outstanding-1

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is outstanding because:

- success rates have improved significantly over the last three years and are excellent
- learners develop first-rate personal, social and employability skills, leading to very high rates of progression to further study, employment and/or training
- learners benefit from very high levels of motivation, care and support from all staff, ensuring high rates of retention and progress
- managers have significantly improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, which is now outstanding
- staff use highly successful assessment strategies to ensure the great majority of learners and apprentices know what they have to do to improve
- teachers, tutors and assessors have embedded English and mathematics skilfully across college-based and work-based provision
- learners receive excellent careers advice and guidance which makes sure they are assiduously prepared for their progression
- the college environment is highly inclusive, providing a supportive and challenging learning environment for learners
- a dynamic and inspirational Principal, ably supported by a highly skilled senior team and governors, has successfully developed and delivered a clear and ambitious vision for learners leading to significant improvements in provision
- college staff are extremely committed to continuously improving provision for all learners
- governance is excellent, providing extremely rigorous scrutiny, challenge and support
- outstanding partnerships with employers, businesses and other training providers, as well as extensive links with the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Confederation of British Industry and the Chamber of Commerce have ensured the curriculum is highly relevant to learners, employers, the local area and regional priorities
- the college's approach to safeguarding all learners and staff is outstanding.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve performance in a very small number of courses where learner attendance and progress remain too low.
- Build on the successful improvements in discrete English and mathematics provision to ensure that outcomes for learners continue to improve at the same rapid rate as the rest of the college.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
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- The college offers a very wide range of provision, comprising study programmes for learners aged 16 to 19 at levels 1, 2 and 3, and provision at levels 1 to 4 for adult learners on college-based courses. Most learners aged 16 to 19 are on full-time courses and most adults on part-time courses. Large numbers of learners aged 16 to 19 and adults are on apprenticeships. In addition, a significant proportion of adults are on courses preparing them for employment. Subject areas with the greatest number of learners are: sport; health and social care; engineering; and visual, media and performing arts.
- Over the last three years success rates for learners on college-based courses have risen significantly and are now exceptionally high for all learners. Success rates for apprentices are high and consistently well-above national rates. The proportion of apprentices who achieve their qualification in the planned time is well above the national rate and has been for the previous three years. No groups of learners underperform compared to their peers or to national rates.
- In-year data, such as retention rates, show that these increases have been consolidated with further improvements in the very small areas of provision which were underperforming in 2013/14.
- Previous data show that many learners aged 16 to 19 on level 3 courses did not make the progress expected when compared with their starting points. College staff have focused on remedying this. Current data and evidence through observations show that many more learners are making good progress. In a number of subjects, such as art and design, learners make exceptional progress.
- Learners demonstrate very high levels of skill development in practical subjects, for example, catering learners preparing complex sauces. Learners are also very adept at applying their knowledge. For example, in chemistry, learners were able to use nuclear magnetic resonance spectra to identify groupings in compounds in their first session on the topic, by applying the knowledge and techniques they had used in mass spectroscopy analysis.
- Learners develop outstanding employability skills so that they have the 'employment edge'. They receive outstanding feedback from a very wide range of employers, praising learners' English and mathematics skills, confidence, highly positive attitude to work, attendance and punctuality. The quality and quantity of work experience is excellent. For example, learners design and sell products, such as metal roses, in the college shop which is a commercial enterprise opened in the local shopping centre, with shop profits used to support other projects.
- Learners understand the importance and relevance of English and mathematics. Work-based learners achieve very well in functional skills. Learners studying mathematics achieve well in entry level functional skills and in attaining GCSE grades A* to C, but a small minority of learners have made slow progress on levels 1 and 2 functional skills. Learners studying English achieve well in functional skills; however, for the small number who sat GCSE last year the number achieving grades A* to C was not good enough. Improvement strategies are in place, which are already having a positive impact.

- Learners' progression between levels and to positive destinations when they leave college is outstanding. A very large majority of learners progress into further study, an apprenticeship or employment. More than three quarters of learners on study programmes at level 2 and below progress to higher levels of study or apprenticeships. Learners go into highly sought after careers and with prestigious employers including training with the Royal Marines. One student was successful in becoming a commis chef at The Ritz hotel London . A high proportion of learners achieve places at Russell Group universities to study, for example music, pharmacy and electrical engineering.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding, reflecting the very high proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications and progress to positive destinations: work; further study; training. Excellent teaching ensures learners are enthused by a wide range of activities and motivated to succeed.
- College managers have significantly improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through investment in a team of lead practitioners in all main subject areas, and by offering coaching to all teaching staff. A recent shift away from the use of the observation system to enforce compliance to the current more developmental approach means that good practice is now transferred more effectively between teams. This has resulted in the more skilful use of questioning techniques in lessons, a rapid increase in the use of learning technologies to enhance teaching and better understanding about how to make equality and diversity relevant to learners.
- Accommodation and resources are excellent. Apprentices on motor-vehicle and warehousing programmes are trained in workshops that are designed in partnership with international and national companies to meet high industry standards. Art and drama learners are inspired by the opportunities to showcase their talents and work in prestigious venues, such as the Baltic Art Gallery and The Sage Gateshead.
- Learners benefit from the very high levels of motivation, care and support they receive from staff. Learners' retention and attendance are excellent because of the college's extremely comprehensive learner support services. Learners at risk of not making progress are referred swiftly to specialist staff that provide targeted additional support to get them back on track.
- Tutors and assessors are very well qualified. They have recent and relevant vocational experience and knowledge, which is regularly refreshed through the college's extensive partnerships with leading employers across the region. Learners and apprentices benefit from this because they are trained in the latest techniques and emerging technologies, such as prototype electric vehicles. The result is that Gateshead learners are highly sought after with many companies.
- Tutors and assessors understand very well the starting points and personal needs of their learners through the highly effective system of initial assessment. Using information on prior attainment, career aspirations, and levels of English and mathematics, tutors create excellent profiles of their groups of learners, against which they plan effectively personalised provision.
- The great majority of learners and apprentices make better than expected progress, develop very good skills and produce high standards of work. Local companies commission learners in visual studies to produce advertising graphics and promotional videos. All programmes are successfully designed to enhance learners' employability skills and entrepreneurial behaviours.
- Learners are highly effective independent learners. The measured and skilful use of information and learning technology, with engaging virtual learning environment sites in many subject areas stimulate learners to carry out research outside the classroom. Learners carry out exciting extension activities, such as the competition to organise a commercial pitch by teams of media learners to a local games company, which increase their motivation and develop their skills.

- The monitoring of learners’ progress is exemplary. Action planning and target-setting for learners are specific, detailed and timed, and include a strong focus on the achievement of personal goals and readiness for work. Targets are monitored regularly and actions are quickly put in place for those learners whose progress is stalled, with frequent checking to ensure positive impact.
- Assessment practice is excellent and results in learners and apprentices knowing what they have to do to improve. Written feedback to learners is very detailed and specific and is reinforced through peer and self-assessment. Attention to the correction of spelling, punctuation and grammar is consistent and rigorous; learners understand fully the importance of this.
- The development of learners’ English and mathematics skills is central to the college’s improvement strategy and in this they are highly successful. A significant investment in staff training has resulted in tutors and assessors being far more confident in their ability to embed English and mathematics within academic and vocational contexts. However, the recruitment of new specialist teachers in mathematics has been too recent to prevent a small minority of current learners from not achieving their qualifications within the planned timescales.
- Careers advice and guidance are outstanding. From their first contact with college staff, and over the course of their studies, learners are prepared assiduously for their next step. Learners and apprentices are exposed to the world of work through high-quality work placements and experience, and a wide range of motivational extension activities.
- The highly inclusive ethos at the college, where relations between learners and staff are characterised by high levels of trust and respect, is replicated in the classroom and workshop. Tutors and assessors are skilful at integrating equality and diversity into their teaching and reviews, so that learners and apprentices can confidently explore areas, such as sexuality and cultural differences.

<p>Health and social care, early years and playwork</p> <p>16-19 study programmes 19+ learning programmes</p>	<p>Outstanding</p>
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Teaching learning and assessment in health and social care and early years and playwork are outstanding because:

- success rates are very high and significantly above the national rate
- outstanding assessment for learning contributes to teaching methods that inspire and challenge; this results in learners who have developed knowledge and skills to a very high standard; employers value the learners’ skills and knowledge and value them as team members, investing time in training them to become professionals in their chosen area
- excellent teaching results in the vast majority of learners becoming highly motivated. For example, self- and peer-assessment are used extremely well so that learners become adept at directing their own learning
- learners make excellent progress which results in almost all of them gaining employment in their chosen field or moving onto higher education or apprenticeships; for example ,many health and social care learners continue into the professional fields of adult, child, mental health nursing or midwifery
- staff monitor progress exceptionally well; individual learning plans are used effectively and are informed regularly by formative assessment; learners and staff, including learning facilitators set themselves challenging short and medium term goals that are reviewed often and have a positive impact on high achievement grades
- learners benefit very well from outstanding feedback that clearly supports their rapid progress and results in high achievement and high grades; peer-assessment is used to great effect in

sessions and feedback on front sheets and within work is very clearly laid out; feedback asks learners to set targets in their action logs

- the development of English and mathematics skills is very good; learners clearly articulate the importance of developing their English and mathematics skills and value opportunities to enhance these skills in class, during work placement and in their assignments; for example, students create spelling logs that they can use when writing assignments, reports or creating a display of work for children
- equality and diversity are promoted very well; this is a very strong element of this area and learners are highly respectful of one another; learners understand very clearly the importance of respecting individuals and treating clients and children fairly and put this understanding to good use.

Engineering and manufacturing technology

Apprenticeships

Outstanding

Teaching, learning and assessment in engineering and manufacturing technology are outstanding because:

- a very high proportion of apprentices successfully complete their programmes and the success rates for both level 2 and 3 apprentices are well-above national rates; a very high proportion complete before their planned end dates and the great majority continue in sustainable employment and many progress within their companies
- teachers' and assessors' planning for individual learning is highly effective and very good use is made of group and individual profiles; work-based assessors work closely with apprentices to identify assessment opportunities; technician apprentices are encouraged to plan for their own assessment and make very good use of the e-portfolio system to report and document these activities
- employers are highly supportive and well engaged in workplace review and assessment, ensuring programme relevance and interest; many advanced apprentices study and document work activities which exceed programme requirements; tutor practitioners from the employers, supplement and enrich the learning experience
- all apprentices quickly develop the skills and knowledge they need to progress; many at level 2 study functional skills at levels which exceed programme requirements and they develop high levels of work-related, personal and social skills
- apprentices on programmes at level 2, many of whom have not been in training or employment for some time, develop confidence and self-respect; this supports their ability to discuss their programme and workplace experiences in reviews
- the management of health and safety is exemplary, both in college and in the workplace and apprentices report that they feel very safe in their workplace and while at college; exhibiting the very high standards of safe working practices needed as employees
- teachers and assessors make very effective use of the excellent resources, both at the centre and in employers' premises; information and learning technology is used very well in both teaching and the formal recording of assessment and progress in the workplace, with apprentices using these resources with confidence
- staff assess apprentices' work regularly and feedback is highly supportive, concise and well documented; apprentices know exactly what it is they need to do to improve and progress
- English and mathematics skills are very well promoted in apprentice programmes; learners develop their skills through teachers utilising naturally occurring work-based scenarios to contextualise the use of written and spoken English and promote better understanding of

mathematics; for example, the calculations involved in the harmonisation of assembly lines in lean manufacturing, also determining mean and median in data arrays

- apprentices have a very good understanding of equality and diversity; separate units within their programmes focus specifically upon issues and good discussions in both taught and individual sessions effectively reinforce their understanding.

Building and construction

16-19 study programmes

19+ learning programmes

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in building and construction are good because:

- learners' success rates are improving, particularly in 16-18 study programmes, and are now high; reflecting the good teaching and learning found in this area
- teachers are well qualified and use their good subject knowledge and industrial experience very effectively to develop learners' practical skills; teachers make appropriate links between building theory and practice, routinely citing examples from their experiences in industry to increase learners' awareness and understanding
- learners enjoy their practical lessons and work very safely in the college's spacious and well-resourced construction workshops that accommodates a full-size traditional built bungalow for learners to develop their construction skills; the majority produce a good to high standard of work and make good progress, developing appropriate occupational skills
- learners develop good employability skills; for example, in a brickwork session the teacher skilfully planned and delivered a revision session that included the group working together, identifying and researching building components and their uses on the intranet, writing descriptions of them and presenting to the group; this developed their confidence and communication skills to the levels expected in the industry when communicating with clients
- learners and teachers make good use of the college virtual learning environment to access course materials both in and outside the college, together with mobile technology to enhance their learning; in a number of classes, such as electrical installation learners were using mobile technology, researching information on earth fault loops; this helped them understand more securely building regulations and compliant issues when installing electrical circuits
- mathematics is integrated securely into the programme and contextualised to the trade areas to help learners understand better their relevance and their skills development; for example, in painting and decorating, skills were put to the test with learners calculating wall areas to order the correct number of rolls of wallpaper and calculate labour and total costs for decorating a room
- learners are very well supported through good jointly planned additional learning support, individual tutorials and support from the teachers in class that helps them achieve their qualifications; most learners benefit from effective information, advice and guidance which help them to progress into further study, training or employment.

Teaching, learning and assessment are not yet outstanding in building and construction because:

- on a small number of courses the recent strategies to improve retention and attendance have not had sufficient time to fully impact on success rates
- not enough teaching and learning is yet outstanding
- the promotion of literacy is not yet sufficiently embedded in all lessons.

Information and communication technology

16-19 study programmes
19+ learning programmes

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment are good in information and communication technology because:

- outcomes for learners on the majority of programmes are good; in the current year retention and achievement have improved and are now high
- learners are developing a wide range of technical skills essential for employment within the information technology (IT) sector; learners make good use of excellent realistic facilities, such as the networking laboratories
- learners make good use of learning resources both inside and outside of lessons, such as the virtual learning environment, to enrich learning and encourage progress; teachers frequent use within lessons of information and learning technology, such as virtual desktop software, motivates learners
- teachers use effective strategies within lessons to inspire learners to make good progress; for example, a diverse range of starter activities that stimulate learners, such as online video clips, number pattern quizzes, specialised network laboratory equipment and robotics
- teachers develop well learners' English and mathematics skills throughout lessons; for example, highlighting the effective use of grammar on assessed work and using mathematics specialists to focus on mathematics development in units on computational skills
- staff use their industrial and vocational backgrounds very effectively to enhance learners' understanding of the IT industry, for example, students develop their own IT workshop and use industry-standard procedures, including health and safety
- teachers' assessment of learners' work is regular with timely and detailed feedback to enable and encourage learners to develop and reach their targets
- staff provide good pastoral and academic support; for example, learning facilitators are used effectively to monitor regularly learners' performance and develop strategies to improve achievement; these are recorded and reviewed rigorously on the students' electronic learning plan
- a high proportion of learners complete relevant work experience as part of a very good programme; examples of this include high profile prestigious commercial digital software companies providing placements.

Teaching, learning and assessment in information and communication technology are not yet outstanding because:

- although there are examples within assignment briefs, induction materials and the learning environments of promotion of equality and diversity, for a small minority of students equality and diversity are not consistently promoted to reinforce and deepen their understanding
- a small minority of students are not making sufficient progress; within this group students have not met challenging targets through, for example, poor attendance.

Warehousing and distribution

Apprenticeships

Outstanding

Teaching, learning and assessment in warehousing and distribution are outstanding because:

- the overall success rates for learners and success rates within planned timescales are significantly above the national average and very high
- current learners are making very good progress, rapidly developing their personal and social skills, such as confidence and teamwork and are all on target to achieve within agreed timescales
- learners receive and reflect on exceptional individual and group support from their tutors and assessors, which creates a positive environment in which they successfully develop their skills in the workplace; this helps improve their job opportunities, for example, through the encouragement and motivation from their tutor a number have now been promoted to team leader
- learners benefit from a high quality and innovative off-the-job training programme which is created through excellent collaboration between a major local employer and the college staff
- tutors provide inspirational learning sessions that are detailed and tailored to meet the needs of each learner and their company, so that learners commit more to their work and develop a deeper understanding of 'just in time' stock receipt, movement and traceability to meet customers' needs
- tutors complete thorough initial and ongoing assessments which provide learners with clear information on their progress and what is needed to develop further their skills and knowledge; for example, assessments in the workplace provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate their improving attitudes and efficiencies in fulfilling their job roles
- tutors integrate English and mathematics into learning programmes very effectively; particularly creative activities, such as calculating improvements in picking up and moving pallets, using remote control forklift trucks, successfully developing learners' mathematical skills
- tutors' and assessors' promotion of equality and diversity is good and as a consequence, learners positively embrace these issues in their working environment and deepen their understanding of life in multicultural Britain; rigorous checks in the workplace ensure that learners are safe.

Sport, recreation and leisure and travel and tourism

16-19 study programmes 19+ learning programmes

Outstanding

Teaching, learning and assessment in sport, recreation and leisure and travel and tourism are outstanding because:

- the large majority of learners are on vocational sports programmes and very effective teaching, learning and assessment ensures they achieve consistently above the high national rates; outcomes for the smaller number of learners on travel and tourism programmes have improved and are now significantly above national rates

- sports learners make excellent progress in developing their practical skills; professional coaches use their expertise and subject knowledge very effectively to develop students’ physical, tactical and technical skills to a high level
- resources to support learning in sport are outstanding; learners benefit from access to an excellent range of high-quality, industry standard indoor and outdoor facilities which very effectively support their skills development
- teachers have high expectations of learners and plan effective lessons which meet their different needs; the majority make very good progress although a small minority are not consistently making rapid and sustained progress in their academic work given their high starting points
- all learners benefit from high levels of care and support; teachers, coaches and learning facilitators work very effectively together to review and monitor learners’ holistic development and set clear targets which inform their progression; a small minority of travel and tourism learners do not attend their lessons regularly and this limits their rate of progress
- teachers consistently use effective questioning skills to check learning and to encourage learners to extend and justify their thinking; as a result, they develop a very good understanding of their subject and produce work of a consistently high standard; for example, travel and tourism learners are able to use different theories of motivation to understand why and where people travel and to plan tours and itineraries that meet their specific needs
- sector-specific work experience placements and a wide variety of work-related activities, events and projects are very effective in building learners’ confidence and preparing them for the world of work
- high-quality advice and guidance prepares learners well to progress to employment and further study; sports learners have very high aspirations for their future and are well supported to pursue their goals in higher education and professional sport
- teachers use a broad range of strategies which effectively develop learners’ mathematical skills in applied and meaningful contexts; sport learners are able to take accurate measurements to calculate performance over time; strategies to improve the standard and accuracy of learners’ English skills are not consistently effective in a small minority of lessons
- learners have a well-developed and comprehensive understanding of the importance of equality and diversity in the sport and travel and tourism industries; they are respectful, inclusive of others and demonstrate good behaviour for learning.

<p>Foundation Mathematics</p> <p>16-19 study programmes</p> <p>19+ learning programmes</p>	<p>Good</p>
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Teaching, learning and assessment in foundation mathematics are good because:

- a high proportion of learners studying functional skills in mathematics at entry level and level 1 achieve their qualifications; retention rates at level 1 have significantly increased and are good; the proportions of learners who achieve GCSE grades A* to C are well-above national rates
- initial advice and guidance is thorough and teachers use the results of initial assessment effectively to place learners on the correct level of study to meet their needs
- teachers planning and delivery of GCSE mathematics and functional skills entry level lessons are good and learners make good progress using these skills to open bank accounts and work out discounts when shopping
- teachers provide comprehensive written feedback to learners on their progress which enables them to identify how to improve and achieve higher marks

- learners develop good work-related skills in lessons, especially when teachers use examples of different applications of mathematics; for example, working out currency exchange rates in travel and tourism
- teachers develop learners’ English skills in mathematics lessons effectively; for example, entry level students read and recorded information from food products using fractions to work out portion sizes
- information and learning technology and resources are used well to promote the importance of mathematics in everyday life and work; learners use mobile phones to practise their skills and participate in online quizzes to work out mathematics problems, such as percentages
- the majority of teachers plan effectively for the development of learners’ understanding of equality and diversity in lesson topics, such as using data on Traveller groups to practise writing numerical data in words; inappropriate language is also challenged effectively.

Teaching, learning and assessment in foundation mathematics are not yet outstanding because:

- reviews of student progress are not always sufficiently detailed and have not adequately identified interventions for a small minority of learners who are making slow progress; consequently, a small minority of learners have not completed their functional mathematics qualifications at level 1 and 2 at the end of their main learning programme; however, additional learning sessions are in place to address this issue
- teachers do not always plan an appropriate range of activities to meet the needs of all learners for classes with mixed levels of study; consequently, more able learners are not always challenged sufficiently and work is sometimes too complex for less able students which limits their learning.

<p>Business Management</p> <p>16-19 study programmes</p> <p>19+ learning programmes</p>	<p>Good</p>
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Teaching, learning and assessment in business management are good because:

- a high proportion of learners achieve their qualification; staff and learners have high expectations; these are routinely reinforced in respect of attitudes to study and career aspirations
- a culture of mutual respect permeates the business department and creates a good learning environment to support and encourage progress
- learners benefit from significant support; strategies to stretch and challenge learners and support opportunities are highly valued by learners and target grades are secure for most; learners are fully aware of their targets, where they are at and what they have to do to improve
- learners arrive punctually to lessons which start promptly; learners are enthusiastic and receptive to learning, work willingly and constructively with their peers
- teachers are knowledgeable experts in their field, have a good rapport with their learners and use target-setting and written feedback to promote and develop independent learning skills
- staff and highly skilled employer mentors from across the sector provide all learners with a very strong focus on developing good employability and social skills and learners have a confidence in their own work readiness
- Learners gain significant experience from the unit ‘starting a small business’ where they work with employer mentors to gain valuable and realistic experiences; learners talk enthusiastically about their businesses and articulate effectively the numerous skills developed in the process;

most businesses are sustainable; one student has already accessed paid opportunities to work as an artist in local business premises, while another with facial disfigurements embraced the opportunity to promote successfully her make-over business via social media

- all aspects of the study programme, including progress in English and mathematics are monitored effectively by teachers and senior leaders at a holistic programme level; feedback on written work encourages learners to proof read their work, correct grammatical errors, add clarity to written text and identify spelling errors; students develop mathematical skills through the accounting and financial elements of the course and are confident with the application of numeracy within the context of business
- equality and diversity opportunities that exist within the curriculum are exploited effectively; resources are well developed and address a range of complex topics, such as religious beliefs in emerging economies, the challenges of the protected characteristics for small to medium-sized enterprises as well as ethical challenges within recruitment and selection.

Teaching, learning and assessment in business management are not yet outstanding because:

- a small minority of learners on advanced courses do not make sufficient progress, complete the course within the planned end date or achieve the grades expected of them
- attendance is not good enough across level 3 provision and low attendance prevents some learners from achieving.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leadership and management at Gateshead College are outstanding. The dynamic and inspirational Principal, supported extremely well by the strong senior executive team and a highly skilled and experienced set of governors, has continued to develop and deliver a very clear and ambitious vision for learners. The extensive networking with a wide range of large employers and businesses across the region raises the aspirations of learners at the college. The college strives to be the 'provider of choice' in the region and is successfully enabling all learners to develop the skills and attitude to enable them to create a 'prosperous future' for themselves.
- The senior team, well supported by the board of governors, sets challenging 'stretch' targets and all staff are very clear about how these support the achievement of the college's vision for learners. Managers have rectified successfully the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.
- Governance of the college is excellent. Extremely well-qualified and experienced governors from a range of industries and backgrounds along with staff and learner representatives provide extremely rigorous scrutiny, challenge and support to the Principal and the senior team. The committee structure enables governors to place a high importance to improving the quality of teaching and learning to support the improvement in overall success for all learners. Clerking arrangements are thorough and support governance well.
- Performance management procedures are extremely rigorous. Weekly 'performance review' group meetings include the rigorous scrutiny of performance in all areas and form part of an improved overall performance management system that has moved from a compliance focused approach to a staff development and support approach. A very good range of measures now ensures a more 'holistic' approach to measuring staff performance. At the regular teaching forum meetings, staff review performance very well, share strengths in teaching across areas and contribute to the improvements in teaching and learning across the college.
- Self-assessment is rigorous with frequent meetings that scrutinise performance against key performance indicators and targets. Full-time quality reviewers manage the quality assurance processes extremely well. Managers and staff are very clear about the strengths and areas needing further improvement or development at the college.
- The Principal strives energetically to develop and maintain excellent partnerships and networks of employers, businesses and other training providers and organisations to support the college's

vision and mission to develop a curriculum to meet the needs of learners, local employers and local and regional priorities. The college makes an excellent contribution to local initiatives with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership, Confederation of British Industry and the Chamber of Commerce to develop the curriculum strategically.

- College staff have developed outstanding links with a number of high profile local organisations, such as Nissan UK, the NHS and Vantec and a large number of other employers to offer training, apprenticeships, bespoke training and opportunities for work experiences.
- The college has not only maintained its 'truly inclusive' approach as identified at the last inspection, but has continued to develop this area. Targeted training to all staff has raised awareness and understanding even further, enabling staff to tackle equality and diversity issues confidently. A 'zero tolerance' approach to bullying and harassment ensures extremely low levels of incidents occurring.
- The college has been a major partner in a superb programme aimed at enabling learners with learning disabilities or autism to develop the skills needed to gain employment. The number who successfully achieve this is outstanding. The College Foundation is an excellent source of support which enables learners to access learning, buy equipment or undertake trips and visits as part of their programme or personal development. Staff successfully encourage recipients to contribute in some way to the Foundation in return for this support.
- The college's approach to safeguarding is outstanding. The college meets its statutory requirements and is exceptionally proactive in assessing risks for all learners and staff. The college maintains a detailed single central register for all staff including those from third party organisations. The links with both the local authority designated officer and the Local Safeguarding Children Board are excellent and provide a good source of support and access to training.
- All staff attend annual mandatory training and a large number of staff are trained to designated officer level. The college gives high priority to ensuring that all learners and staff understand the threats and potential risks of use of the internet and social media. Extensive training for staff and coverage at tutorials alongside detailed poster promotions around the college ensures that learners are aware of the potential risks and dangers.
- Leaders and managers have been actively developing the college's 'Prevent' agenda since 2011 even though it is not an identified priority area. All staff have undergone training in the 'Prevent' agenda.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Provider name

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	1	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	1	1	N/A	N/A
	Outcomes for learners	1	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	1	1	N/A	N/A
	The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	1	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	1	1	N/A	N/A
	The effectiveness of leadership and management	1	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	1	1	N/A	N/A

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Health and social care	1
Early years and playwork	1
Engineering	1
Manufacturing technologies	1
Building and construction	2
ICT for practitioners	2
ICT for users	2
Warehousing and distribution	1

Sport, leisure and recreation	1
Travel and tourism	1
Foundation mathematics	2
Business management	2

Provider details

Type of provider	General further education college							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	19,270							
Principal/CEO	Ms Judith Doyle							
Date of previous inspection	February 2014							
Website address	www.gateshead.ac.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+
	276	2166	677	5308	1243	362	53	400
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	319	2309	159	727	N/A		5	
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	N/A							
Number of community learners	37							
Number of employability learners	2505							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cablecom Training Ltd ■ Construction and plant Assessments Ltd ■ Flooring Assessment LLP ■ Free to Learn Ltd ■ Group Horizon Ltd ■ NAC College Trust ■ New Generation Training and Consultancy Ltd ■ Nordic Pioneer Ltd ■ Penshaw View training Ltd ■ Premier Training International Ltd ■ Winnovation Ltd 							



Contextual information

Gateshead College is a very large general further education college with its main campus in Gateshead and additional centres in the Team Valley and at the Gateshead International Stadium. It provides a wide range of classroom-based and work-based programme for learners aged 16 to 18 and adults. In the local area the proportion of adults with no qualifications is higher than that for the North East and for the country as a whole. The proportion of school leavers who achieve at least five GCSEs A* to C in Gateshead is slightly higher than that for the region and nationally. The unemployment rate in Gateshead is higher than the national rate but slightly lower than that for the region.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Heather Barnett HMI
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Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and eight additional inspectors, assisted by the college's Deputy Principal, Curriculum and Quality 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 college 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:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012

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