

Lancaster and Morecambe College

General Further Education College

Inspection dates

13–16 March 2018

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement	16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement	Adult learning programmes	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement	Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement	Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Requires improvement	

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders, managers and governors do not have sufficient oversight of the progress that current learners studying vocational courses and apprentices make on their programmes.
- Teachers and assessors do not consistently identify the skills, knowledge and experience that learners and apprentices have at the start of the programme in order to plan their learning diligently.
- Leaders and managers have not been successful in improving learners' and apprentices' English and mathematics skills.
- Too many teachers and assessors do not sufficiently challenge or inspire learners and apprentices, which results in them making slower than expected progress. This is particularly the case in theoretical lessons.
- A significant minority of learners and apprentices, particularly the most able, do not achieve their potential.
- Attendance to lessons is low on too many courses.
- In 2016/17, a significant minority of apprentices did not complete their apprenticeships in the planned time.

The provider has the following strengths

- The new senior management team have successfully communicated their vision of developing individuals through high-quality work-related education and training.
- Adult learning managers have nurtured highly effective relationships with external partners such as the National Health Service to provide employment opportunities for learners.
- Learners' behaviour is good in lessons and in communal areas around the college.
- Learners' additional learning receive good support that helps learners, particularly those with education, health and care (EHC) plans, to develop their skills and independence.
- Learners and apprentices develop good skills in practical classes that support them well in the workplace and in preparing for work.
- Most learners and apprentices at subcontractors make good progress and achievement is high.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Lancaster & Morecambe College is a small college of further education, situated on the edge of a largely rural area, serving the communities of North Lancashire, South Cumbria and, in particular, the City of Lancaster and the seaside resort of Morecambe. The college provides a wide range of vocational post-16 education and training, including study programmes for learners aged 16 to 19, adult learning, apprenticeships, traineeships and provision for learners with high needs. Around a third of learners are aged 16 to 18 on full-time courses and the remaining two thirds are adult learners, mostly studying part-time courses. Currently, the college provides apprenticeships for 654 apprentices.
- Lancaster has a population of 143,500. The unemployment rate is 4.8%, which is broadly in line with that for the north west of England. The proportion of pupils who achieve a grade 9 to 4 in English and mathematics in Lancashire is broadly in line with the national rate.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Swiftly improve the proportion of learners and apprentices that make at least the progress which is expected of them by:
 - ensuring that all learners' and apprentices' existing skills, knowledge and prior attainment are rigorously assessed at the start of their programme and that these assessments are consistently completed across the college
 - ensuring that teachers and assessors use the results of assessments completed at the start of programmes to plan learning that will challenge and inspire learners and apprentices to make good progress on their courses
 - ensuring that there are reliable systems for checking learners' and apprentices' progress and making sure that effective action is taken when their progress is slow
- Ensure that senior managers and governors have an effective oversight of the progress that all learners and apprentices make on their programmes. They should intervene swiftly when learners and apprentices make slow progress and hold teachers and assessors to account for slow progress so that no learners or apprentices are disadvantaged.
- Implement effective strategies to improve the proportion of learners who attend their lessons.
- Improve learners' and apprentices' English and mathematics skills by planning lessons which take account of their experiences and prior attainment and extend their learning in these subjects.
- Improve the operational management of the apprenticeship provision by ensuring that a much higher proportion of apprentices make the progress that they should and achieve their apprenticeship on time.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Governors and leaders have been too slow to deal with all areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Not all weaknesses identified in the previous report have been rectified fully. While the newly appointed senior management team have recently implemented appropriate policies and procedures to deal with these concerns, it is too early to see any significant improvements, due to them only recently being put in place.
- Quality improvement arrangements require further development. In too many instances, managers do not identify or evaluate areas for improvement well enough. Following the previous inspection, leaders developed a two-year quality improvement plan, which did not achieve the improvements that managers anticipated. The newly introduced curriculum assessment boards are helping managers and staff to focus on the actions needed to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. However, this new initiative has not yet raised the standards of education and training at the college.
- Leaders and managers place a disproportionate focus on audit and compliance as opposed to improvement planning when evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. This has resulted in leaders and managers not sufficiently improving the standard of education and training at the college since the previous inspection.
- Leaders and managers have not dealt with all of the weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment identified at the previous inspection. Too many learners and apprentices, regardless of ability, still do not make the progress that is expected of them. The standard of education in theoretical lessons is still not good enough, with too many weaknesses in teaching practice identified across different subjects and types of provision across the college.
- Leaders, managers and governors do not have sufficient oversight of the progress that learners and apprentices make on their programmes. They do not collect this information routinely, check its accuracy or use it to enable them to record and monitor the progress that learners and apprentices make. Consequently, they do not know how well learners and apprentices progress on their courses throughout the year or whether they are reaching their full potential. This prevents leaders and managers from swiftly intervening to support learners to improve their performance and reach their potential.
- Leaders and governors have not improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment or improved the proportion of learners who make positive progress in English and mathematics. Following the previous inspection, leaders and managers invested a high level of resource to improve learners' and apprentices' development in this area. This intervention has led to increased integration of English skills in vocational programmes and mathematics in apprenticeship programmes, but the progress that learners and apprentices make is not good enough.
- The new senior management team have been successful in their desire to improve the culture of the college. Managers have high aspirations of what staff, learners and apprentices at the college can achieve. Clear communication of leaders' vision of 'inspiring and developing individuals through high-quality work-related education and training' has

ensured that all staff know what they need to do improve and how this will be achieved.

- The new leadership team has identified accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the college. They have made changes to the quality improvement process to include validation of the self-assessment report by governors and external parties, but this has yet to have a positive effect in raising the standards of education and training.
- Governors and the new leadership team have embraced fully the opportunities presented by the Strategic College Improvement Fund. This has been developed in collaboration with a regionally located general further education college. The associated action plan will form the basis of the new quality improvement plan and will be subject to external monitoring.
- Leaders have improved the management of performance of staff and subcontractors throughout the college. Targets set for senior managers and subcontractors are appropriate and relate specifically to the areas that require improvement. These targets are reviewed regularly and are starting to bring about some improvement. While managers use the results of the observations of teaching, learning and assessment in management performance discussions, too little focus is placed on ensuring that the improvement actions are concisely recorded and diligently monitored to ensure that rapid improvement in teaching practice is achieved.
- The arrangements for the management of subcontracted provision are effective. Appropriate and detailed checks are in place to ensure the monitoring and compliance of subcontractors to college requirements. Leaders and managers have secured very good working relationships with a carefully selected group of subcontractors. Almost all subcontractors' achievement was high in 2016/17, with consistently high achievement at Lancashire Football Association for learners on 16 to 19 study programmes, adult learners and apprentices.
- Leaders and managers provide a wide range of professional development and training opportunities for all staff. They provide continuous professional development tailored to staff's job roles which relate directly to areas for improvement. They place a significant focus in the current academic year's plan to improve the practice of teachers and assessors and ensure that all staff meet the college's statutory requirements such as safeguarding and careers information, advice and guidance.
- Leaders and governors have developed the provision to provide a wide range of choices for learners at all ages and levels that meet local, regional and local enterprise partnership skill priorities. A number of governors are well connected to the energy and digital industries and they provide introductions and links to support curriculum development with employers. A strong partnership with a number of external agencies provide successful routes for unemployed people to gain employment with the National Health Service.

The governance of the provider

- Governors are committed to the college and have high ambitions for the future. Their new approach to governance to include the whole governing body on key issues is effective. They have a wide range of appropriate skills and expertise which they use to support senior managers at the college effectively.
- Governors receive detailed and well-presented papers that provide a good level of

information for most aspects of the college.

- Governors have developed effective relationships across the college and are actively involved in college life. They are knowledgeable about the recent interventions that have taken place and recognise what further improvements are required. They monitor the achievement rates and other indicators such as attendance and retention appropriately. However, they do not have a sufficient oversight of the progress that current learners and apprentices are making on their courses, which limits their ability to hold the principal and senior managers to account fully.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The safeguarding log is very comprehensive and shows what actions have been taken to protect students and how staff use a range of external agencies to respond swiftly and effectively to individual safeguarding cases as they arise. Leaders and managers promote a strong culture of feeling safe and being safe in the college, which they have extended effectively to embrace their responsibilities under the 'Prevent' duty.
- Leaders and managers ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all staff, including Disclosure and Barring Service checks and a comprehensive scrutiny of job applicants' suitability. Staff and governors have received appropriate training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Leaders' and managers' understanding of the local risks posed by radicalisation is good.
- Safeguarding arrangements at the subcontractors are thorough and effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The system for identifying learners' starting points is not sufficiently thorough. Assessors on apprenticeships and a very small minority of teachers who teach on adult learning courses do not routinely identify the skills that learners already have and those that they need to develop. Learners' skills and abilities in English and mathematics are assessed at the start of their courses on the 16 to 19 study programme and for learners with high needs. However, teachers do not consistently check learners' practical skills at the start of the course to allow them to plan learning to ensure that they reach their potential. As a result, learners, particularly the most able, do not extend or develop their skills quickly enough and their progress is too slow. A few subject areas, including sport, art and design and childcare, assess learners' practical skills effectively to ensure that they are able to meet the rigours of their course.
- A significant minority of teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of learners. These teachers do not plan lessons effectively, focusing on middle-ability learners, particularly on 16 to 19 study programmes and apprenticeships. They do not plan learning well enough to meet the needs of the most able learners and those learners requiring additional support. Consequently, learners do not produce work of a high enough standard or make the progress of which they are capable.
- Too much teaching on the 16 to 19 study programme and apprenticeship provision does not challenge, inspire or excite learners. Teaching is often pedestrian, the pace of

learning is slow and learners do not make swift enough progress. Teachers too readily accept learners' answers, failing to link theoretical concepts to the development of practical skills. As a result, the progress that learners make is too slow.

- A significant minority of teachers and assessors do not use their knowledge and experience well enough to support learners in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding of vocational topics and themes. Teaching focuses on meeting the minimum requirements of the course and does not challenge learners to excel in their learning. Teachers and assessors focus on the completion of tasks and assessments rather than extending learning. As a result, not enough learners achieve or exceed their target grades.
- Feedback to learners varies significantly across subjects, levels and types of provision. Many teachers provide feedback that is too general or does not identify significant errors in learners' and apprentices' work. The majority of learners and apprentices do not act upon feedback and continually repeat their mistakes. Conversely, a significant minority of learners receive helpful feedback that identifies how they can improve their work and develop their skills. For example, adult learners and learners on 16 to 19 study programmes on music practitioner, sport and plumbing and heating courses feedback is detailed, developmental and helps learners to improve their work and develop their skills. Learners complete actions set by teachers, successfully improving their skills and making good progress.
- The tracking, monitoring and recording of learners' and apprentices' progress is underdeveloped. Teachers, assessors and managers monitor and record the progress that learners make on their qualifications on a college management information system. However, a disproportionate emphasis is placed on monitoring the completion of tasks and assignments as opposed to the new skills and knowledge that learners and apprentices are developing on their courses.
- Targets set by teachers and assessors with, and for, many learners and apprentices do not focus sufficiently on vocational progress and skills development. Targets set are too generalised and not personalised to meet learners' needs. As a result, learners make slow progress and do not reach their potential. Targets set for learners with high needs are effective and support them to make good progress.
- Learners' additional learning support needs are identified quickly and appropriate support put in place. Regular personalised reviews for learners with additional support needs and for those with an EHC plan mean that their targets are amended accurately. For example, this results in the reduction of support to improve the independence of learners with high needs.
- Learners and apprentices are motivated and keen to learn. They enjoy their lessons, and are prepared for classes. Learners are respectful towards each other and their teachers. The learning environment is inclusive and all learners and apprentices are able to express openly their views and opinions.
- Learners and apprentices develop good skills in practical lessons that support them well in the workplace and in preparing for work. For example, learners on childcare programmes use the 'learning den' to develop and improve their childcare skills. Learners on 16 to 19 study programmes benefit from opportunities through meaningful work experience to apply these skills on work placement.

- Learners and apprentices at subcontractors make good progress on their programmes. They enhance existing skills, acquire new knowledge and improve their confidence, self-esteem and employment-related skills such as problem-solving, teamwork and being work-ready. This leads to them being able to progress to employment, an apprenticeship or further study. For example, Lancashire Football Association Limited have developed a curriculum which promotes progression at all levels. The six-week traineeship prepares learners for a career in the sport and leisure industry, with many trainees progressing to a full-time study programme or an apprenticeship.
- Learners use technical and specialist terminology well in the right context and with increasing complexity. For example, as learners explore the work of the theorist Erikson, they discuss personality traits and the effects of cortisol on the mind and body.
- A few learners and apprentices, for example those on construction crafts programmes, complete units of higher-level qualifications alongside their courses. They gain additional skills and a deeper understanding of the construction industry. As a result, learners make rapid progress and many exceed their targets.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

- Attendance is too low across the college. The attendance of learners on the 16 to 19 study programme and adult courses requires improvement. Attendance rates of learners with high needs and apprentices to their off-the-job training are good.
- Learners and apprentices do not consistently produce work of a high enough standard. A minority of learners and apprentices, particularly the most able, do not reach their potential. This is due to teachers and assessors not planning learning to meet their specific development requirements.
- Most learners are provided with sufficient information, advice and guidance and are placed on the right course to help them fulfil their career aspirations. In a minority of cases, support provided by careers staff does not sufficiently promote learners' independent research skills, which results in overreliance on the support that they receive.
- Learners' behaviour is good in lessons and corridors around the college. Those who attend classes are prompt and eager to learn in their lessons. Learners benefit from the new skills and experiences that they develop on their courses.
- Study programme learners achieve good employment-related skills through the purposeful, very effective and well-planned work placements. Many learners are enthused because their work placements align well not only to the course that they are studying but also to their personal interests. For example, business learners who enjoy creative writing in their spare time attend work placements at publishers that further enhance their experience and learning.
- Many learners benefit from the effective enrichment activities that they receive. This allows them to gain experiences out of their usual working environment. For example, public service learners benefit from residential trips with the armed forces to develop their team-working, navigation and map-reading skills. Plumbing and heating apprentices benefit from developing new skills in Denmark installing underfloor heating, and business and hospitality learners complete extended work placements at tourist locations

throughout Italy.

- Learners and apprentices develop good practical skills at college, in work placements and, for apprentices, at their employers. They develop new skills that are in addition to those that they need for their courses. For example, joinery and carpentry apprentices can confidently explain how they construct truss roof structures and the importance of bracing to ensure the stability of the building.
- Learners enhance their employment-related skills at college. They develop new skills such as improved confidence, self-esteem and self-belief. However, learners' and apprentices' development of English and mathematics is weak in many subjects within the different types of provision across the college.
- Learners feel safe and know how to seek support. They demonstrate a good awareness of the importance of health and safety in their working environments, both at the college and, for apprentices, in their workplace. Learners have a good awareness of the risks of radicalisation and extremism and what action they must take if they have any concerns. They receive regular updates in their tutorial sessions, which include important topics such as online safety and potential risks in their community.
- All learners have a very good understanding of the importance of fundamental British values. Learners complete a level 1 course through their tutorials to inform them of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect.
- Learners are treated fairly and receive good opportunities to develop skills and acquire new knowledge. The newly implemented aspire programme provides learners, many of whom have been disaffected by learning in the past, to complete taster courses to re-engage with learning. Electively home-educated learners have the opportunity to complete short courses at college such as construction and hairdressing, a stepping-stone to vocational courses when they reach the age of 16.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- The proportion of learners on the 16 to 19 study programme who achieve their qualifications improved in 2016/17 but is still too low. While there has been a significant improvement for entry and level 1 qualifications, which are now high, improvement at levels 2 and 3 has been more modest and remains low. The majority of learners make the progress expected of them. However, the most able learners and those who require additional support do not reach their potential. Two of the three subcontractors' achievement rates are high, which include Angelique Beauty and Holistic Academy Limited and Lancashire Football Association Limited. However, Lancaster Training Services Limited's achievement rates are too low, with around one third of learners not completing their qualification in 2016/17.
- Learners on adult learning programmes make good progress towards achieving their qualifications. The proportion of learners who achieved their qualifications in 2016/17 improved. Learners produce work of a high standard, and often a very high standard, and significantly improve their confidence and self-belief. The Skills Network Limited and Lancashire Football Association Limited deliver almost all of the subcontracted provision for adult learners; both have high achievement rates.
- While the proportion of apprentices who have completed their programmes on time has

improved in 2016/17 from a low level in 2015/16, around a third of apprentices did not complete their apprenticeship on time. A minority of apprentices are not making the progress of which they are capable due to poor planning of learning. There are significant gaps in achievement between intermediate and advanced apprentices, which managers acknowledge is too high. The only subcontractor for apprenticeships is Lancashire Football Association Limited. The proportion of apprentices who complete their apprenticeship at this subcontractor is good and in 2016/17, the achievement rate was higher than the college's directly delivered apprenticeship achievement rate.

- Learners with high needs develop new skills effectively, make good progress, with a high proportion of these learners achieving their vocational qualifications. However, too many learners do not develop their English and mathematics skills well enough.
- In 2016/17, too few learners improved their GCSE grades in English and mathematics. Just less than half of all learners studying GCSE in English achieved an A* to C grade (9 to 4 grade), which is not high enough, while only one quarter of learners studying GCSE in mathematics achieved an A* to C grade (9 to 4 grade), which is too low. Functional skills achievement for English and mathematics is low, particularly for mathematics. Apprentices develop very effective mathematical skills in practical sessions but their English skills are not sufficiently developed.
- Leaders and managers effectively identify gaps in achievement between different groups of learners. They are aware of the low achievement of intermediate apprentices compared to advanced apprentices and the increasing gap of the achievement of learners with difficulties and/or disabilities. They have recently implemented appropriate actions to reduce these gaps but there is not yet any evidence of the impact of these actions.
- The vast majority of learners progress to positive destinations, which include further or higher education, employment or apprenticeships. Almost all apprentices who complete their programmes gain full-time employment.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Currently there are 1,141 learners on a range of study programmes from entry level to level 4 across 25 subject areas. The vast majority of learners are equally distributed between level 2 and level 3 programmes. Around one in ten learners are studying on entry and level 1 programmes, and a very small proportion of the remaining learners are studying at level 4. The majority of learners study courses in sport, leisure and recreation, engineering, building and construction, and health and social care. Over two thirds of learners with high needs are integrated into vocational study programme classes at a range of levels. The college subcontracts a very small amount of learners to Angelique Beauty and Holistic Academy Limited, Lancashire Football Association Limited and Lancaster Training Services Limited.
- In 2016/17, the proportion of learners who achieved their qualifications improved significantly from a low level in 2015/16. While there was significant improvement for entry and level 1 learners in 2016/17, level 2 and level 3 learners' achievement was more modest and is not high enough. Learners on level 3 graded qualifications, which account for the minority of all level 3 courses, make poor progress compared to other learners

nationally.

- Teachers do not consistently use the results of assessments completed at the start of learners' courses to design a learning programme to meet learners' specific requirements. Too many lessons disproportionately focus on the completion of generic, whole-class tasks. Teachers do not provide sufficient support for learners who need extra help, nor do they provide challenging tasks for those who have the potential to achieve higher standards of work.
- Teachers do not sufficiently challenge, excite or inspire learners in lessons. Teachers do not adequately motivate learners to produce work, develop skills or enhance their knowledge beyond the level of which they are comfortable, resulting in them not reaching their potential. Too often learners produce mediocre work, which is readily accepted by teachers.
- Too often teachers do not develop learners' applied numeracy skills in lessons. This results in learners not effectively linking or using the skills they develop in mathematics classes to solve problems in a vocational environment, which in a few cases impedes the progress that learners could make on their course.
- Most teachers provide regular feedback to their learners. The feedback that learners receive identifies in most cases how a learner can improve their work to meet the minimum expectation of the awarding organisation, but learners do not always act on this feedback to improve the standard of their work. On too many occasions, teachers do not always challenge the most skilled learners to produce more complex work and develop skills at a higher level.
- Leaders and managers have implemented all aspects of the study programme. They have secured strong links with industry from which the vast majority of learners benefit. The majority of learners enjoy their studies. They take advantage of valuable work experience and enrichment opportunities that prepare them effectively for future employment, resulting in the vast majority of learners progressing to further education, employment or onto an apprenticeship. For example, engineering learners experience good-quality vocational placements at a multinational energy supplier, gaining a good understanding of the principles of engineering in the energy industry.
- The majority of learners on all levels of courses develop good practical and wider employment-related skills that prepare them effectively for work. Entry-level learners acquire skills of how to prepare a restaurant professionally to industry standards, while level 1 learners studying carpentry and joinery craft a range of items for the home to a high standard using a range of tools, which they use proficiently.
- The majority of learners benefit from supportive teachers who have a good understanding of their specific personal and social requirements. They nurture learners' confidence and enhance their self-esteem incrementally throughout their course, which results in the majority of learners making positive progress in their personal and social development on their courses. For example, teachers identify learners who do not normally take part in physical activity and ensure that they are supported to overcome their fears. As a result, learners on beauty courses complete yoga within the salon environment, while learners who are reluctant to be seen exercising take part in activities in discrete facilities at the college.
- The majority of learners develop their English skills effectively in many vocational lessons.

They use subject specific terminology with confidence, which results in them being able to communicate with teachers and external visitors with conviction.

Adult learning programmes

Good

- Currently there are 2,219 part time learners on a range of adult learning programmes ranging from level 1 to level 3. Most study level 1 and level 2 courses. These courses consist of Access to Higher Education courses, vocational courses, English for speakers of other language courses, and functional skills and GCSE qualifications in English and mathematics. Just under half of this provision is subcontracted, mainly to The Skills Network Limited and Lancashire Football Association Limited. The remaining subcontractors, which include Angelique Beauty and Holistic Academy Limited, Lancaster Training Services Limited and Piccadilly Garden Limited, have very low learner numbers.
- Leaders and managers have been successful in developing the adult learning curriculum to meet the requirements of the localities which they serve and the skill priorities of Lancashire and Cumbria. They have developed very productive working partnerships with a range of external agencies, including JobCentre Plus, the National Health Service and local voluntary agencies who support refugees to integrate into the locality.
- Learners regularly produce a very high standard of work in the vast majority of adult learning classes. Art and design students demonstrate very good progress in their courses, producing paintings, illustrations, creative designs and work produced using industry-recognised computer software.
- Adult learners benefit from high standards of teaching, enjoy their learning and make good progress on their courses. They develop new skills, acquire new knowledge and improve their confidence. Many learners have a clear focus on the career that they want to progress to following their course. For example, health and social care learners can eloquently explain their next steps in becoming nurses, physiotherapists or other service professionals such as care workers.
- Teachers effectively incorporate mathematics into vocational lessons, which develops learners' applied numeracy skills in preparation for their next steps into employment or higher-level courses. For example, learners on hairdressing and beauty courses use their newly acquired skills to work out the timings and costs of treatments. Learners on plastering courses use effective strategies to calculate the appropriate mix for a specific surface area.
- Teachers promote the use of literacy skills in most vocational lessons. Learners develop their confidence in their oracy skills effectively. They develop confidence in using a range of technical terms and industry-specific vocabulary. For example, learners who study horticulture can confidently use botanical names for a range of flowers and vegetation when discussing work that they have completed.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not provide feedback to learners to identify how they can improve further their work. Worksheets handed out in lessons are not always completed, which results learners not gaining the knowledge or making the progress that they should.

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

- The college offers apprenticeships in a wide range of sectors, including health and social care, childcare, engineering disciplines, building and construction, retail, hairdressing and beauty therapies, and business. Currently there are 658 apprentices. Two hundred and sixty-five learners are aged 16 to 18 and 393 are adult apprentices. A total of 369 are on intermediate apprenticeships and 285 on advanced-level apprenticeships, with four studying at higher level. A small number of apprentices are studying with the subcontractor Lancashire Football Association Limited.
- The operational management of the apprenticeship programme requires improvement. The principles and requirements of apprenticeships are met. However, managers do not have an accurate oversight of the progress that apprentices make on their programmes, nor do they ensure that assessments for the vocational element of the apprenticeship are consistently completed and diligently recorded.
- The proportion of apprentices who complete their programme on time is low. While managers have been successful in significantly improving the proportion of apprentices who completed their programme on time in 2016/17, around a third of all apprentices did not complete their apprenticeship on time, which is too low.
- Teachers and assessors do not consistently identify the prior experience, skills and knowledge that apprentices possess at the start of the apprenticeship to enable them to plan and provide personalised and challenging learning programmes.
- Leaders and managers do not have a sufficient oversight of the progress that apprentices are making in developing new vocational skills and knowledge and enhancing existing behaviours to ensure that they make a positive contribution to their employers' businesses. While assessments are completed at the start of the programme for English, mathematics and information and communication technology, the results of these assessments are not used well enough to plan learning effectively.
- The majority of teachers and assessors do not set clear actions for apprentices to complete to ensure that they make at least the progress of which they are capable. Teachers and assessors place a disproportionate emphasis on the completion of units set by the awarding organisation as opposed to developing new skills which will make them more productive in the workplace.
- Apprentices do not receive helpful information from their teachers and assessors following the completion of work to help them to improve. On the infrequent occasions when formative feedback has been provided, there are insufficient checks that apprentices act on this advice. This leads to them not making swift progress in the development of their skills and knowledge.
- Teachers and assessors do not consistently encourage apprentices to improve their English skills. This results in their written work not being to the same standard as their practical skills development. For example, apprentices in health and social care are given assessment papers to complete that are one level below the level they have already attained. This results in the apprentices not extending their learning.
- Apprentices who receive training from Lancashire Football Association Limited, the only subcontractor of apprenticeships at the college, make good progress on their qualifications. Apprentices take pride in their work, value the opportunity to work and learn and are aware of the importance of their pivotal role in promoting healthy lifestyles

throughout the schools of Lancashire. Apprentices are proud of the progress they have made since completing their traineeship, improving their confidence and nurturing their career in sport and leisure industries.

- Teachers and assessors work closely with employers to ensure that the content of the apprenticeship meets the specific requirements of both the apprentice and the employer. Off-the-job learning is clearly aligned with the work that they are completing in the workplace. The majority of apprentices are making a positive contribution to their place of work. For example, a business administration apprentice has improved her time management and prioritisation skills, which has enabled her to react better to unplanned requests from suppliers and changing circumstances.
- Apprentices develop good mathematical skills throughout the apprenticeship curriculum. This supports the practical application of skills in the workplace. For example, hairdressing apprentices learn the importance of angles and ratio when cutting and colouring hair in college salons.

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

- Eighty-four learners with high needs from two local authorities are enrolled on college courses. Twenty-five learners are on courses specifically designed to support their high needs. The remaining learners are enrolled on a wide range of vocational subjects from entry level to level 3. These include animal care, business, engineering, public services and sport.
- Managers and teachers know learners who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well and support them to become independent in their daily lives. They use high-needs funding effectively to support the needs of learners and help them to make at least the progress expected. Where learners demonstrate that they no longer require the level of support provided, managers reduce or withdraw support to ensure that learners develop independent skills successfully to support them when they progress to their next steps.
- Managers collaborate very effectively with the local authority special educational needs disability officers in Lancashire and Cumbria. They make sure that high-needs funding is available and they use it effectively to provide the additional support and specific resources that learners with high needs require.
- Managers are committed to ensuring that learners' transition from school to college is as easy as possible. They have developed strong relationships with staff in the schools from which learners are recruited. Managers work very closely with special educational needs coordinators to identify and agree appropriate outcomes for learners' EHC plans, which are diligently monitored.
- Learners benefit considerably from attending the college before they enrol on a course. They meet the staff, familiarise themselves with the college environment and learn a lot about the courses that are available. Learners also attend taster days which provide good first-hand experience of college life. Learners, and their parents, have very good opportunities to consider whether the college is suitable for them.
- Managers and teachers place a high priority on ensuring that learners' needs are identified quickly and assessed accurately. This helps to ensure that they are placed on

the correct course at the right level.

- Managers and teachers provide good personal and pastoral support that help learners to settle into the college quickly. Learners benefit greatly from the friendly, inclusive and supportive learning environment that helps them to make good progress in their studies. Learners' retention is very high.
- Managers take particular note of the educational requirements in learners' EHC plans and ensure that they are fulfilled. All learners with high needs have a named learning-support assistant who checks each learner's attendance, retention, progress and achievement regularly. Senior leaders have not yet succeeded in implementing fully the computerised tracking system. As a result, checking and recording of progress and achievement are time-consuming, but effective.
- Many learners with high needs who are not ready to join mainstream vocational courses enrol on good entry-level courses that enable them to develop their employability skills, enhance their personal effectiveness and improve their social competence. Teachers are often very successful in re-engaging young learners who have been away from education for some time and in renewing their enthusiasm for learning. A high proportion of learners achieve their qualifications.
- Learners make good progress in practical lessons and develop a good range of vocational skills. For example, they develop skills in welding and fabrication, hospitality and catering, and in performing arts. Learners' long-term aim of gaining employment is enhanced considerably through the vocational skills they acquire.
- Staff provide good impartial careers information, advice and guidance that help learners to make carefully considered decisions about their next steps. In 2016/17, learners' progression was good. The large majority of learners continued with their studies at a higher level at the college, with almost one in five learners gaining employment or an apprenticeship.
- In a minority of cases, teachers do not have high enough expectations of all learners. They do not always challenge them or set demanding targets. As a result, learners, and especially the most able learners with EHC plans, do not work to their full capacity.
- Learners do not improve their spelling, punctuation and grammatical knowledge and skills quickly enough. In lessons, teachers do not question learners sufficiently to check and extend their understanding of English and, particularly, the accuracy of their spelling. Teachers do not identify English errors in learners' written work routinely, with the result that errors are repeated.
- In a small number of lessons, insufficient attention is given to the effective deployment of learning-support assistants to support learning and to ensure that all learners with high needs make progress as rapidly as possible.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers' feedback on learners' work does not indicate where improvements can be made to improve the quality of the work.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130737
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	4,059
Principal/CEO	Mr Wes Johnson
Telephone number	01524 66215
Website	www.lmc.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 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	138	834	504	1,161	473	224	26	62
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	191	178	74	211	–	4		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	19		9		28			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	5							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	90							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Piccadilly Gardens Limited Lancashire Football Association Angelique's Skills Network Lancaster Training Services							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the college.

Inspection team

Paul Cocker, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Anita Pyrkotsch-Jones	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ken Fisher	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Ingle	Ofsted Inspector
Dilys Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Elaine Smith	Ofsted Inspector
Ruth Szolkowska	Ofsted Inspector
Suzanne Wainwright	Her Majesty's Inspector

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