

# Cambridge Regional College

Progress monitoring report

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<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Sambit Sen, Her Majesty's Inspector
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<b>Type of provider:</b>	General further education college
<b>Address:</b>	Science Park Campus Kings Hedges Road Cambridge CB4 2QT

## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Cambridge Regional College was last inspected in February 2020. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

This monitoring visit focused on the extent to which leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action to provide education and training in the current circumstances. It was undertaken as outlined in the [operational note on visits carried out from January 2021](#) and with reference to the further education and skills handbook.

These visits are to help learners, parents, employers and government understand how providers are meeting the needs of learners in this period, including those with high needs and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, inspectors carried out this monitoring activity remotely. As a result, the range of evidence available to inspectors was narrower than would be the case during an on-site inspection. Therefore, this report provides a more limited level of assurance.

The impact of COVID-19 has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgement below. Inspectors did not evaluate leaders' response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer of 2020, when the provider was not open to all learners and there were no national expectations regarding remote education.

### Theme

**What progress are leaders and those responsible for governance making to ensure that staff teach a curriculum and provide support to meet learners' needs, including the provision of remote/online learning?**

**Reasonable progress**

Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have taken effective action to improve the quality of learning for adult students and apprentices. For example, governors have acted on external advice to help them focus more sharply on helping and challenging leaders, managers and teachers to improve.

Senior leaders have adapted their part-time courses for adults effectively, to ensure that the curriculum provides meaningful routes to further study and employment. For example, they provide short courses to develop employment skills and English for

speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses. This enables adults to retrain for new job opportunities locally.

Leaders have ensured that in many apprenticeship programmes, planning is more ambitious and takes account of apprentices' current skills and knowledge. Managers consider the needs of employers effectively when planning their apprenticeship courses. Leaders have rearranged the curriculum as a result of the pandemic. For example, when the hairdressing apprentices came back from furlough in June 2020, they had extra practical sessions to enable them to catch up on lost learning. However, the pace of improvement on engineering apprenticeship programmes remains slow. For example, the learning from classroom sessions at college still does not link closely enough to the job roles that apprentices undertake in the workplace.

Teachers have quickly adapted their teaching methods to support online learning. They make good use of virtual break-out rooms and online chat facilities to encourage student participation. Most students and apprentices participate in lessons despite the current national restrictions. They continue to learn new concepts and skills. Managers frequently visit online teaching sessions and help teachers to share good practice.

The quality of education for those adult learners studying English remains inconsistent. On ESOL programmes, teachers often do not identify errors in basic English composition, such as the use of full stops and capital letters. As a result, students continue to repeat these errors over time in their work.

Students with education, health and care plans receive effective support. This helps them make progress towards completing their qualifications and wider personal development goals. Staff frequently review students' progress against the targets set within the plans, and set appropriate new targets.

Most students receive impartial careers advice and guidance. They are clear about their long-term goals and what steps they need to take to achieve them. For example, teachers of access to science programmes encourage students to consider a wide range of careers, including primary school biology teaching and further studies in biomedical science.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to ensure that:

- classroom learning at college matches closely to the job roles that engineering apprentices undertake at work, so that apprentices can practise their skills and knowledge effectively in the workplace
- teachers consistently identify and correct basic English composition errors made by ESOL students to enable them to learn effectively from, and eradicate, their mistakes.

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