

# Inspection of Hull College

Inspection dates:

8 to 11 February 2022

## Overall effectiveness

## Requires improvement

The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Education programmes for young people	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Information about this provider

Hull College is a large general further education college that recruits learners and apprentices from across the City of Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire. At the time of the inspection, there were approximately 2,100 adult learners, 1,600 learners aged 16 to 18, 1,000 apprentices, 167 learners aged 14 to 16, and 109 learners with high needs. Education programmes for young people is the largest provision type in terms of funding. The college uses four subcontractors to teach some of its courses for adults and apprentices.

Since the college's previous inspection in May 2019, there have been multiple changes to the senior leadership team of the college. The chief executive officer and deputy chief executive officer at the time of the previous inspection have both left the college. At the time of this inspection, there was an interim chief executive in post and a recently appointed permanent senior management team.

## **What is it like to be a learner with this provider?**

On too many courses, learners aged 16 to 18 do not benefit from well-planned teaching. Too often, teachers do not build on what learners already know at the start of their programmes to ensure that they quickly develop new skills and knowledge. Teachers do not ensure that enough learners attend their programmes. As a result, too many learners do not develop their vocational and academic skills to a high enough standard.

Learners aged 14 to 16 on full-time provision benefit from a broad and well-planned curriculum that meets their needs well. Learners study vocational and academic subjects that enable them to explore their interests fully. Learners make informed choices about their next steps and most progress into further education, employment or an apprenticeship. Most learners attend well and are punctual to their classes. Learners are highly motivated, keen to learn and demonstrate good behaviours.

Learners with high needs benefit from individually tailored learning programmes to develop their knowledge and skills. They are prepared well for progression to further study and into employment. Learners benefit from very effective personalised support. As a result, they engage fully in all aspects of their learning. This has a positive impact on their personal development over time, leading to greater independence and autonomy.

Most adult learners develop significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours, which enables them to progress into further study and employment. Learners develop their confidence, which helps them to contribute positively to class discussions and increases their participation in society. However, too many teachers do not ensure that adult learners attend their English and mathematics classes consistently. As a result, learners do not develop essential skills in these subjects quickly enough.

Apprentices benefit from good-quality training. They often work on more complex and technical tasks than their courses require. This enables them to develop technical skills and knowledge quickly, which further develops their confidence.

Learners feel safe at college. They know to whom they should report any concerns, should these arise. Learners benefit from a range of useful weekly drop-in sessions relating to their safety and their health. These cover topics such as drug and alcohol support, sexual health, family planning and contraception, mental health support and domestic abuse. The programme provides learners with information that helps them to understand how they can seek help and support for a wide range of concerns if required.

## **What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?**

Since the previous inspection, the college's senior leadership team has undergone a sustained period of instability. A refreshed governing body has recently taken action

to establish a new permanent leadership team to provide a structure and the capacity to enable the college to improve more rapidly. Despite the many changes in college leadership since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully improved the quality of apprenticeship provision, which is now good, and maintained the good practice identified in adult learning programmes and full-time provision for learners aged 14 to 16. Leaders and managers have effective oversight of the provision that is delivered by subcontractors.

Despite these recent changes, leaders have not made sufficient progress in improving the quality of education for learners aged 16 to 18. The quality of education for these learners varies considerably across curriculum areas, and too many learners do not benefit from high-quality teaching to enable them to develop new knowledge and skills rapidly. On courses where teachers sequence learning logically and effectively, learners develop a sound understanding of key concepts and produce work of a good standard. However, where teachers' guidance is not sufficiently clear, learners struggle to understand what is required, which impedes their progress.

Senior leaders have developed a comprehensive strategic plan that focuses on developing the skills of residents in Hull. The plan clearly articulates how the curriculum offer will contribute to the economic regeneration of the city. However, it is too early to see the full impact of leaders' plans on learners' skills development and progression into higher level careers and jobs across the city.

Leaders and managers have developed productive relationships with local employers to help inform curriculum design and content. Staff collaborate with technology companies, for example to prepare learners effectively for employment in fibre-optics engineering. Managers have recently implemented a range of new courses, particularly for adults and apprentices, to enable learners to develop the skills that they need to access local jobs. However, as yet, the introduction and development of new courses for learners aged 16 to 18 have had limited impact in improving the skills development and progression of learners on these courses.

Leaders have not yet had sufficient success in improving the attendance at college of learners aged 16 to 18, which remains too low. Poor attendance contributes directly to the slow progress that too many learners make and to the low achievement of English and mathematics qualifications. Learners aged 14 to 16 and learners with high needs attend well.

Not enough teachers have the skills or confidence to teach effectively the personal development curriculum for learners aged 16 to 18. Too many teachers do not, for example, ensure that learners can apply well enough to their personal and social lives the perceived dangers such as drink- and needle-spiking. Teachers too often recap topics that learners have already covered at school or in previous years at college, and do not develop learners' deeper understanding. As a result, too many learners do not have a secure understanding of the wider personal dangers that they may face in society.

Too many teachers do not provide learners aged 16 to 18 with prompt or effective feedback on the quality of their work. Teachers' assessment of written work is often overly positive, which means that learners do not benefit from the constructive feedback that they need in order to improve their academic skills. Teachers of adult learners and apprentices use assessment well to check their understanding of what is being taught and to provide guidance on how to improve. As a result, these learners make good progress towards their next steps and are well prepared for their final assessments.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that learners aged 16 to 18 have sufficient opportunity to experience the world of work. Too many learners do not know if or when they will be undertaking work experience. Too often, when work experience is planned, it is not relevant to learners' main vocational subjects. As a result, too many learners do not gain knowledge or experience of their intended workplace and the skills needed to be successful.

Leaders and managers ensure that adult learners effectively develop the skills and confidence that they need to prepare them for employment. Teachers sequence and teach lessons well so that learners build and practise their skills incrementally. Culinary arts tutors, for example, use a variety of methods including live demonstrations to cement key concepts in learners' memory. As a result, learners build their knowledge and skills in a cumulative way.

Leaders and managers have developed an inclusive and personalised curriculum for learners with high needs. Teachers ensure that learners are placed on the most appropriate courses for their needs. Courses such as those in employability and independent living and supported internships develop and enhance the independence and employability skills of learners. Consequently, most learners complete their courses and progress to higher level study.

Teachers and specialist advisers provide most learners with useful independent and impartial careers advice and guidance. Consequently, a high proportion of learners progress into further learning or employment. However, trainers do not provide apprentices, except those in health and social care, with meaningful careers advice. As a result, most apprentices are not aware of progression opportunities to higher level qualifications or alternative career options beyond their current employment.

Leaders have good support arrangements for children who are looked after, including unaccompanied minors who have recently arrived in Britain. Staff quickly engage these learners in their studies, which helps them to integrate and make friends. Teachers ensure that learners whose English language skills are limited quickly develop the skills needed to help them participate in their communities. As a result, these learners remain on programme and progress to further study and employment well.

Leaders and managers set high standards of behaviour in classrooms and around the campus. Most learners' behaviour reflects these high expectations. Learners aged 14 to 16, for example, understand from the outset that they must leave their

mobile phones in their lockers, and they comply without any objection. As a result, learners benefit from a calm and orderly environment across the college.

Teachers have successfully created an inclusive culture in which learners collaborate with each other to achieve their goals. Learners and staff of different faiths and cultures work together harmoniously within the college. For example, learners on culinary skills courses remove pork and alcohol from the recipes that they prepare to enable Muslim learners to participate fully. As a result, learners develop mutual respect and regard for each other.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding officers monitor the effectiveness of actions taken to support individual learners well. Staff quickly refer learners to specialist agencies to ensure that they access expert help when required. Support staff closely monitor these learners to ensure that they are safe and continue to be supported, even when external agencies cease their involvement.

Leaders ensure that all staff and governors are security checked to ensure that they are safe to work with young people. The designated safeguarding lead and the lead governor for safeguarding fully understand the local context in which learners live and work. They have developed extensive and useful links with a wide range of external agencies to help keep learners safe.

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

- Ensure that leaders' plans to improve the quality of education, particularly for learners aged 16 to 18, are effectively implemented.
- Ensure that teachers plan successfully the curriculum for learners aged 16 to 18 and provide learners with high-quality, developmental feedback to ensure that learners rapidly develop significant new knowledge and skills.
- Rapidly improve learners' attendance and punctuality, particularly for 16- to 18-year-old learners and adults studying English and mathematics, to ensure that learners develop the skills and knowledge needed to achieve their qualifications.
- Quickly develop teachers' skills and knowledge to fully implement the personal development curriculum for learners aged 16 to 18.
- Ensure that 16- to 18-year-old learners understand what it is like to work in their chosen industry sectors through meaningful and relevant work experience placements and work-related activities.
- Ensure that apprentices receive impartial careers advice and guidance to help them understand what longer term careers options are available to them outside their current employer organisations.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130579
<b>Address</b>	Queen's Gardens Wilberforce Drive Hull HU1 3DG
<b>Contact number</b>	01482 329943
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hull-college.ac.uk">www.hull-college.ac.uk</a>
<b>Principal</b>	Lowell Williams
<b>Provider type</b>	General further education college
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 to 10 May 2019
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	Portull Training Services Ltd Blue Apple Training Ltd Time2Train Ltd The Skills Network Ltd

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the vice-principal, quality and learning experience, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

## Inspection team

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