

# Inspection of Waltham International College Limited

Inspection dates: 5 to 8 July 2022

## Overall effectiveness

**Inadequate**

|  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| The quality of education                     | <b>Inadequate</b>           |
| Behaviour and attitudes                      | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Personal development                         | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Leadership and management                    | <b>Inadequate</b>           |
| Adult learning programmes                    | <b>Inadequate</b>           |
| Apprenticeships                              | <b>Inadequate</b>           |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected    |

## Information about this provider

Waltham International College Limited (WIC) is an independent learning provider based in east London. They teach adult learning programmes through funding from the Greater London Authority and several mayoral combined authorities across the country. WIC also offers level 3 loans funded courses and apprenticeships.

At the time of the inspection, there were 113 learners studying adult learning programmes. The largest programme is entry level English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), with 77 learners. The remaining learners are on a small number of courses, including the online level 3 diploma in information and communication technology (ICT), the diploma in rail engineering track maintenance, the level 2 certificate in hair and beauty skills and the entry-level English and mathematics qualifications.

There were 104 apprentices following a range of standards-based apprenticeships. Of those, 20 are on the level 3 digital marketer course, 14 are on junior content producer courses and 30 apprentices study care qualifications from level 2 to level 5. The remainder follow apprenticeships in business, hospitality and leadership and management.

The vast majority of learners are aged 19 and over.

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

On the online level 3 business courses and information and communication technology courses, learners do not have a positive experience. Too many learners whom inspectors spoke to had not heard of WIC, and a high proportion said they had not studied a course at the college.

Learners' attendance varies between courses. On level 2 hair and beauty and entry level ESOL courses, learners' attendance is high. However, on level 1 rail engineering courses, teachers do not emphasise to learners the importance of attending and being on time for lessons. Consequently, learners do not attend regularly.

Most digital marketing and junior content producer apprentices do not value their training. In a few cases, leaders have not checked thoroughly that employers have suitable experience of working in these sectors. Apprentices cannot recall in detail the basic principles of digital marketing. They talk superficially about how to use social media to promote their employer's business. Most apprentices on these programmes do not learn the broad range of skills and knowledge they need for roles in this sector.

Learners on ESOL, rail engineering and beauty programmes benefit from their courses. For example, on the level 2 certificate in rail engineering, learners learn about the health and safety risks associated with working on live rail tracks. They have useful opportunities to practise working safely with tools such as impact wrenches before going on site. On these courses, most learners gain valuable skills and knowledge that prepare them suitably for their next steps into employment or higher-level study.

Learners feel safe at the college. They know who to go to if they have concerns.

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

Leaders and managers have not ensured that all programmes are planned coherently. On traineeships in rail engineering, leaders have not secured suitable work experience placements for learners. As a result, learners lack the opportunity to work on live tracks during their course. Teachers do not plan sufficiently to develop learners' knowledge of English and mathematics. Too many learners fail their qualifications in English and mathematics.

On digital marketing apprenticeships, managers have not verified sufficiently that apprentices have appropriate jobs for the apprenticeship. Too many apprentices are not in employment, are self-employed or undertake significant other duties at work such as being waiters in restaurants. As a result, apprentices do not have suitable jobs or opportunities to put into practice what they are taught on their programme.

Leaders and managers do not assess most apprentices' and learners' starting points accurately enough. On online level 3 courses in business and ICT, managers'

assessment of what learners know at the start of the course is poor. Too many learners do not have good enough written or spoken English skills to engage meaningfully with their programme. Too often, learners cannot answer questions posed to them, and cannot recall anything that they have learned.

On online ICT courses, leaders do not plan lessons to cover all topics in sufficient detail. Consequently, too many learners cannot recall what they have been taught. They do not understand key concepts. Nor can they explain how they would apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace. On other courses, the curriculum is better planned. For example, on ESOL courses, teachers plan and teach the curriculum effectively. On entry level one courses, learners first practise speaking the language they need to use in everyday life. For instance, learners repeatedly recite the days of the week and months of the year. They then learn about more difficult topics such as pronouns and prepositions.

On hair and beauty courses, teachers first teach learners about health and safety, client care and skin conditions. Learners then progress to carrying out client consultations. Teachers recap usefully the knowledge taught in previous weeks, and learners can recall what they have learned. They are confident when they practise applying make-up on each other and progress well in their studies. Apprentices on care qualifications develop new skills and knowledge as a result of their training. They are suitably equipped to identify and report swiftly any safeguarding concerns.

On most courses, teachers do not give good enough feedback on apprentices' and learners' work. On apprenticeships, teachers give brief feedback and do not explain how apprentices can improve their written work. On too many courses, teachers do not consistently correct apprentices' and learners' spelling, punctuation and grammar errors. On online level 3 ICT courses, teachers write the same reviews of learners' progress for each learner. They do not identify the specific knowledge and skills each learner has gained or what they need to do to improve.

Teachers promote an inclusive learning environment. For example, on hair and beauty courses, learners experiment with make-up colours and hues for different skin tones and types. Posters in classrooms display images of people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and cultures. Learners feel valued and grow in confidence during their course. On traineeships, teachers discuss what it means to respect each other's faith and gender. Learners work together cooperatively, and young women feel comfortable working with their male colleagues.

Leaders and managers plan a range of interesting voluntary activities for learners and apprentices to join. For example, learners give out cold water to pedestrians on the high street during hot weather to help them remain hydrated. Consequently, learners make a useful contribution to their community. However, only a very small proportion of learners based in London take part in these activities.

Most learners benefit from appropriate careers information and advice. Teachers on rail engineering courses use their expertise to give learners examples of the different types of jobs available in the rail sector. Teachers on care apprenticeships carefully

plan with apprentices their next steps in learning. Learners feel inspired to aim higher in their careers.

Leaders have not ensured that learners and apprentices have a secure understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Learners and apprentices cannot discuss fluently how they would respond when faced with a scenario that required action, such as in the event of a terrorist threat on the railways.

Since the previous monitoring visit, leaders have changed substantially and increased rapidly the range of courses they offer. They have carefully considered regional skills shortages. For example, leaders have worked closely with businesses in the West Midlands to run health and social care apprenticeships at different levels.

Leaders do not provide governors with accurate and reliable information. Consequently, governors do not have a good enough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is appropriately trained and experienced in their role. They check that all staff undertake refresher safeguarding training annually. The DSL keeps a useful log of safeguarding concerns.

Staff carry out suitable pre-employment checks before appointing most new staff. Where these are not in place prior to their start date, staff undertake appropriate risk assessments.

Leaders have been slow to implement robust policies and procedures that set out how they protect learners from harmful sexual behaviours and a curriculum that promotes healthy relationships.

Learners have a limited understanding of how to keep themselves safe when learning online.

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

- Leaders should review the employers they work with on digital apprenticeships to ensure that apprentices are in jobs that are suitable for the standard.
- Leaders should revise the traineeship curriculum so that learners receive appropriate work experience while on the course and develop their knowledge of English and mathematics.
- Leaders should ensure that staff assess accurately learners' knowledge of English prior to starting level 3 courses to ensure they are on the right level of course.
- Leaders should improve the quality of lessons on ICT courses so that learners

remember and recall what they have been taught.

- Leaders should develop further the opportunities for learners and apprentices across all regions to take part in additional activities over and above their courses.
- Leaders should ensure that learners and apprentices know how to protect themselves against the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- Leaders should improve the reliability of the information they provide to governors to ensure they have an accurate overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.

## Provider details

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | 1270871  |
| <b>Address</b>                     | Glebe House<br>Vicarage Drive<br>Barking<br>IG11 7NR |
| <b>Contact number</b>              | 0207 0180 430  |
| <b>Website</b>                     | <a href="http://www.wic.ac.uk">www.wic.ac.uk</a>     |
| <b>Principal/CEO</b>               | Hassan Ashraf  |
| <b>Provider type</b>               | Independent learning provider                        |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | Not previously inspected                             |

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the assistant principal FE curriculum, 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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