

# North East Surrey College of Technology

## Inspection report

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**Unique reference number:** 130822

**Name of lead inspector:** Janet Mercer HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 1 October 2010

**Type of provider:** General Further Education College

**Address:** Reigate Road  
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## Information about the provider

1. North East Surrey College of Technology (Nescot) is located in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell in Surrey. There are five secondary schools with sixth forms within a five-mile radius of the college. In 2009 the proportion of pupils in local schools achieving five or more GCSEs grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, was 59% against a national average of 51%. Surrey has one of the highest levels of attendance at independent schools, and one of the highest staying-on rates in full-time education at age 16 in England.
2. In 2008/09 there were 12,236 students enrolled at the college, of whom 7,579 were on further education programmes. Over 80% of these were enrolled on part-time courses. One third of further education enrolments were on entry and foundation level courses, just over 30% on intermediate level programmes and 11% on advanced level provision, with the remainder on other provision. Some 80% of all students were adults and almost half were female. One quarter of students were of minority ethnic origin, which is significantly above the local Surrey average of 8.7%. Around 80 students aged 14 to 16 attended college courses, mostly in beauty therapy and construction.
3. The college currently offers vocational courses in 14 of the 15 sector skills areas. The largest numbers of students are in health, public services and care, construction and preparation for life and work.
4. Surrey is a relatively prosperous area with low levels of unemployment and crime. The college draws a significant number of students from neighbouring South London boroughs. Students' attainment on entry is generally lower than the local authority average.
5. The college provides training on behalf of the following providers:
  - Surrey Football Association (football coaching).
6. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the college:
  - Elements (hairdressing)
  - Phoenix4Training LLP (business administration and customer service).

<b>Type of provision</b>	<b>Number of learners in 2009/10</b>
<p><b>Young learner provision:</b>                      14-16                      Further education (16-18)                      Foundation learning tier, including</p>	<p>78 learners                      1,628 full-time learners:                      197 part-time learners                      331 full-time learners</p>
<p><b>Adult learner provision:</b>                      Further education (19+)</p>	<p>199 full time learners;                      4,965 part time learners</p>
<p><b>Employer provision:</b>                      Train to Gain                      Apprenticeships</p>	<p>514 learners                      157 apprentices</p>
<p><b>Informal adult learning</b></p>	<p>368 learners</p>

## Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

<b>Overall effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>
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<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>Grade 1</b>
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	<b>Grade</b>
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	1
Safeguarding	1
Equality and diversity	2

<b>Subject Areas</b>	
Health, care and early years	2
Construction	2
Beauty therapy and hairdressing	2
Literary and numeracy	2

## Overall effectiveness

- Nescot is a good college that has made very good progress in many areas since the last inspection, and continues to improve the quality of education and training and outcomes for students. Success rates are above average for both younger and adult learners and are high in construction and beauty therapy and hairdressing. Most students make good progress compared to their starting points. More students achieve higher grades on foundation and intermediate level courses than is seen nationally, but this proportion remains below average on advanced level courses. Success rates for apprentices have improved from well below average in 2006/07 to around the average, and Train to Gain success rates are above average.
- The quality of provision is good. The college has secured clear improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection, and inspectors observed mostly good teaching, with some outstanding practice. Teachers often make very good use of information and learning technology (ILT) to enhance learning but, in a

minority of lessons, planning and teaching do not take sufficient account of students' different needs and abilities. Students benefit from a wide range of courses, which provide good progression opportunities, and they enjoy the varied enrichment activities provided.

9. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The very well integrated tutorial and enrichment programme ensures that students' progress on all aspects of their courses is closely monitored. Students all benefit from attending sessions which strongly promote safety and well-being. The college's exemplary arrangements for safeguarding ensure that students feel very safe. Students receiving learning support achieve at least as well as or better than others.
10. Leadership and management are outstanding. The principal and senior managers have followed a relentless and successful strategy to raise standards and expectations by working closely with staff and listening to students. Through close monitoring of performance and accurate self-assessment, managers have identified weaker aspects of provision and taken prompt action to secure improvements. Outstanding financial management has eliminated a significant deficit and enabled the college to invest in improving its provision. The college demonstrates outstanding capacity to improve further.

## **Main findings**

- Outcomes for students have improved each year since the last inspection and are now good. Success rates on long courses are above average in many of the larger subject areas and are particularly high in construction, and beauty therapy and hairdressing. In approximately one third of the provision they remain in line with national averages. Success rates for apprentices have improved markedly over the last few years and are around national averages. Learners on Train to Gain courses achieve well.
- Students enjoy their courses and speak positively about the college's improving reputation in the local area. The majority make good progress compared with their prior attainment. The proportion of students achieving higher grades is above average on foundation and intermediate level courses, but remains below average on advanced level courses. The college has not measured the proportion of students who met or exceeded their achievement targets to determine fully the extent of their progress.
- Standards of students' work are good, and students develop good practical and vocational skills which support their progression into employment or higher levels of study. Students taking key skills achieve well, particularly in communication.
- Teaching and learning are good and inspectors observed examples of outstanding practice. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. The most effective lessons provide individualised and challenging activities to engage and motivate students well, enabling them to make good progress.

- Students gain good knowledge and skills, and enjoy their work. Most teachers use ILT well to enhance learning and increase student participation in lessons. However, not all lessons address the full range of learners' needs, or provide appropriate challenge to enable the more able students to make better progress.
- The college has developed its provision well to meet the needs and interests of students and employers. Students benefit from good opportunities to progress from foundation to advanced level courses. Productive partnerships with employers and community groups have supported the development of new provision, including a broader range of apprenticeships. While some students benefit from well-organised work placements, there are not yet sufficient opportunities for all those who might benefit to take part in real work experiences.
- Care, guidance and support for students are outstanding. Clear information and good advice help students choose the right course. Comprehensive induction ensures they settle into their courses quickly. A very good range of welfare and learning support is available. Additional learning support helps students achieve their goals and become independent learners. The college monitors students' attendance closely and attendance and retention have improved year on year.
- Outstanding tutorial provision includes enrichment activities and forms an integral part of students' courses. The programme covers relevant and useful topics such as employability skills, choosing healthy lifestyles and personal safety. Students review their progress in all aspects of their course at helpful, regular one-to-one meetings with their tutor.
- Leadership is outstanding. The consistent and relentless focus on raising standards and improving teaching and learning has led to significant improvements across the college. The improved availability and use of data and the close monitoring of performance have enabled staff to make improvements where needed.
- Financial management is outstanding and the college has invested strongly in providing extensive ILT resources and in training for teachers to improve the quality of learning. Governors use their wide range of expertise to support the college well in planning provision in response to local and national priorities.
- Safeguarding arrangements are exemplary. The college provides a high level of security for students, and demonstrates much good practice which reflects a thorough understanding of the wider aspects of protecting students and vulnerable adults. Students speak very highly of the safe and welcoming environment in the college. They are well informed about assessing potential risks and understand how to keep themselves safe in different situations.

### **What does North East Surrey College of Technology need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the effectiveness of lesson planning to ensure that activities meet the needs of all learners, enabling the more able learners to make better progress

and increase the proportion of higher grades, particularly on advanced level courses.

- Make better use of available data on students' achievement of their targets, in order to monitor and measure their progress more rigorously and fully measure the impact of actions to improve the provision.
- Increase opportunities for students on all courses to participate in more real work experiences, in order to enhance their vocational skills and understanding and readiness for employment.

### **Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors**

#### **What learners like:**

- the supportive, helpful and caring teachers
- feeling safe, and the very positive atmosphere in the college
- the opportunity to make many new friends
- the positive way in which the views of learners are listened to and acted upon
- the quality of teaching
- the improved reputation of the college in the local community
- the ready availability of a wide range of courses.

#### **What learners would like to see improved:**

- the standard of decoration in some areas of the college
- the ready availability of some course textbooks in the library.

#### **What employers like about the college:**

- the college's responsiveness to their training needs, and success in meeting them
- the high standards of learners' work and the progress they make
- flexibility in response to learners' individual needs and personal circumstances
- prompt attention to resolving problems.

#### **What employers would like to see improved:**

- greater involvement in reviewing learners' progress, and better feedback on their progress.

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

**Grade 1**

11. The principal has provided inspirational leadership which has changed the culture of the college, ensuring that all staff take responsibility for improving the quality of the experience for students. Students have a strong voice in the college and contribute to improvements. Strategies for managing performance and improving the quality of teaching and learning are at the heart of the college's success in raising standards. Since the last inspection, success rates across the college have improved. In six years the college has moved from being inadequate to a position where the provision is consistently at least good, and where care, guidance and support are outstanding. Self-assessment accurately identifies any aspects of underperformance. Effective partnership working, together with the expertise of the governors, has ensured that the college is able to respond effectively to rapidly changing local and national priorities. Resource and financial management are outstanding and have enabled well-targeted investment to improve students' experiences.

### Outcomes for learners

**Grade 2**

12. Outcomes for students are good overall, and above average in many subject areas. Retention rates have improved steadily over the last three years, leading to improved success rates on long courses. Achievement rates have been consistently above average over the last three years. Success rates are above average for 16–18-year-olds and adult learners on courses at all levels, substantially so for 16–18-year-olds at intermediate level and for adults on advanced level courses. Success rates on short courses have also improved to just above national averages.
13. Overall success rates for apprentices in construction are around national averages, and the proportion who complete their courses within the expected timescales is well above average. Success rates on Train to Gain courses have improved and are good. Students aged 14 to 16 completing college courses achieve well, and the majority progress successfully to further courses in the college or other post-16 providers.
14. The majority of students make good progress compared with their prior attainment. The proportion of students achieving higher grades is above average on foundation and intermediate programmes but, despite improvements in recent years, remains below average on advanced level courses. The college has not made full use of its data on students' performance to monitor the proportion that met or exceeded their target grades.
15. Students develop sound practical skills and subject knowledge, leading to good standards of work. Inspectors observed students who demonstrated confidence and high levels of skills within the first few weeks of starting their courses. Students were developing good communication skills and were able to give



confident presentations to others in their class. Success rates in key skills are good, particularly in communication. Careers advice and guidance are effective in supporting students to progress well to higher levels of study or employment.

16. The college closely monitors the performance of different groups and there are no significant differences in success rates between males and females, nor any significant underachievement for any minority ethnic group. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve at least as well as their peers with 16–18-year-olds at advanced level and adults on foundation level courses achieving particularly well.
17. Students report that they enjoy their courses and the good range of enrichment activities available. The college provides a friendly and welcoming environment and the strong emphasis on promoting safety and well-being ensures that students feel very safe on site. Attendance has improved over the last few years and is good. Students make a good contribution to the college and wider community, with many taking responsibilities as course representatives, college ambassadors and peer mentors, as well as organising charitable fundraising events.

## **The quality of provision**

## **Grade 2**

18. Teaching and learning are good and have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Students enjoy their lessons, are often highly motivated and speak positively of their enthusiastic and supportive teachers. Most lessons are well planned, providing a good variety of appropriately balanced activities to maintain students' interest and to stimulate learning.
19. In better lessons, individualised and challenging activities engage and motivate students well, enabling them to make good progress. In contrast, as in theory lessons for construction, weaker lessons tend to lack planning to ensure that activities and course materials effectively meet the differing needs of students, including the more able. Teachers' questioning techniques to check learning are often good, although a few miss opportunities to allow students to develop the confidence to evaluate their own and others' work and to extend their understanding.
20. Initial assessment of students' needs is thorough and the outcomes are often used well to help plan teaching and appropriate additional support within, and outside, lessons. Teachers are provided with very helpful personal profiles of their learners. The work of learning support assistants in lessons is often good, although, in a minority of lessons, it is insufficiently coordinated with that of teachers.
21. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. They are very carefully selected for their capacity to teach well and engage in extensive staff development. In practical lessons especially they often use their current or recent work experiences in the wider community to enliven teaching and learning.

22. Resources to support learning are good. The provision of ILT, and its good use by teachers, has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Many teachers, as in lessons for functional skills, make very good use of interactive technologies. Learners speak positively about how they use the college's virtual learning environment (VLE) to catch up on missed work, to find extra resources to support their learning, and to record and monitor their progress.
23. Assessment and the review of learners' progress are good overall. The monitoring of learners' progress is often very good, as in construction, and beauty therapy and hairdressing, where it promotes good progress and high success rates. Assignments and homework are set regularly and often relate to the world of work. Progress reviews for apprentices are rigorous.
24. The college's scheme for judging the quality of lessons is thorough and accurate, although a few college lesson observation records reviewed by inspectors indicated that observers did not always distinguish sufficiently clearly the key characteristics of outstanding or good lessons to support the grade awarded. The clear college-wide system includes extensive support and helps all teachers to improve, with a particular focus on improving good teaching to outstanding. Lesson observations always lead to detailed action plans for improvement. The tightly knit and expert team of observers are very well trained. The accuracy and consistency of their judgements are effectively validated through internal and external moderation.
25. The curriculum provides a wide range of vocational courses with good progression routes from foundation to advanced level in most of the 14 subject areas. The college is flexible and makes changes in provision to suit students, for example providing weekend courses for students who work during the week. Managers have worked hard to ensure that new foundation level programmes meet students' needs and offer progression routes to advanced courses.
26. Enrichment activities are well integrated with the tutorial curriculum. Full-time students are set an enrichment target at the beginning of the year and almost all take part in activities of some kind. The college has extended the enrichment programme, increasing participation rates in curriculum-related activities by some 20% in the past year. While students in some curriculum areas benefit from very well organised work placements, not all vocational students have sufficient opportunities to participate in real work experiences to enhance their work-related skills.
27. Good partnerships with employers, community groups and schools extend the range of opportunities for learners. Links with employers have increased significantly in the past year. Work-based provision now includes courses in health and social care, beauty therapy, and gas and electrical studies, and the number of apprenticeships in construction has increased. Successful, well-regarded community provision has been developed, in particular with the Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership, including courses to support young people who are not in education, employment or training. The college has good links with

local schools, with around 80 young people aged 14 to 16 attending courses in construction and beauty therapy and hairdressing.

28. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Well-planned recruitment and enrolment procedures give clear information and advice that help students choose the right course. Comprehensive induction settles students into their courses well. A very good range of welfare and learning support is available, including support for young women who are pregnant. Additional learning support helps students achieve their goals and become more independent as they move through their course. Those who receive support achieve as well or better than their peers. Teachers and support staff have been trained appropriately to understand the needs of those with disabilities and those requiring learning support.
29. The comprehensive tutorial provision forms an integral part of students' courses. The programme covers interesting and valuable topics such as employability skills, how to combat bullying, choosing healthy lifestyles and citizenship. Events such as 'Safe Drive Stay Alive' and 'Cooking for Fun' are popular with students, who value what they learn. Students review their progress in all aspects of their course regularly with their tutor. Most individual learning plans contain precise and detailed targets which help learners make good progress. Student feedback on the availability and impact of support is very positive.

## **Leadership and management**

## **Grade 1**

30. The principal and senior management team have successfully established a culture whereby staff and students feel listened to and valued, and have high expectations. Since her appointment five years ago, the principal, supported by the governing body and senior staff, has focused relentlessly on a programme of improvement that has transformed the college's working practices. This has resulted in significant improvements in outcomes for students, which are now good. Managers and teachers focus on improving the experience of students and are well supported by senior members of staff who are highly visible in the college, and work with staff to identify and rectify any shortfalls in performance. Curriculum management in all of the areas inspected is good.
31. Governors use their wide range of expertise to monitor the performance of the college well. Their collective experience is used effectively to assist the college in planning its response to changes in the external environment. They challenge senior managers effectively, understand and fulfil their statutory duties and contribute to college committees where they can. Students are represented on the governing body, although currently both student governors attend higher education courses.
32. The senior staff have made exceptional progress in promoting safeguarding across the whole college. Their procedures meet all the child and adult protection requirements, and staff and students have a very good understanding and awareness of safeguarding as a significant issue for the

- college community. Internet safety is rigorously promoted. The tutorial programme includes a range of modules on topics such as cyber-bullying to raise students' awareness. Staff will not tolerate persistent bullying or intimidation and make this clear at induction.
33. The college's protection officers liaise closely with the local authority to protect young people at risk of harm. Health and safety are rigorously monitored and practical steps are taken to improve students' understanding and reduce risk. In high risk vocational areas, such as land-based and construction subject areas, students complete health and safety assessments and must achieve a 'safety passport' before they can use the facilities.
  34. The promotion of equality and diversity training has been a priority for the college. The staff have received updated training in relation to the new single equality scheme and human rights legislation. Shortfalls in the performance of specific groups of students have been identified, investigated and rectified. The percentage of staff of minority ethnic heritage reflects that among the student body, and is well above the proportion in the local area. Members of staff are encouraged to participate in national initiatives such as the Black Leadership Initiative and the Women's Leadership Network.
  35. The college allocated significant resources to the training of teachers to promote equality and diversity through the curriculum, and their progress on this is monitored through the scrutiny of schemes of work, and the observation of teaching and learning. Inspectors in two subject areas found good examples of challenge and promotion in the curriculum. The quality of materials used in the student induction and in tutorial programmes is exemplary. College publicity material does not adequately signpost the availability of information in alternative formats, the text-phone facility or the availability of an accessibility statement. In a minority of lessons, there is insufficient focus on meeting individual needs.
  36. Students have a substantial voice in the college. The college has developed a range of forums and mechanisms for student feedback, including email. The competition to be a student representative on one of the many forums is strong as students recognise that they will be heard and that they can have an impact on the provision. Students are closely involved in the recruitment of teachers and in decisions about new catering provision. Employers also contribute to reviews of college provision. Student and employer satisfaction surveys show high levels of satisfaction, across all areas of provision, and staff respond swiftly to issues raised, feeding back on the actions taken.
  37. The college has been very successful in implementing strategies that improve the quality of provision. Senior staff are closely involved with the annual cycle of monitoring performance, and the principal leads in discussions with staff teams where courses are giving cause for serious concern. Staff at all levels have been well trained to use performance data to monitor the quality of provision and take effective action to rectify any aspects of underperformance. The introduction of increasingly sophisticated interactive on-line systems has

enabled teachers and students to monitor progress on a daily basis. Students at risk of underachieving can be identified early and support provided.

38. The college has successfully implemented strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning. For example, the promotion of ILT in teaching, adequately resourced, with a champion in each area, has improved the capacity of the staff to use interactive methods that engage learners. Self-assessment, including the observation of teaching and learning, is rigorous and accurate in identifying strengths and priorities for improvement, although the self-assessment report understated the significance of student support in contributing to the college's improving position.
39. In the last five years the college has moved from inadequate to outstanding for its financial health. Resource management has been carefully planned to give priority to resources to support teaching and learning and this has contributed to the improvements. Staff development prioritises support for teachers and those working directly with students. All teachers have, or are working towards, a teaching qualification. The quality of provision across the college is now consistently good, with some outstanding aspects, and the college provides outstanding value for money.

## Subject areas

### Health, care and early years

### Grade 2

#### Context

40. The college offers full- and part-time courses in health, care and early years from foundation to advanced level. Some 346 students aged 16 to 18 study full-time programmes in health, care or childcare. About 80 adult learners follow part-time courses in childcare and education. Approximately 2,000 students take flexible programmes in care.

#### Key findings

- Outcomes for students are good. Success rates improved in 2009/10 and are now in line with national rates. Students make very good progress, producing work of a high standard within the first few weeks of their programmes. Students rapidly grasp and apply professional skills.
- Students feel very safe and secure at college. The promotion of personal and professional safeguarding practice, including internet safety, is integrated effectively into the curriculum. Students know whom to contact if they feel unsafe or have any concerns.
- Teaching and learning are good and inspectors observed some outstanding lessons. Students communicate well and express ideas and opinions with confidence and maturity. In the best lessons, learning activities are interactive and motivate students well. Teachers use a range of exciting resources such as video footage, case conference material, images and foetal ultrasound scans to illustrate key points, for example the experience of weight gain during pregnancy. As a result, students relate theory to professional practice well.
- ILT is used well to promote learning. Students greatly appreciate the way teachers illustrate tasks with images and enjoy opportunities to use interactive, on-line resources to address topics such as health and safety and food and nutrition. However, some learning activities, although innovative, are not sufficiently tailored to meet individual needs and different abilities.
- Assessment is good. Teachers check students' understanding in lessons through effective use of targeted questions and task-based activities, as well as students' presentations, their body language and responses and comments. Students' work is assessed promptly with comprehensive, detailed and constructive advice about how to improve. Students have longer-term personal and achievement targets.
- The breadth and range of the curriculum meets students' needs and interests well. Additional qualifications, such as cookery and first aid, support students' understanding of healthy living and safe working practices and their preparation for employment.

- Partnerships with employers are very good. Employers play a key role in contributing to students' assessment and review during students' work experience. Highly effective relationships with employers secure flexible placements for students to suit individual circumstances. The college manages work placements very well through close monitoring of the quality of experiences provided.
- Care, guidance and support are good. Tutors use initial assessment effectively to build on students' prior attainment and set aspirational, but achievable, targets. Individual learning plans show students how to achieve their targets, which are reviewed regularly. Students appreciate the depth and breadth of the support and guidance. Tutors have skilfully adapted the comprehensive tutorial programme to meet current students' needs.
- Curriculum management is good and strongly focused on improving students' outcomes. Course teams review students' progress regularly and monitor course level performance closely. As a result, success rates improved in the past year.
- A very cohesive, competent and enthusiastic staff team works very effectively together across early years and care to share good practice through team meetings and by sharing resources. New members of staff value their induction and feel well supported. The programme area self-assessment report makes accurate judgements about the quality of provision, but does not always analyse sufficiently the reasons underlying some aspects of underperformance.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is very good. Students have an excellent understanding of equality and diversity and appreciate the implications for employment and professional practice. They refer readily to equality and diversity in assignment work and discussions and have extensive opportunities in work placements to put their knowledge and understanding into practice.

### **What does North East Surrey College of Technology need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that all teachers make effective use of information about students' specific needs and abilities to inform course planning and approaches to teaching and learning.
- Ensure that actions for improvement are informed by a more rigorous analysis of the reasons for underperformance.

## Construction

## Grade 2

### Context

41. The college provides courses at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels in carpentry, bricklaying, plastering, painting and decorating and plumbing. At the time of the inspection there were 1,356 learners studying on either full- or part-time courses, of which 839 were aged 16 to 18. Work-based learning in construction is provided to 163 apprentices, mostly in plumbing. Almost 30 14–16-year-olds attend courses in construction.

### Key findings

- Success rates are high for both young people and adults on courses at all levels, with outstanding success rates on the advanced certificate in plumbing in 2009/10. Students on foundation level courses were making excellent progress within the first few weeks of their course. Success rates for the relatively small number of apprentices are around national averages.
- The standard of learners' work is good, particularly in practical lessons. In painting and decorating, students were able to measure and prepare walls for paper hanging, hang the paper and accurately 'cut in' both internal and external corners without defects and within a specified time limit. Students on plastering courses, only three weeks into their course, produced rendered 'scratch coat' wall finishes of a standard high enough to allow for final wall finishes to be applied at a later time.
- Although students are able to visit construction manufacturing companies as part of their courses, second-year students on full-time courses have insufficient work-related activities to enhance their skills, knowledge and understanding of the construction industry and the built environment.
- Students have a good understanding of health and safety and adopt safe working practices in workshops. Prior to gaining access to workshop facilities all students need to attain a college permit to work, covering areas such as health and safety, first aid and correct use of personal protective equipment.
- Teaching and learning are good. Enthusiastic teachers provide very good support for students which contributes to the exemplary behaviour observed by inspectors. Teachers make good use of ILT to make lessons interesting. For example, students working in groups in a health and safety lesson used the interactive whiteboard confidently while developing their knowledge of safety signs.
- However, in theory lessons, more able students are not set extra activities to stretch and challenge their skills and understanding. Teachers do not always use questioning effectively to check students' understanding of key points.
- Teachers and managers monitor students' progress rigorously and the extensive tracking of achievement is leading to high success rates. Any students at risk of underachieving are identified quickly and additional support is effective in helping them to progress. Students have opportunities to catch up on missed



work at a time to suit them outside lesson times. Tutors conduct detailed progress reviews regularly with apprentices, and give constructive advice about how to improve.

- Leadership and management are good. Departmental managers are very focused on improving students' outcomes. Course teams share a common ethos and a clear focus on continuous improvement. Managers communicate well with teachers, who feel well supported and have good staff development opportunities. The promotion of equality and diversity for apprentices is good, often naturally occurring in conversations during progress reviews.

**What does North East Surrey College of Technology need to do to improve further?**

- Increase the opportunities for students to participate in work-related activities and environments to improve their preparation for working in the construction industry.
- Improve learning in theory lessons by planning to meet the needs of the more able students and ensuring that all teachers check students' understanding of key points in lessons.

## Beauty therapy and hairdressing

## Grade 2

### Context

42. The college provides full- and part-time courses in beauty therapy and hairdressing. Of the 232 students in the subject area, 70% are studying beauty therapy, 20% are on hairdressing courses and 10% are students aged 14 to 16 from local schools, taking an introductory course. The large majority of students are female.

### Key findings

- Overall success rates are high and outstanding for the relatively small number of students who take diploma courses in reflexology and anatomy and physiology. Success rates are also very high on the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 in hairdressing. Progression rates into employment and higher level courses are good in beauty therapy but low in hairdressing.
- The standard of students' practical skills on beauty therapy courses is good and students work confidently and competently, for example when completing facial massage treatments. Students on hairdressing courses demonstrate satisfactory practical skills when blow-drying hair. Students' written and portfolio work is satisfactory overall, but is particularly good on the beauty specialist diploma. Beauty therapy students develop good work-related skills, but professional practice is less well developed on hairdressing courses.
- Students enjoy their courses. They feel safe in the college and demonstrate an appropriate understanding of safeguarding. Students make a positive contribution to the local and national community by participating in a wide variety of fundraising events.
- Teaching in beauty therapy and key skills lessons is good. Teachers focus clearly on learning and group work is used effectively to develop students' discussion and research skills. Teachers set challenging tasks and use varied strategies to motivate and interest students. They have developed good learning resources and use effective questioning to check students' understanding.
- However, at times there is too much dependence on students practising on each other, which limits their experience of working on different client groups and the development of their interpersonal and communication skills. In hairdressing lessons, teaching strategies do not always meet the needs of students, particularly in classes where students' behaviour needs to be managed strongly. Teachers do not focus sufficiently on basic housekeeping matters, professional appearance and uniforms and developing students' work-related skills.
- Teachers monitor students' progress towards their targets very closely, which contributes to the achievement of high success rates. Students use the college on-line progress monitoring system regularly to monitor their own progress. Assessment is satisfactory and meets awarding body guidelines.

- Enrichment activities are good. Students benefit from guest speakers and good links with prospective employers, for example in arranging interviews for students. However, there is no planned work experience and insufficient promotion of student participation in external competitions.
- Induction is comprehensive and detailed learner profiles inform teachers well about students' different abilities and support needs. Learning support assistants work effectively with vocational teachers to help those students with identified support needs. Students also receive useful additional learning support in separate one-to-one sessions.
- Leadership and management are good with a strong focus on raising retention and success rates and improving the quality of teaching and learning. Hairdressing courses were introduced two years ago and the college has recently begun an apprenticeship programme in hairdressing following feedback from employers.
- Facilities for teaching theoretical subjects are good and the standard of the hairdressing and beauty therapy salons are satisfactory, although there is insufficient equipment for sterilisation in hairdressing salons. The reception area for hairdressing and beauty therapy is adequate but does not provide an appropriate, commercial working environment where students can develop their professional skills.
- Promotion of equality and diversity is good and the college has had some success in attracting more male students. The college arranged a good role exchange between beauty therapy and brickwork students to give both groups an insight into what each others' trades involve.

### **What does North East Surrey College of Technology need to do to improve further?**

- Improve professional standards in hairdressing by rigorous implementation of good housekeeping and uniform standards, increasing the amount of sterilisation equipment available and focusing on improving students' work-related skills.
- Improve and develop teaching and learning strategies in hairdressing to enable teachers to manage students' behaviour effectively.
- Develop the hair and beauty reception area so that it provides a simulated real working environment, where students can enhance their professional skills through interaction with clients and promotion of retail products.

## Literacy and numeracy

## Grade 2

### Context

43. The college offers courses in functional skills in English and mathematics from entry to intermediate level to 1,204 students and GCSE English and mathematics to 54 students. The majority of students are aged 16 to 18 and attend the college full time. All courses take place during weekdays and are based on the college main site.

### Key findings

- Outcomes for students are good. Success rates have improved over three years. In key skills, they are high in communication and above average in numeracy. The proportion of GCSE A\* to C grades in English declined in 2009/10 to well below the national average. It improved to above average in GCSE mathematics. Retention rates, which were an area for improvement at the last inspection, have risen and are now well above national averages. Attendance in lessons is good.
- The standard of students' work is good. Students develop good speaking and listening skills in English lessons and give confident presentations on set topics. In one lesson observed, students contributed enthusiastically to lively debates on the frequency of use of mobile phones and social networking sites and the teacher placed a good emphasis on increasing the personal safety of students.
- In a mathematics lesson, pair and group work successfully promoted students' discussion of the use of metric and imperial units in everyday life and in other countries. Students enjoy their learning and speak highly of the safety of the college environment.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use a good range of activities to interest and motivate students, and planning for learning across all subjects is good. In the best lessons, teachers place a strong emphasis on increasing the aspirations of students so that they make good progress in lessons and move on to higher level courses.
- However, in a few lessons, too little attention is given to the wide range of students' abilities within the class, and activities are not sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of some more able students. In weaker lessons, teachers occasionally fail to recap sufficiently to ensure all students fully understand the key learning points.
- Learning resources are good. Teachers use ILT and e-learning links well to personalise learning and help students progress. Accommodation within the skills centre is good overall, but the open plan layout and shared space mean that whole group work can sometimes be disruptive to other users of the area.
- The provision meets students' needs and interests well. Students appreciate the ease of the enrolment process and the value of teambuilding at induction. Educational trips and visits are a positive part of students' programmes. However, the range of English and mathematics programmes for adult learners

is limited, and the college is using external funding to develop appropriate programmes in the workplace for such learners.

- Guidance and support for students are good. Teachers provide good support in lessons and teaching within the learning support area is well focused on students' specific needs. However, the management of learning support assistants by teachers in lessons is not always sufficiently well planned and targeted to meet the needs of individual students. One-to-one learning support sessions focus effectively on learning techniques to help students improve their spelling and study skills.
- Leadership and management are good. Communication within, and between, teams is good. Managers have implemented the new functional skills programmes very well, having used their experiences from the previous year's pilot programme to review and improve provision.
- Staff are strongly focused on continuous quality improvement and this has resulted in substantial improvement in retention and success rates over time. Managers act promptly to resolve both emerging curriculum issues, share best practice, and to respond to student feedback.
- Arrangements for safeguarding students are outstanding, with rigorous attention to creating a safe environment for all. The promotion of equality and diversity is good within functional skills lessons across the full range of college courses where functional skills are taught.

### **What does North East Surrey College of Technology need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure all lessons are planned to take account of all students' particular learning needs, so that their individual targets can be managed and met within the lesson.
- Ensure disruption to students is minimised in the shared space of the skills centre by reviewing the times and structure of whole-group teaching within the centre.

## Information about the inspection

44. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's vice principal for quality, curriculum and tutoring, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding bodies, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on students and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
45. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of students and employers. They also looked at questionnaires students and employers had recently completed for the provider. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

**Record of Main Findings (RMF)**  
**North East Surrey College of Technology**  
**Learning types: 14 – 16:** Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades <b>using the 4 point scale</b> 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
<b>Approximate number of enrolled students</b>	1980		1905	75	
Full-time students	1246	83	149	685	329
Part-time students					
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	1				
<b>Outcomes for students</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How well do students achieve and enjoy their learning?	2				
How well do students attain their learning goals?	2				
How well do students progress?	2				
How well do students improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2				
How safe do students feel?	1				
<i>Are students able to make informed choices about their own health and well-being?*</i>	2				
<i>How well do students make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2				
<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2				
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for students?	2				
How effective are the care, guidance and support students receive in helping them to achieve?	1				
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>				
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	1				
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of students?	1				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2				
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for students?	1				
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	1				

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