

Calderdale College

General further education college

Inspection dates		10–14 March 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- Success rates on foundation-level and intermediate-level college-based courses are significantly higher than national averages, and those for 16-19-year-old students, who make up the largest cohort, are outstanding.
- A high proportion of students on courses that lead to qualifications in English and mathematics achieve their qualification and progress to the next level.
- Outcomes on the apprenticeship programme are outstanding.
- Students and apprentices make good progress in improving their personal, social and employability skills.
- Teaching in practical sessions enables students to acquire skills they need for work.
- Students with additional learning, social or physical needs benefit from very effective support.
- Teachers and assessors promote equality and diversity very effectively.
- The Principal and senior managers have high expectations of students and apprentices, and promote high standards of quality and performance.
- Governance is outstanding, and provides robust challenge and support to the Principal and senior managers.
- The college's observation of teaching and learning scheme encourages teachers and assessors to reflect on their practice, take risks, and share information and resources.
- The college is highly responsive to the needs of employers and key stakeholders.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- The success rate on advanced-level college-based courses is too low.
- Students do not make sufficient progress in developing their mathematics skills during their vocational programmes, and too many students without a GCSE qualification at grade C do not take an appropriate qualification in mathematics.
- Not enough teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding.
- Staff do not use initial assessment consistently well to identify the individual needs of students.
- The quality of written feedback on the accuracy of the English used in students' work is not consistently good.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the success rate on advanced-level courses by:
 - closely monitoring and reviewing the attendance, retention and progress of students on current courses
 - taking action quickly to support students at risk of leaving their course early or of failing to achieve their qualification.
- Improve the development of students' mathematics skills by:
 - ensuring that all teachers integrate the development of mathematical skills into their vocational lessons
 - ensuring that all students who have not yet achieved a GCSE grade C take an appropriate qualification in mathematics.
- Reduce the proportion of teaching and learning that requires improvement by:
 - ensuring that all teachers communicate clearly to students the purpose of theory lessons and relate theory to practice successfully
 - consistently using interesting and motivating activities
 - making better use of information and communication technology, including the virtual learning environment, to enhance teaching and learning, and to develop students' independent learning skills.
- Use the results of initial assessment consistently to identify the individual needs of students and to set challenging target grades based on prior attainment.
- Improve the written feedback on the accuracy of the English used in students' work, including the correction of spelling, punctuation and grammar, so that it is consistently good.
- Ensure that arrangements for the observation of teaching and learning continue to promote teachers' professional development and improve their teaching in order to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, learning and assessment.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Outcomes for learners are good. The proportion of students achieving qualifications on college-based courses increased significantly between 2011/12 and 2012/13 and is now above the average for similar providers. Success rates on foundation-level and intermediate-level college-based courses are significantly higher than national averages, and those for 16-19-year-old students, who make up the largest cohort, are outstanding. The success rate on the college's small volume of subcontracting provision is very high.
- The success rate on advanced-level college-based courses has also improved since 2011/12, but in 2012/13 it remained below the national average, with too few students achieving higher grades. Students on current courses are making good progress, and a significantly higher proportion of students than in 2012/13 are expected to achieve an advanced-level qualification.
- Outcomes on the apprenticeships programme are outstanding. The overall success rate on the apprenticeship programme is significantly higher than that for similar providers, and for 16-18-year-old apprentices, the largest cohort, it is very high. The proportion of apprentices completing their framework within the planned time is much higher than the national average. Although the success rate for apprentices aged 19 and above fell in 2012/13, it remains well above the rate for similar providers.
- A high proportion of students on courses that lead to qualifications in English and mathematics achieve their qualification and progress to the next level. The majority of students make good progress on vocational courses in improving their confidence and skills to use the spoken and written language that they need for employment in their vocational area. However, students do

not make sufficient progress in developing their mathematics skills during their vocational programmes, and too many students without a GCSE qualification at grade C do not take an appropriate qualification in mathematics.

- Students make good progress in improving the skills that they need for work. Many gain valuable experience of work through participating as volunteers in community projects and through work placements. Students on advanced-level courses make particularly good progress in acquiring enterprise skills that enhance their potential for self-employment. Progression into sustainable employment from the college's pre-employability courses is good.
- The college has taken action to increase attendance and this has led to an improvement in the current year. However, in lessons observed by inspectors, the overall level of attendance was too low.
- Male and female students perform equally well with no significant gaps in achievement. A significant number of students are of Pakistani origin, and a very high proportion of these students achieve their qualifications. The success rate among students with learning disabilities and/or difficulties is higher than for other students.
- A high proportion of students on foundation-level and intermediate-level courses progress to the next level of their programme. Progression from advanced-level courses on to higher education provision, including courses provided at the college, is good, with the majority of applicants gaining places on degree courses. A high proportion of 14-16-year-old students who attend courses at the college progress to full-time vocational courses. However, managers do not collect information systematically on destinations and, as a result, the college is unable to evaluate fully the extent to which its provision enables students to progress successfully into employment and further learning or training, or identify areas for improvement.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
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- Students and apprentices benefit from teaching, learning and assessment that are good and which lead to good outcomes. This is consistent with the college's own evaluation of the quality of its teaching, learning and assessment in the self-assessment report.
- A high proportion of students enter the college with low prior attainment and with low aspirations and expectations for success. The college puts a significant emphasis on supporting and encouraging students to raise their expectations and achieve their qualifications. However, the college recognises that students' achievement of higher grades requires improvement and this is a key aspect of its drive for further quality improvement.
- Teachers are well qualified and have good experience in their vocational subjects. They use this expertise well in lessons to provide students with good examples of practice at work and to contextualise their knowledge and understanding. As a result, teaching in practical lessons is very effective. In the best theory lessons, teachers plan carefully and engage students through a good variety of activities, leading to students making good progress. In a small minority of theory lessons, students are unclear about the activities they are asked to complete, and too many become disengaged from their work and make insufficient progress.
- Support for students is planned well and is very effective in helping students with additional learning, social or physical needs to succeed and progress to further qualifications within the college. Students receive very good help and support to overcome personal and financial difficulties and, where necessary, staff direct them to relevant external specialist organisations. This enables students with challenging personal circumstances to remain on their course and to make good progress. Apprentices benefit from good support both from their assessors and from their supervisors in the workplace.
- The college provides students with a relaxed and friendly learning environment, and managers and teachers create a professional and purposeful atmosphere in which to learn. Students respond to this by exhibiting good behaviour and a high level of mutual respect. Accommodation at the main college site is a mixture of new and old buildings, providing excellent and mostly good environments respectively. The college's virtual learning environment is comprehensive and well designed, but its use is inconsistent. Some curriculum areas use it

well while others do not take advantage of its potential to enhance learning and improve students' independent learning skills.

- The college has responded effectively to the introduction of study programmes, in particular the requirement for students to gain experience of work. Teachers are successfully developing innovative approaches to work experience that are responsive to the needs of students. These include a wide range of volunteering opportunities for students in partnership with community organisations.
- Initial assessment identifies students' starting points, aspirations and support needs, and is used well to plan study programmes. However, teachers do not use the results of initial assessment consistently when developing student and group profiles. As a result, too often their planning of lessons is not responsive to the individual needs of students. The use of minimum target grades based on prior attainment to motivate students to reach their full potential is not consistently effective.
- Teachers and assessors plan and manage assessment well. Verbal and written feedback following assessment are constructive and help the large majority of students and apprentices to improve their performance. Students and apprentices receive regular feedback on the progress they are making. However, teachers do not identify or correct errors consistently in spelling, punctuation and grammar in students' work, and the quality of feedback on the accuracy of the written English used by students is not consistently good.
- Specialist English and mathematics teachers are well-qualified and vocational teachers benefit from professional development that enhances their skills in integrating the teaching of English and mathematics successfully within their subjects. Students taking courses leading to qualifications in English and mathematics benefit from good teaching and learning that enable the great majority to make good progress and achieve qualifications. However, in too many lessons on vocational courses, teachers do not develop students' mathematical skills.
- Initial advice and guidance are very effective in helping applicants to make the most appropriate choice when seeking to join a college course or begin an apprenticeship. A wide range of activities provides school leavers with good opportunities to visit the college and sample different vocational areas. Student champions play a key role in meeting prospective students, providing them with the students' view of college life, and helping them to make the right choice of course. Strong links with local schools ensure that applicants with additional needs benefit from a smooth and effective transition to college. Students benefit from good advice and guidance on progression on to further study, into employment and into higher education.
- The promotion of equality and diversity in teaching and learning is very strong. In most lessons, teachers ensure that students extend their understanding of equality and diversity through well-designed learning activities and materials. For example, a group of students studying information and communication technology produced an informative display on the key aspects of Islamic religion and lifestyle. Another group of students on a sports course investigated the effectiveness of different campaigns to 'kick racism out of sport'.

Health and social care

Early years and playwork

16-19 study programmes

19+ Learning programmes

Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, as reflected in the very high success rates on childcare courses and success rates on health and social care courses that are in line with the average for similar providers. The success rate on the apprentice programme is very high.
- In the great majority of lessons, students participate fully in their learning and make good progress. Teachers plan and deliver lessons that are well structured and relevant, and students develop a good understanding of concepts such as the importance of play in child development and the qualities needed to work with clients with learning difficulties. In a few lessons, teachers do not explain clearly the purpose of the learning activities that students carry out and, as a result, many students in these lessons lose interest and motivation.
- Teachers prepare students who are aiming to progress to higher education very well by providing them with challenging activities that extend their skills through independent research topics such as the long-term effects of post-natal depression. However, on too many other courses, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities to challenge the more able students.
- As part of their study programme, students benefit from good opportunities to gain work experience in a broad variety of relevant settings such as community midwifery centres and youth offending services. This enables them to develop their employability skills successfully and to understand the importance of timekeeping and good attendance.
- Support for students is good. The college deploys additional learning support staff effectively in lessons to help students achieve. Students receive good support when on work placement, which enables them to benefit fully from the experience and gain useful employability skills. Teachers quickly identify students at risk of not achieving and take appropriate action to support them. They provide effective support for students with personal difficulties and, as a result, the great majority of these students complete their course successfully.
- Teachers make good use of initial assessment to ensure that students are on a course that meets their needs and aspirations. The monitoring of students' progress on access to higher education and apprenticeships programmes is good. Access students and apprentices are aware of the progress they are making and what they need to do to complete their qualifications. On other programmes, too many students are unaware of their target grades or how they can achieve them.
- Assessment of students' work is thorough and detailed. Teachers return assessed work promptly to students and provide clear written and verbal feedback that enables students to understand what they need to do to improve.
- Vocational teachers and functional skills teachers work together closely and effectively to help students to understand the relevance of English and mathematics and to improve their functional skills. They ensure that students develop good written and verbal communication skills. Students develop their mathematics skills through activities such as weighing ingredients and analysing statistics on the proportion of people with disabilities who require care.
- Students benefit from detailed and helpful advice and guidance on the different options they can study on intermediate-level and advanced-level courses. Towards the end of their course, they receive good guidance on opportunities for progression into work, further training and higher education.
- Teachers promote equality and diversity successfully. Students from different cultural backgrounds work together well and are encouraged to share their experiences. Teachers encourage students to challenge stereotypes, and students develop a good understanding of the importance of not being judgemental towards those from different family backgrounds.

Students also develop a very good understanding of the needs of different service users, such as those with disabilities.

Animal care

16-19 study programmes 19+ Learning programmes

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment within animal care are good. The success rate is higher than the national average, and students make good progress on their programmes and achieve high grades. Students on intermediate-level and advanced-level courses complete a two-week work placement as part of the programme of learning, which they value and which helps to build their employability skills.
- Teachers are well qualified and use their industrial experience well to motivate students. They use a range of techniques skilfully in the classroom to create interesting and lively lessons in which students demonstrate a good knowledge of animal care. Students enjoy their lessons, work diligently and behave well. They work well together in group activities that develop their interpersonal and communication skills. Learning support assistants, especially on foundation-level courses, provide effective support that enables students to make good progress. In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not design a sufficiently wide range of activities to meet each student's individual needs, and do not check students' progress consistently.
- Students on advanced-level courses conduct laboratory experiments that test the nutritional value of animal feedstuffs, and this helps them to understand relevant aspects of feeding animals. Students demonstrate high levels of confidence and skills in handling animals when carrying out routine care on a range of small animals including scorpions, frogs, lizards, snakes and spiders. Teachers use the college's facilities at a farm to develop handling skills with larger animals. Students value the experience that this provides and make good progress in developing skills to work independently with larger animals. However, the facilities at the farm do not provide a suitable environment to develop the routine animal care skills needed to meet the best industry standards.
- Students use information technology well to extend their learning. For example, in one lesson, students researched information online about the factors that contribute to global warming and then quickly converted their evidence into a presentation to the whole group. The college's virtual learning environment is used by students who have been absent from lessons to enable them to catch up on missed work, but this resource is not used sufficiently to extend and develop independent learning.
- Initial assessment is effective and ensures that students start on the right programme. Teachers regularly review students' progress towards their long-term targets, and discuss this with students, ensuring they cover any difficulties that students are experiencing. However, learning plans do not identify short-term targets clearly, and this means that students are not always aware of what they need to do next in order to improve their skills.
- Students' work is of a high standard and is assessed thoroughly. The majority of teachers' feedback on students' work is helpful but, in a minority of instances, lacks the information that students need to help them make improvements.
- Students make good progress in improving their English in functional skills lessons in which they successfully use examples and contexts that are relevant to the study of animal care. However, students have insufficient opportunities to develop their mathematics skills in their vocational lessons.
- Advice and guidance are good and the majority of students progress within the college to a course at the next level. Students benefit from a wide range of advice and guidance on career opportunities in animal care.

- Staff promote a culture of mutual respect and students have a good understanding of equality and diversity. In one lesson, for example, students discussed how a female member of staff working in animal welfare influenced the attitudes to the care of animals for slaughter in a male-dominated industry.

<p>Building and construction</p> <p>16-19 study programmes 19+ Learning programmes Apprenticeships</p>	<p>Good</p>
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- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Success rates on long courses are in line with national averages. The overall and timely success rates on the apprenticeship programme are good. The large majority of students progress to a higher level of study within the college or into employment.
- Teachers use their thorough subject knowledge and extensive industrial experience effectively to develop students’ practical skills. They cite relevant examples from their own experiences in the construction industry to illustrate key learning points and to increase students’ understanding. As a result, students are interested and motivated, and make good progress.
- In practical lessons, students enjoy their learning, develop good occupational skills and produce high-quality work. In one lesson in wood occupations, students used a variety of hand tools safely, and constructed good quality timber frames that met the industry standard. In theory lessons, most students develop good underpinning knowledge of construction principles, which helps them with their practical tasks. In a bricklaying lesson, students developed a good understanding of how to set out a serpentine brick wall.
- Teachers use a wide range of learning activities that ensure that all students understand the work. In the majority of theory lessons, teachers use sufficiently challenging tasks to extend the knowledge of the more able students. In a very small minority of lessons, tasks are too basic and inappropriate for the level of the qualification.
- Many construction students gain valuable work experience through their involvement in local community activity. For example, bricklaying students constructed a brick wall around a garden area for a charity organisation that works with disabled students. Plastering students then carried out the necessary rendering work.
- Teachers make insufficient use of learning technology. Although the construction resources on the college’s virtual learning environment system are extensive, teachers do not encourage students to use them regularly to develop their research skills.
- Teachers, learning support tutors and workshop technicians work closely together to identify students’ needs and to provide support promptly. College-based assessors and employers work collaboratively to support apprentices in developing their interpersonal and occupational skills, and to ensure that they gather sufficient work-based evidence for their portfolios.
- Staff assess students well at the beginning of their course. Initial assessment ensures that students join a course at an appropriate level and identifies individual targets for students.
- Teachers and assessors monitor students’ and apprentices’ progress effectively. Assessment of students’ work is accurate, thorough and timely. Improvement targets are set in students’ individual study programmes and reviewed in individual tutorials and reviews. Teachers’ written and verbal feedback is supportive and helps students to improve the quality of their work.
- The development of students’ mathematics skills is good. In almost all lessons, students use equipment and measuring devices, and carry out calculations and record data prior to carrying out their tasks. However, the development of students’ English skills requires improvement. Teachers do not use specific written tasks to improve students’ English skills. They do not correct students’ spelling and grammatical mistakes consistently.

- Information, advice and guidance are good. Students receive good guidance before they join their courses and while they are on their course. They value highly the support and guidance they receive from their teachers and college staff on progression routes, career opportunities and employment.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Teachers explore equality and diversity issues successfully in their lessons. In a lesson in plumbing, the teacher and students discussed the use of thermostatic mixers and various shower taps for the elderly and disabled in the context of hot-water installations. Teachers make suitable adaptations to workshop tools and equipment to meet the needs of students. For example, teachers in carpentry and joinery adapted hand tools such as chisels to fit directly onto a student's prosthetic arm in order to facilitate full control.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

16-19 study programmes
19+ Learning programmes
Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching learning and assessment are good, and contribute well to the skills that students and apprentices gain, and to the high success rates which have been consistently above the national average for the last three years. Current in-year college data indicate that retention is improving further. However, attendance is too low and requires improvement.
- Students and apprentices benefit from the wide range of professional skills and current industry knowledge of teachers and assessors. In practical lessons, teachers have high expectations of students who work to good professional standards. Teachers and assessors ensure that students adhere to high standards of safe and hygienic salon practices. Students and apprentices demonstrate their newly acquired skills confidently and some students receive accolades in external competitions for the high quality of their work in, for example, barbering and media makeup. However, in too many theory lessons, teachers rely too heavily on uninspiring worksheets and use learning activities that do not extend learning sufficiently or maintain students' interest.
- Specialist accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory. The main salons enable students to develop appropriate practical skills. However, some specialist areas are in need of attention. For example, the reception area is cramped and there is a lack of space for the display and promotion of after-care products.
- Teachers ensure that study programmes have a strong focus on employability. Students on intermediate-level and advanced-level programmes participate in a wide range of work-related activities, which include a short block of work experience. Students on advanced-level courses carry out a range of enterprise assignments enthusiastically, which they relate well to future employment aspirations.
- Initial assessment identifies students' and apprentices' starting points accurately. Teachers and assessors use the outcomes of initial assessment well to set challenging learning goals for students and apprentices, and they review and update these regularly. Students benefit from the close monitoring of their work by teachers during practical salon lessons, and this helps them to improve the quality of salon services and treatments for clients.
- Feedback on assessed work is detailed and evaluative, and enables students and apprentices to understand what they need to do to improve. Prompt and detailed verbal feedback during practical lessons and in reviews enables the large majority of students and apprentices to develop at least good and often exceptional standards of work, with many acquiring levels of skill that are well above the requirements of their qualifications.
- Students make good progress in developing their English and mathematics skills during discrete functional skills lessons. However, the development of functional skills within vocational lessons is not consistently effective.

- Good careers advice, guidance and support encourage students to understand how their newly acquired skills and their qualifications can support their career aspirations. For example, in one session students engaged enthusiastically in discussion about careers on cruise ships. Teachers regularly emphasise the industry requirements of good hairdressing and beauty therapy practitioners, and the skills that they need to enter and progress in the industry, including the need to maintain high standards of professionalism and to be punctual.
- Teachers and assessors use learning materials and teaching methods that promote inclusion and ensure that all students and apprentices make progress, including those who need additional support. Most teachers explore diversity topics confidently when opportunities arise in lessons. A strong ethos of mutual respect is evident among staff, students and apprentices. The department recruits students successfully from ethnic groups that are often under-represented in hairdressing and beauty therapy provision.

Performing arts

Visual arts

16-19 study programmes

19+ Learning programmes

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, which reflects the good success rates in 2012/13. Students' overall success rates increased significantly in 2012/13 to around national averages and current in-year retention rates indicate a sustained improvement in 2013/14. A significant majority of current students produce work of a high standard and are making good progress.
- Teachers have high aspirations for all students, and encourage them to work towards ambitious target grades. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together to give good individual support to students during lessons. The best teaching motivates students to improve their practical skills by exploring new media and ways of working. Music technology students construct sound loops by manipulating computer software to refine existing recordings and eliminate noise distortion. Rigorous and disciplined warm-ups enable acting students to enhance their voice and movement skills. Art and design students explore new mark-making materials and develop precise observational drawing techniques.
- Teachers use assignments well to extend students' knowledge of the creative industries. Intermediate-level students identified the attributes needed for working in the performing arts industry, reviewed their existing skills and produced templates for a card game incorporating these skills. Study programmes incorporate good work experience opportunities for students to develop enterprise skills. Some students form their own companies. Good partnerships with local creative and performance industries extend the range of these opportunities. Accommodation and facilities are mostly good although a few rooms are too cramped.
- Well-planned sessions and assignment briefs enable students to develop good practical and employability skills. Theory teaching is particularly good and teachers use imaginative, interactive methods, including visual prompts, to stimulate research skills, reflection and critical thinking. Acting students had the challenging task of analysing and comparing the historical context of both a classical opera and a 1980s American play, which explored themes of HIV and AIDS.
- In the few sessions where learning was less successful, teachers failed to keep all students attentive and not all contributed actively to discussion or participated fully in activities. Questioning techniques failed to encourage responses from students. Some group learning activities were not well managed and teachers did not probe deeply enough to assess students' understanding.
- Teachers use initial assessment well to identify challenging targets for students. Teachers work vigorously to ensure that students understand assessment criteria and what they need to do to

achieve high grades. They encourage students to assess their own performance and use peer assessment regularly. Teachers monitor students' progress well through strong tutorial support, and many students aim for more ambitious target grades. Challenging assignment briefs enable students to extend their range of skills. The quality of feedback on written work gives students detailed pointers for the improvement needed to achieve target grades.

- Students successfully learn to use technical vocabulary to talk knowledgeably about their subject areas. All take additional qualifications or attend sessions to improve their English or mathematical skills. A few teachers spell words incorrectly and not all correct spelling, punctuation and grammar in marked work consistently. Teachers do not promote the development of students' mathematical skills consistently within vocational lessons.
- Students receive regular and effective advice and guidance on progression opportunities. Teachers successfully integrate into their lessons discussion about the range of progression routes available to students, including employment and higher education.
- All students respect and treat their peers well, and teachers ensure that students work in safe environments. Students acquire a good understanding of equality issues through projects and experience a wide range of artistic and musical forms and world cultures. Not all teachers use naturally occurring opportunities in lessons to extend students' understanding of equality topics, even when exploring concepts such as beauty and disfigurement.

Foundation mathematics

16-19 study programmes

19+ Learning programmes

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Success rates on functional mathematics and GCSE courses improved significantly in 2012/13 and are now above the national averages. Students make good progress on mathematics courses in developing the mathematical skills that they need in their vocational programmes as well as in everyday contexts.
- Students understand the relevance and importance of achieving mathematics qualifications to support their progress. Students intending to progress to university to study politics recognised the value of learning about statistics in order to achieve their ambitions. Other students, studying plumbing, described the value of learning algebra in working out, measuring and applying mathematics in the workplace.
- In the majority of lessons teachers set high expectations and link learning well to future careers and ambitions. They place mathematics in the context of students' wider study programmes and, as a result, students are motivated and fully engaged in learning. In a minority of lessons, learning activities do not relate to students' main programme sufficiently and, as a result, learning has less relevance.
- Skilful planning for learning generates lively and enthusiastic discussion on the application of mathematics. Students on courses in English as a second language practise measuring skills and are able to apply their understanding of comparative language to describe different heights. As a result, students on these courses make rapid progress in mathematics while enhancing their language skills. Students benefit from a range of learning activities that challenge and extend learning. In one lesson, groups of GCSE students completed different tasks and explained to the whole group how they arrived at their solution. As a result, students were able to consolidate their understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Support for learning is good. Students benefit from a range of effective strategies to enable them to make good progress. The skills and knowledge of learning support assistants have a positive impact on learning and progress. In one lesson, the support worker and teacher worked seamlessly together to explain complex problems to ensure that students made rapid progress.

- Staff initially assess students’ starting points well. They follow this with an extended diagnostic activity to ensure that students enrol on an appropriate course at a level that is suitably challenging. Staff monitor and review students’ achievement rigorously and share information with vocational teachers, personal tutors and parents to inform them of the progress students are making.
- Students receive regular feedback on their progress and are aware of what they need to learn in order to achieve. They understand their personal target grades and level, and the progress they are making towards achieving them. Students receive timely advice and guidance to help them to plan their progression.
- Teachers promote equality and diversity well in lessons through planned learning activities. They foster a safe and supportive environment in which students from diverse backgrounds work collaboratively to express ideas in an open and supportive manner. Learning resources reflect students’ cultural and ethnic backgrounds fully. In one lesson on scale, the teacher used famous buildings from Dubai, Britain and other European countries to promote an awareness of each student’s country of origin.

<p>Administration</p> <p>Business management</p> <p>16-19 study programmes</p> <p>19+ Learning programmes</p> <p>Apprenticeships</p>	<p>Requires improvement</p>
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- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, reflecting the overall success rate, which also requires improvement. The retention rate for current students has improved from the rate in 2012/13. The proportion of students achieving higher grades has also improved but is still too low. On the small apprenticeship programme in administration, overall and timely success rates are good. Attendance among current students is too low.
- As part of their study programme, students on advanced-level business courses develop entrepreneurial and work skills well through working in the college’s enterprise centre and through operating small businesses. Students develop good decision-making and problem-solving skills and are able to use these when, for example, making decisions during activities on the theme of recruitment and selection.
- Where learning is most successful, students are motivated and enthused by knowledgeable and creative teachers. Students take part in a wide range of activities, which engage and interest them, and they develop a good understanding of business principles. Teachers have high expectations of their students and they help them to realise their ambition to achieve high grades.
- In too many lessons, students are unclear about the activities they are asked to complete, and are not always sufficiently well motivated or engaged actively in learning. Teachers make too few checks on learning to ensure that all students are progressing. They do not plan lessons well enough to ensure that students are able to develop successfully their understanding of topics such as employment legislation and responsibilities at work.
- Teachers use initial assessment effectively to ensure that students’ individual study programmes meet their aspirations and abilities. Students start on the most appropriate administration or business programme to meet their career ambitions. However, staff do not use the results from initial assessments of English and mathematics well enough to identify specific improvement targets.
- Insufficient online learning resources are available. Little use is made of learning technology in lessons to extend students’ understanding of key business concepts or of relevant legislation. Many textbooks in the learning resource centre are outdated.
- Students broaden their skills and knowledge of the career opportunities available in business through listening to a wide range of external speakers and visits to employers. Students on

advanced-level business courses take part in residential leadership courses, which are successful in enabling them to develop team-building and communication skills.

- Written feedback is detailed and supportive, but does not always encourage students to achieve higher grades or provide specific guidance to students to identify how they can do this. Students are aware of the grades they have received and their overall unit target grades. However, during progress reviews, shorter-term targets are often too vague and do not enable students to measure effectively their progress in improving their attendance, punctuality and learning behaviours.
- Students benefit from good career information, advice and guidance. Guidance staff support students very well to apply for higher education courses, and the majority of students are successful in their applications. Where appropriate, teachers refer students to the college's additional support team to help them resolve personal difficulties and remain in learning. Supervisors in the workplace provide good support for apprentices.
- The promotion and reinforcement of the accurate use of English are weak. Too many teachers make spelling errors in the work they give to students and too few teachers correct students' spelling errors. Teachers and assessors often miss opportunities to integrate mathematics into activities, and do not consistently monitor students' and apprentices' progress in developing their mathematical skills.
- Students and apprentices have a good understanding of cultural influences on businesses and consumer choice. For example, when planning food items to sell, students were aware of the need to promote halal and kosher meat products. However, teaching staff do not ensure that students and apprentices have a sound understanding of all the protected characteristics in equality legislation.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The Principal and senior managers demonstrate an ambitious vision for the college. They consult widely with key stakeholders in developing the college's strategic plan. The college is successful in realising its vision of 'inspiring learners to succeed in life and in work'. Leaders and managers have made a number of significant improvements to the college since the last inspection. They have created a new and well-equipped technology centre and a large sports and fitness facility. They have also built the capacity and skills of the management team by implementing a well-received management development programme in conjunction with a local university.
- Senior managers have high expectations of students and promote high standards of quality and performance. They are taking appropriate actions to remedy the few areas for improvement identified by inspectors.
- Governance is outstanding and highly effective in raising standards. Governors are highly committed and demonstrate expertise in a wide range of education, finance, human resources and business areas. They meet regularly with curriculum managers, students and employers to help them gain a better understanding of the provision. Governors scrutinise carefully the wide range of reports on performance measures that they receive, and contribute fully to identifying actions for improvement. The clerk is particularly effective in ensuring that the governing body works effectively, efficiently and in a way that helps the college to improve.
- The college has developed an innovative approach to evaluating and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. It has replaced the practice of grading learning sessions with one in which groups of teachers, supported by a learning coach, share information, engage in professional discussions, and evaluate the effectiveness of different teaching and learning strategies. The college has replaced formal observations with informal peer observations carried out by learning coaches across different college departments. While the majority of teaching, learning and assessment is good, it is too soon to assess the full impact of the college's decision not to grade individual lessons, in particular its impact on increasing the volume of outstanding teaching, learning and assessment.

- Programme managers support the new approach to quality improvement by carrying out regular 'learning walks' and giving constructive feedback to teachers on the quality of their teaching. They also carry out ungraded short observations during the early stages of the academic year, and this enables them to evaluate attendance, behaviour, punctuality and the quality of teaching resources. Teachers welcome this new approach because it helps them to focus their attention on pedagogy, professional development, and on the college's priorities.
- Self-assessment is inclusive, critical and rigorous. Managers consult students, governors, staff and external partners fully as part of the process. They make good use of accurate data to support self-assessment judgements.
- Performance management arrangements are sound. Senior managers lead regular course performance reviews to challenge curriculum managers to identify strengths, and to identify and take swift action to improve under-performing areas.
- The college invests considerable resources and staff time to gather the views of students and apprentices through a wide range of approaches. The information that is collected helps the college to identify how it can improve further and better meet the needs of all of its users. Managers consult widely and extensively with students and apprentices on most aspects of the college's activities, including teaching and learning, self-assessment and accommodation. The college seeks the views of employers, but recognises that it needs to engage them more in the college's work.
- The management of work-based learning is outstanding, as demonstrated by the outstanding apprenticeship success rates. External partners comment very favourably on the college's responsiveness to local employers' and community's needs. The college's successful apprenticeship programme engages with approximately 300 employers and contributes significantly to the region's economic development. The Principal is involved actively in several local employer and college consortia, and this has helped to raise the profile of the college as a high quality learning provider.
- Particularly productive links with Jobcentre Plus have helped the college to develop a range of courses to support unemployed adults into employment or further training. Effective subcontracting arrangements with a local community organisation enable the college to respond well to the needs of disaffected young people. The college has raised its regional profile further by bidding successfully for a very substantial European Social Fund contract to support employers across the Yorkshire and Humber region in enhancing occupational skills.
- The college promotes equality and diversity very effectively. An equalities group is very active in promoting the celebration of diversity through, for example, Black History month, Holocaust Memorial Day, and initiatives to combat bullying and homophobia. Students say that they feel safe in the college. The college has narrowed the achievement gap between different groups of students. The college works particularly well with transgender students to promote a better understanding of transgender issues through informative talks to groups of students and staff. As part of this initiative, creative arts students recently produced a well-received play that examined and aimed to reduce the prejudice that transgender people often experience.
- The college meets its statutory safeguarding duties.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Calderdale College									
Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	2	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	2	2	2	N/A
Outcomes for learners	2	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	2	1	2	N/A
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	2	2	2	N/A
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	2	1	2	N/A

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Health and social care	2
Early years and playwork	1
Animal care	2
Building and construction	2
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	2
Performing arts	2
Visual arts	2

Foundation mathematics	2
Administration	3
Business management	3

Provider details

Type of provider	General further education college							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 2,644							
	Part-time: 3,744							
Principal/CEO	Mr Chris Jones							
Date of previous inspection	February 2011							
Website address	www.calderdale.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 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	310	64	403	103	733	351	4	4
Part-time	186	938	124	664	57	122	N/A	16
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	193	272	37	165	N/A	N/A		
Number of learners aged 14-16	33							
Full-time	19							
Part-time	14							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	30							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Project Challenge 							

Contextual information

Calderdale College is the only general further education college in the Metropolitan Borough of Calderdale, which includes the towns of Halifax, Brighouse, and Todmorden. The borough has a population of 205,300. The proportion of residents from minority ethnic groups is 10.4%. The unemployment rate in Calderdale is slightly lower than the regional average. The main employment areas are finance and other business services, public administration, education and health services. The proportion of people in the borough with a qualification higher than a National Vocational Qualification at level 2 is slightly below the national average while the proportion of students attaining five GCSEs at grades A* to C increased significantly in 2012 and is now above the national average.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Steve Hailstone HMI

Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and seven additional inspectors, assisted by the Vice Principal (Learning and Achievement) as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

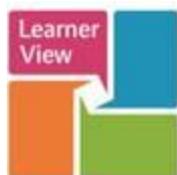
What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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