

Hackney Community College

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 130407

Name of lead inspector: David Martin HMI

Last day of inspection: 21 May 2010

Type of provider: General Further Education College

Address: Shoreditch Campus
Falkirk Street
London
N1 6HQ

Telephone number: 0207 6139000

Information about the provider

1. Hackney Community College is a large general further education college in the London Borough of Hackney (the borough). It is the only general further education college in the borough, although there is a sixth-form college and several school and academy sixth forms. Its main site is in Shoreditch, adjacent to the City. The college works in over 40 community and employer venues in the borough. Its mission is stated as 'unlocking community potential through success'.
2. The college offers a range of courses, from entry to post-graduate level. Enrolments on courses for preparation for life and work constitute 37% of all adult enrolments, with many of these for English speakers of other languages (ESOL). Provision for Train to Gain is large and there is a significant schools link course programme. In 2008/09, there were just over 8,200 learners, of which 79% were adults and 55% were female. Around 70% of learners are of black and minority ethnic heritage. For a high proportion of learners, English is their second language. Learners are mainly from Hackney and adjacent boroughs. Nearly 95% reside in disadvantaged areas.
3. The borough is one of the most economically and socially deprived in the country, with all 19 of its wards in the poorest 20% nationally. It has the third highest proportion of workless people in the United Kingdom, with over 31% of the working age population without jobs. Its residents are less well qualified than the London average, with over 16% of those of working age having no qualifications. The proportion of the population with mental health support needs is very high. The proportion of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is relatively high, at 6.5%.
4. The college provides training on behalf of the following providers:
 - The Hackney Learning Trust (Adult safeguarded learning)
 - The Corporation of London (Adult safeguarded learning)
5. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the college:
 - SET Solutions (Employer responsive construction provision)
 - Manatec Training (Employer responsive health and social care and preparation for life and work provision)
 - Citrus Training (Employer responsive construction provision)
 - Aspire Training and Business Services (Employer responsive teaching assistant provision)
 - ENAIP (Learner responsive modern foreign language provision)
 - Hoxton Trust (Learner responsive horticulture provision)
 - UXL (Learner responsive Information technology (IT), business and ESOL provision)

■ East London ITEC (Learner responsive IT and ESOL provision)

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
<p>Provision for young learners: 14 to 16</p> <p>Further education (16 to 18)</p> <p>Foundation learning</p>	<p>23 full-time learners 129 part-time learners</p> <p>1,150 full-time learners 262 part-time learners</p> <p>250 full-time learners 162 part-time learners</p>
<p>Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)</p>	<p>1,147 full-time learners 2,475 part-time learners</p>
<p>Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships</p>	<p>668 learners 17 apprentices</p>

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2
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Capacity to improve	Grade 2
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	Grade
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	2

Subject Areas	Grade
Health, social care, early years and playwork	3
Hospitality and catering	2
Sport, leisure and recreation	2
English for speakers of other languages and literacy and numeracy	2

Overall effectiveness

6. This is a good college, which has made significant progress since the previous inspection. It has tackled well all of the key areas for improvement identified at that inspection. The college's capacity to make further improvements is good. Quality improvement arrangements, including the college's self-assessment of its own strengths and weaknesses, are now good. The college's ability to provide managers and other staff with accurate and comprehensive data on learners' achievements and assessment is now good.
7. Learners achieve satisfactory outcomes overall and enjoy their learning. Overall, college outcomes for young and adult learners on further education courses are satisfactory and improving, although in the subject areas inspected they are often good. In others, improvement is far less evident, with poorer outcomes. Outcomes for learners following Apprenticeship and Train to Gain courses are good. Learners' skills and standards of work are good. Learners often make

good progress on their courses. Many continue with their studies to higher levels, often at the college. Students feel very safe in the college. The college's arrangements for safeguarding learners are satisfactory.

8. Teaching and learning are good. Well-qualified and experienced teachers, often plan and deliver lessons well and learners gain good knowledge. In some instances, teachers pay insufficient attention to matching their teaching to the particular needs of individual learners. A broad and expanding range of courses meets a wide range of learners' needs and those of the local community. The college's extensive partnerships with other organisations are outstanding in helping to improve the quality of learners' courses. The care, guidance and support of learners are good, although the setting of targets to help learners improve is insufficiently thorough.
9. The college is well led and managed. Learners are at the centre of its work and ambitions. They have good opportunities to express their views, which are listened to. Equality of opportunity is good.

Main findings

- Learners' attainment of learner responsive qualifications is satisfactory. Success rates have significantly improved since the previous inspection and are largely at the national average for general further education colleges. The college's indicative success rate data for 2009/10, with clear improvements in retention, show continuing improvement. However, improvement is not consistent across all subject areas and some perform significantly less well.
- Employer responsive, Train to Gain and Apprenticeship outcomes are good, both for completion and for completion within expected timescales. For the Train to Gain learners in the current year, success rates for both measures are high at around 90%.
- Value added measures show that many learners make good progress, although there remains a significant number of subjects with grades below a satisfactory level. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory and, although improving, remain a focus for the college.
- Learners' skills and standards of work are good overall. Learners often make good progress and attain their learning goals. Learners enjoy their studies and are proud of their achievements. They are motivated by their studies and develop the confidence and enthusiasm to engage in further learning. Progression to further studies is good.
- Learners feel very safe in the college and demonstrate safe working practices. Arrangements for safeguarding learners are satisfactory.
- Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are often well planned and provide a good variety of activities. Learners gain good knowledge and skills, and enjoy their work. Relationships between staff and learners are good. Not all lessons cater well for the full range of learners' needs, or provide appropriate challenge to enable the more able to make better progress.

- Resources for learning are good. Most teachers use information and learning technologies (ILT) effectively as part of their teaching and to support learning. Learners use the virtual learning environment (VLE) well to catch up on missed work and to research materials to develop their knowledge and understanding.
- The college's lesson observation scheme is now thorough and accurate. Judgements on the quality of lessons are appropriately moderated and actions for improvement are well addressed. Teachers continue to work hard to ensure that learners attend lessons, and arrive to lessons on time.
- The broad and inclusive curriculum has expanded considerably since the previous inspection and responds well to the variety of needs of learners, employers and the local community. Provision has been rationalised with an increase in programmes at entry and foundation levels, with clear progression routes to more advanced courses.
- The use of extensive partnerships to strengthen the quality of provision is outstanding. Links with local organisations to reduce the number of workless are particularly effective. Innovative initiatives successfully meet the needs of young people who are NEET, and those with additional support needs.
- The care, guidance and support for learners are good. Additional learning support impacts well on the progress of learners identified with additional learning needs through robust initial assessment. Target setting and monitoring of learners' progress is inconsistently effective across all subject areas.
- Leadership is highly effective and inclusive, ensuring that meeting the needs of learners is central to all aspects of planning and the management of the college. Managers and staff are strongly focused on raising aspirations, maximising learners' potential and meeting the needs of the local community. The college has a key role in the borough's skills and employment strategy.
- Equality and diversity are promoted very effectively throughout the college and are given a high priority. The learner population is highly diverse and this is broadly reflected in the staff profile. Data are used well to monitor equality and diversity. Achievement gaps are being reduced.
- Learners are encouraged to give feedback on the college and their programmes and they have a wide range of different opportunities to express their views. The college captures and acts on learners' views well. It considers their views carefully and responds clearly to them on actions taken.
- Arrangements for quality improvement have been strengthened since the previous inspection and are now good. Action plans for improvement have clear target setting with rigorous monitoring of progress. The self-assessment process is thorough, with good involvement of staff and use of peer review. However, the quality of some subject area self-assessments and course reviews requires improvement.

What does Hackney Community College need to do to improve further?

- Improve poorer success rates in underperforming subject areas by further building on the good work to improve learners' retention and sharing the college's good practice in improving pass rates.
- Improve the consistency of lesson planning to ensure that activities meet the needs of all learners and enable the more able learners to make better progress and improve their level of achievement.
- Ensure that all staff continue to work relentlessly to improve learners' attendance and punctuality.
- Improve target setting for learners by making better use of the good practice within the college.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the diversity and mix of learners and the ethos of equality in the college
- feeling safe and the friendly atmosphere in the college
- the teaching, which has generally improved in the last year
- the staff, who are very supportive and help learners enjoy college
- the advice they receive about progression routes, within and outside the college
- the improvements the college has made to help learners achieve
- the way the college listens to them and resolves any issues they identify
- the ILT resources which are used well by teachers to support learning.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the range and balance of activities in some lessons to extend their understanding
- the provision of work placement periods in some subjects.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the strong relationships the college has with local schools
- the extent to which the college supports the training of employers' staff and works hard to ensure that they are successful
- the facilities, which enable their staff to work with industry standard equipment
- employers' staff being supported by the college to obtain assessor and verifier awards
- the way that the college supports employers' own in-house training

What employers would like to see improved:

- no improvement needs were identified