



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cardiff and Vale College
Dumballs Road 2
Cardiff Bay
CF10 5FE**

Date of inspection: March 2015

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the provider's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

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Context

Cardiff and Vale College was established in August 2011 as a result of the merger of Barry College and Coleg Glan Hafren. The college is in the top quarter of the largest colleges in Wales and has 10 sites located from Trowbridge in East Cardiff across to Rhoose in the Vale of Glamorgan. A new £45m campus based in Cardiff city centre is due to open in September 2015. In 2012-2013 the college had 15,515 learners with 19,127 enrolments. There are approximately 639 higher education learners.

Forty-eight percent of students at the college are male and 52% female. Eighty-six percent of learners are declared as white and 14% as other. Forty percent of learners are aged 16 to 18 years and there are 60% aged 19 and over.

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) data shows that the percentage of lower level super output areas (LSOAs) in the most deprived 50% of Wales in the Vale of Glamorgan is 36.7% and in Cardiff is 46.3%. The percentage in the most deprived 10% in the Vale of Glamorgan is 5.1% and in Cardiff is 17.3%. In 2014, Splott 6 in Cardiff was ranked nine in the overall most deprived areas in Wales. A substantial increase from rank 36 in 2011. The Welsh Government WIMD report 2014 states that this could be attributed to its relative deprivation having increased substantially in the Employment and Education domains.

The number of learners aged 16 to 18 years in receipt of the Welsh Governments' Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) in Cardiff in 2011-2012 was 8,620 (31%) and in the Vale was 3,850 (36%). The average figure for Wales in the same year was 34%. Cardiff has the highest percentage of school leavers in Wales who are NEET (not in employment, education or training) at 4.9% in 2013. The proportion in the Vale of Glamorgan is 3.8%. The average for Wales for the same year was 3.7%.

Statistics for Wales show that, in 2013-2014, 17% of Cardiff residents and 15% of the Vale of Glamorgan residents, aged 16 and over, speak Welsh.

Summary

The provider's current performance	Good
The provider's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The college is good because:

- Success rates for substantial courses (those that are equal to, or greater than, 150 guided-learning hours) are good, placing it in the second quartile of all colleges in Wales
- Success rates for both substantial courses and all courses show an upward trend over the last three years
- Learners from areas of deprivation, ethnic minority backgrounds and with a declared disability succeed as well as their peers
- Learners in learner support and Essential Skills classes improve their literacy and numeracy skills well
- Learners from all backgrounds and religions feel safe at the college and behaviour around the college sites is very good

Prospects for improvement

The college's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The principal and governing body provide an effective and ambitious strategic lead
- The principal and senior team have managed change effectively and have created a new energy within the college
- The three-year development plan has a strong emphasis on improving quality
- Self-assessment is an integral part of strategic planning
- The quality cycle is well established and Benchmarking data is used well to measure the progress and success of learners
- Targets at a corporate level are clear and challenging

Recommendations

- R1 Continue to improve the rate at which learners successfully complete their substantial courses
- R2 Improve teaching to ensure that all teaching is consistently of a high quality
- R3 Make sure that targets for learners are specific, aspirational and measurable, and that they include targets for skills
- R4 Review management responsibilities to ensure a robust structure and a consistency of approach
- R5 Improve the use of specific targets in development plans at course, staff and departmental level

What happens next?

The college will incorporate actions into its quality development plan which show clearly how it is going to address the recommendations made in this report. Progress against these recommendations will be monitored periodically by the college Estyn link inspector as part of normal link inspector work. Estyn will invite the college to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.'

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Overall, the college success rate is 77% for substantial courses (those that are equal to or greater than 150 guided learning hours). This is one percentage point below the national comparator of 78% and places the college in the second quartile of all colleges in Wales.

Nearly all subject sector learning areas with large numbers of enrolments are performing around or above national comparator for the substantial courses. However, science and mathematics success rates are very low and are 20 percentage points below the national comparator. Hospitality and catering, and leisure travel and tourism are performing well and are ranked one and two respectively against their national comparators. A majority of all subject sector areas are in the top two quartiles for substantial courses.

The success rate for substantial courses has shown a steady improvement over the last three years, from 74% in 2010-2011 to 77% in 2013-2014. The college unpublished data for substantial courses in 2013 -2014 is robust and shows that this upwards trend is continuing and that the college has made another improvement of two percentage points.

The college success rate for all courses in 2012-2013 is 86% and is one percentage point above the national comparator. This places the college in the top quartile for all colleges in Wales.

Trends for all course data over the last three years show that the college has consistently improved the rate at which learners attain their qualifications and successfully complete their courses. This improving trend is across nearly all of the subject sector areas and across essential skills outcomes.

The college all course unpublished data for 2013-2014 indicates that the success rate has marginally improved from the previous year.

College data for 2013-2014 shows that 75% of full-time learners achieved a positive progression. They progressed from their programmes of study to higher levels of education, employment or promotion in their work place. This is 17 percentage points higher than the previous year. The most significant improvement in positive progression is from entry level and level four where the improvement is around 20 percentage points

Although the substantial course success rate for science and mathematics is well below national comparator, nearly all learners achieve in-line with their predicted outcomes. Learners from the most deprived areas in Cardiff and Vale succeed in their learning at the same rate as their peers from less deprived areas. Learners with a declared disability and learners from ethnic minority backgrounds succeed in their

learning at a rate that is comparable rate to that for the college as a whole. The success rate of female learners is two percentage points below that of male learners. However, the trends for both genders have improved over the last two years.

Many learners, in most learning areas, progress well in lessons. They recall prior learning well and apply the skills they have developed competently to new areas of learning and different contexts. Portfolios of work generally demonstrate that learners make effective progress towards their course outcomes. Most learners are up-to date with their course work and are on target to achieve their qualifications. In vocational subjects such as construction, and hospitality and catering, learners develop their practical skills and progress well. Learners in these lessons engage particularly well with their learning and work effectively together in groups and pairs.

Most learners develop their literacy and numeracy skills well in the context of their essential skills classes and in learner support. They use technical terms relevant to their courses with fluency and accuracy. Most learners around the college and across all courses communicate well with their peers, their tutors and visitors to the college. They speak with confidence and use a wide range of vocabulary. They support their ideas and justify their opinions with ease. A majority of learners show a sound competence in numerical calculations and apply these accurately in the context of their programmes of study.

Learners develop their understanding of Welsh culture well through Welsh Baccalaureate classes. Although learners' use of Welsh is underdeveloped, learners respond appropriately to Welsh greetings. Learners in hospitality and catering use Welsh effectively in menu planning and in meeting and greeting customers.

Wellbeing: Good

Most learners at the college feel safe and have someone to talk to if they have concerns. Through the college's comprehensive tutorial programme, learners gain a worthwhile understanding of the importance of healthy living.

Attendance rates have improved slightly over the last few years and, in particular, those of full-time learners. This year's attendance is currently around 90%.

Behaviour throughout the college is very good, with a generally calm and purposeful atmosphere across the college's 10 sites. Learners are respectful of their peers and establish effective working relationships with their tutors. Most learners are punctual although, in a few learning areas, a few learners arrive late to lessons. During lessons, most learners are well motivated and demonstrate appropriate levels of engagement.

Learners complete useful questionnaires to share their views about college life. Course representatives meet at key points during the year and have useful opportunities to meet with the principal and senior staff. However, the role of the 'student governor' is not fully developed.

Learners participate in a wide range of high-quality employability, enrichment and entrepreneurship activities through the college's 'B#EPIC' strategy, which centres on

employability and entrepreneurship. The number of learners accessing the wide range of beneficial, engaging and interesting activities has increased significantly over the last two years. Examples include the volunteering fair, 'Pantpreneur' competition and speed networking events. In addition, learners following the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification volunteer in a range of worthwhile community events, such as raising money for local and national charities.

By the time most learners leave the college, they have acquired a comprehensive range of social and life skills to enable them to progress effectively to employment, further education or training.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

The college uses labour market information well to develop and deliver a wide range of courses that meet the needs of learners, employers and the wider community. The majority of courses offer learners good opportunities to progress to the next level of learning.

The college collaborates well with other education providers to offer learners a broad range of learning from entry level to level four. The college has a strong focus on local communities, which encourages learners to engage in an extensive range of fund raising events for charities. This work extends to projects around the world, including the Vale for Africa project, which raises funds to help communities in Uganda.

A dedicated team at the college works well to secure work experience opportunities for learners. This has resulted in a significant increase in the number of learners accessing work placements. However, work experience opportunities in engineering are underdeveloped.

The college has a useful guide for teachers on marking literacy. However, the guide is not used consistently within departments or across the college. The college numeracy guide is a recent development and it is too early to see the impact of this on learning.

The college offers learners an appropriate range of enrichment opportunities. These contribute well to developing learners' entrepreneurial, employability, and social and life skills. Particularly good examples include the Falkland Island project and the rugby and football academy.

Welsh Baccalaureate classes integrate Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) well in their sessions. Projects are designed thoughtfully to allow learners to take part in competitions and social enterprise activities.

The college has a suitable focus on developing Welsh language provision. It has established a Welsh language team to support staff and learners to develop their bilingual skills. This has resulted in an increase in the number of learners undertaking courses using the Welsh language.

Teaching: Good

Across the college most teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. These teachers plan their theory and practical sessions well and set clear expectations for learners at the start of the session.

In the majority of classes, sessions are delivered at a good pace, with teachers challenging learners appropriately to develop new theory knowledge and practical skills. However, in a few sessions the pace is slow and teachers do not effectively challenge learners enough to make the progress relative to their capability.

Across the learning areas, teachers plan assessment well. However, the college does not provide the opportunity for learners, and parents, where relevant, to have feedback on their progress through formal reports and parents evenings.

A majority of teachers mark learners' written work regularly and provide them with useful feedback on their performance. However, in a minority of cases, teachers do not give learners constructive feedback that will enable them to improve their future performance. In the majority of learning areas teachers develop learners' employability skills well. In these sessions, teachers pay particular attention to developing learners' understanding of the workplace and developing the skills they need to gain and sustain employment.

Overall, learning support staff give valuable levels of support to learners. This helps learners to develop their understanding and knowledge and to make good progress on their course and achieve their qualifications.

The teaching in specific classes for Essential Skills Wales (ESW) develops the skills of learners well and they make good progress. This has resulted in an increase in the number of learners achieving their ESW qualifications. However, the college does not set, monitor and track short-term targets for learners to improve their literacy and numeracy skills across all classes and through vocational programmes. This means that learners are not able to identify the skills they need to learn or to practise them across a range of contexts.

In the majority of sessions teachers develop learners' understanding of the culture of Wales well. In the best cases, teachers use practical tasks and projects that engage learners and effectively develop their knowledge and understanding. Examples include learners undertaking a Falkland Islands project, which highlights the involvement of Welsh soldiers during the conflict.

Nearly all teachers develop effective working relationships with their learners and give them good levels of support.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The college has comprehensive arrangements to support learners and to promote all aspects of their health and wellbeing. Leaders are constantly reviewing and amending the tutorial and enrichment programmes to respond appropriately to the changes and challenges of an urban community. The college has effective provision and partnerships to promote equality, celebrate diversity, support learners with mental health issues and to combat radicalisation.

The college monitors attendance routinely and leaders generate useful monthly reports to highlight and discuss concerns with colleagues. When attendance rates give cause for concern, appropriate plans are generated with suitable action points and milestones to monitor progress.

The college has useful systems to share information with learners. These include the use of posters and notice boards to signpost information and advice and guidance drop-in sessions every week across three of the college's largest sites. The college also uses QR (quick response) codes to signpost useful websites and promote the services of partner organisations.

The college has established effective partnerships with a range of outside agencies to support its most vulnerable learners. An example of this is the work with CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and other support groups.

The college has strong and effective arrangements to support learners with additional learning needs, particular those with disabilities and dyslexia. During the last few years, the college has used information and communication technology (ICT) in innovative ways to support learners. This includes developing 'the widget' to pose literacy and numeracy teaser questions and the establishment of an online learning support hub to collect and store important information about learners with additional learning needs. Tutors have access to useful 'how to guides', which include helpful strategies to support learners in lessons.

The college's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The college has a very comprehensive strategy to promote equality and diversity through a strong ethos of inclusivity. It provides a welcoming and inclusive environment where learners of all backgrounds and religions feel safe and supported.

Different nationalities work very well together across all departments and at all college sites.

The college works actively to challenge discrimination and inequality by maintaining a strong focus on enrichment activities that encompass global citizenship. There are a number of events that aim to challenge stereotypical course choices such as the 'female leadership programme' to promote women in business.

The college has a robust equality and diversity policy that links well to a wide range of other policies including the anti-bullying and harassment policy, and the safeguarding policies and procedures.

The college has an ambitious and extensive estates development plan that includes a new city centre campus in Cardiff and a new initiative to provide secondary and further education in a combined location.

Facilities and accommodation across the college provide learners with a well-equipped learning environment. Most practical areas are well stocked with up-to-date equipment. Where relevant, these provide a realistic work environment that prepares learners well for future employment. Sites in need of refurbishment are included appropriately in the estates plan. However, accommodation for independent living skills (ILS) learners does not consistently fully meet their diverse needs.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

Since the formation of Cardiff and Vale College the principal and governing body have made good progress in establishing a single institution. They provide the college with an effective and ambitious strategic leadership. A clear and simple three-year development plan, based on the college vision which is 'Inspirational, Inclusive, Influential', is understood well and supported throughout the organisation. It has generated a new energy within the college. In particular, the principal has been very effective in promoting the corporate external branding and the repositioning of the college as a key player within the area. The two deputy principals take active and effective lead roles in the operation of the college, allowing the principal to focus on external engagement.

The senior team have managed the establishment of a new college structure very carefully and managers have generally responded well to their new roles and responsibilities. The college is progressive in creating a new commercial department and its function is being implemented effectively. However, although the management structure is coherent, there are aspects of workloads within the executive that are unbalanced.

Communication from the executive is strong, in particular through the innovative use of e-media, which creates a sense of transparency. Many management meetings are held across the college at different levels. However, these are not always structured well enough to allow consistent implementation of the new policies, procedures and systems across all learning areas. Senior managers gather the views of staff extensively on an informal basis and there has been a detailed consultation on specific issues. However, there is no systematic review of staff opinions to inform the self-assessment process.

The college has developed useful electronic dashboards that are used extensively to monitor data. Performance management is a routine part of the college. However, the strategic key performance indicators are not acted on sufficiently below middle management level.

The governing body has full ownership of the three-year development plan and plays an influential role in its progress. Board members understand their roles and responsibilities and have provided management with strong challenge and support during an ongoing period of change and development for the college. The ambitious estate strategy is a pivotal aspect of their involvement and they are clearly risk aware. The governing body receives regular updates on learner performance and underperformance is robustly challenged.

Student representation on the board has been problematic. However, governors are making efforts to meet students through a well-planned link governor structure. The governing body actively promotes learner inclusivity and widening participation. However there is a less clear focus on bilingual curriculum development.

Leaders of the college are well aware of national and local priorities for improving the quality of education and are adapting the organisation effectively to meet those challenges.

Improving quality: Good

The college has a well-established cycle of quality management that ensures all course and functional area teams are involved in the annual self-assessment process.

The policies and procedures of the two legacy colleges have been integrated well since the merger.

Self-assessment forms an integral part of the strategic planning process. The college's three-year development plan is particularly effective in establishing a strong emphasis on improving quality across all aspects of provision.

A clear set of key performance indicators and targets is defined at corporate level. These targets are embedded well in the college's three-year development plan. Progress towards achieving these targets is reviewed effectively.

A consistent focus on overall learner success and positive progression permeates the new college. Overall performance in terms of these indicators has improved significantly in a relatively short period of time.

The college makes good use of benchmarking data and sets targets well at corporate level. However, the setting of specific targets for learner outcomes is less effective at departmental, course and individual learner level. Value-added data is used to monitor performance on AS and A level programmes. However, this approach has yet to be extended to advanced level vocational programmes.

Managers make effective use of a comprehensive dashboard system to monitor key performance indicators. However, the functionality of links to other information systems down to individual learner level has yet to be fully realised.

The college's maturing approach to improving quality is characterised by the improved rigour in observation processes. This links well to the provision of staff development and support. The recently launched programme of internal reviews provides further impetus for continuous improvement.

The college uses a range of strategies to gather views of learners and feedback is used well to identify areas for improvement.

The college uses networking well to share best practice, improve quality and encourage innovation.

The college has made good progress in addressing relevant recommendations from Estyn's previous inspection reports on the two legacy colleges.

The self-assessment report provides an honest and evaluative account of the college's key strengths and areas for improvement. There is a very close match between the college's overall self-assessment report and the findings of the Estyn inspection team.

Partnership working: Excellent

The Principal has created a new ethos of partnership working and the college is a key member of strategic partnerships in the area. This ethos is permeating throughout the college. Partnerships include community, educational and business sectors. The college is seen as a proactive and generous participant within the partnerships.

Relationships with both local authorities are strong and a high level of trust has developed. Cardiff Council's education development board is making transformational post-16 changes in the eastern region of Cardiff, enabled specifically through partnership with the college.

Through the 14-19 network, the college provides significant vocational provision for local schools. This provision has grown by 22% since 2012-2013. A newsletter specifically designed for communicating with partners including school teachers has been developed to inform them of opportunities for learners. NEETs numbers in the area are falling and the college has played a significant role by adapting courses and increasing the full-time post-16 intake.

The college provides a strong representation on the regions' enterprise boards. These relationships are creating real potential for the college to become a key driver in the region's economic development and creating exciting vocational skills developments for learners. The new commercial team is developing an extensive network of private sector partners and creating effective links with employer advisory boards. Information from this networking is being collated effectively into labour market intelligence briefing papers, which inform the overall curriculum planning process.

The higher education (HE) provision is delivered in partnership with several higher education institutions with clear targets for growth. There are aspirational targets for international work being developed with Cardiff Metropolitan University and a joint office opened in Beijing recently. A college-based foundation course has been agreed, which will allow learners to progress onto specific Cardiff Metropolitan University courses.

Resource management: Good

The college manages its resources well. Financial management and planning are strong and managers have delegated budgets that are used appropriately to support the delivery of the curriculum and to improve other services.

The allocation of resources is clearly linked to strategic priorities and targets contained in the college's three-year development plan. The college uses external benchmarking information very well to review its financial performance and to inform its decision-making.

The college has ambitious and innovative plans in place to transform its estates and reduce its reliance on core Welsh Government funding. The delivery of these plans is underpinned by strong partnerships, collaborative projects and greater commercialisation of services.

Priorities for capital development are being progressed very well and align closely with external needs as a result of close partnership and collaboration with key local and regional stakeholders.

The college employs an appropriate number of experienced and qualified staff. The college recognises the need to address management development issues and strengthen capacity at senior level in order to ensure effective delivery of its plans.

The allocation and utilisation of staffing is managed well and this forms an integral part of curriculum and financial planning. The college has improved its overall efficiency through significant reductions in staffing costs over recent years while avoiding the need for compulsory redundancies.

Almost all staff have an annual appraisal as part of the college's performance review and improvement processes. The college has a well-established staff development programme, which includes termly professional development days and an annual teaching and learning conference.

The college makes extensive and effective use of online staff development programmes to address key issues including safeguarding and equality and diversity. This approach provides cost effective delivery of such training as well as helping reduce the extent of inter-site travel.

Overall, outcomes for learners are good and the quality of teaching is good. The college manages its finances and resources well and provides good value for money for the benefit of its learners.

Learning area reports

Literacy

Learning area context

Literacy at the college is taught through learner support, Essential Skills Wales classes, Welsh Baccalaureate classes and Adult Basic Education (ABE). We did not inspect ABE and GCSE English as part of this learning area.

The college also has a commitment to improving the literacy skills of all learners across all courses and all sites.

The college uses a standard initial and diagnostic assessment tool to identify learners' skills needs. Outcomes of initial assessment for 2013-2014 show the following literacy results:

- 0.36% of learners are pre-entry
- 1.65% of learners are entry 1
- 3.39% of learners are entry 2
- 18% of learners are entry 3
- 33.7% of learners are level 1
- 38.9% of learners are level 2
- 0.83% of learners are level 3 or higher

Learning area recommendations

- R1 Ensure that all learners have short, specific literacy targets and that all learners have a clear understanding of the specific skills they need to improve and develop
- R2 Ensure that all teachers use assessment results effectively to plan opportunities for learners in order to develop their literacy skills during lessons
- R3 Establish clear lines of accountability for managing and co-ordinating literacy development across the college

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Judgement: Good

Data for 2012-2013 shows that the college successful completion for essential skills communication, across all levels, is 79%. This is four percentage points below the national average of 83%. The rates at which learners successfully complete and attain their Essential Skills Wales communication qualification have shown an upward trend over the last two years in nearly all levels. There is a downward trend in successful completion for entry level two communication from 92% in 2011-2012 to 53% in 2012-2013. However, unpublished data for the college shows that upward trends are continuing for most levels.

Most learners use their speaking and listening skills well to communicate effectively in a range of settings and use technical vocabulary accurately and fluently. For example, learners in engineering are articulate and use relevant engineering technical language confidently.

Many learners are able to read information confidently to carry out given tasks. In the best cases, learners are able to use a range of reading strategies to extract information from course materials.

Most learners study essential skills qualifications at an appropriate level. They develop their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills well in these classes and take responsibility for proofreading their own work. Learners in a few vocational learning areas, such as Performing Engineering Operations (PEO) level 2 and cache level 3, develop their spelling skills well by keeping a list of common technical words and use this resource to help them with their writing.

In Welsh Baccalaureate sessions, learners use templates well to support them in their writing, minute taking and action planning. However, in vocational curriculum areas, such as level one catering, learners demonstrate a poor standard of writing in their course work.

Nearly all learners who receive specialist support achieve well and make further progress. These learners are aware of their targets and use these well to develop their skills. However, where this specialist basic skills support is not in place, learners do not know their individual literacy targets. This means that they are not able to improve and practice their specific literacy skills in all classes and apply them across the whole curriculum.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Judgement: Adequate

The college carries out an initial assessment of nearly all learners at the start of their course. Learner support staff use this information well to identify those learners who would benefit from specialist basic skills support. Learners studying Essential Skills Wales qualifications also complete a diagnostic assessment, based on the results of their initial assessment, to help identify their specific skills development needs.

Learners who receive specialist basic skills support benefit from having individual literacy targets and use their learning plans well to monitor and review their progress. The college offers these learners a comprehensive range of support options including in-class support and workshops. These learners succeed in the programmes in-line with their peers. However, planning for other learners' skills development is inconsistent both within and between vocational learning areas. Too few lessons include opportunities for students to develop their skills as well as practise them. Many teachers do not use the results of diagnostic assessment effectively enough to help learners at all levels to improve their literacy skills.

The learner support department offers a range of useful options for learners to develop their literacy skills away from their support sessions. These include on-line

materials and magazine subscriptions for vocational subject areas. The learning resource centre provides learners with a well-stocked supply of literacy support materials.

In essential skills classes teachers plan interesting projects contextualised to the learners' main course. For example public service learners are completing a project on mountaineering and orienteering. In a few essential skills sessions, teachers' questioning techniques are effective in supporting learners to reflect and self-assess their individual speaking and listening skills.

The college has a literacy mark scheme but this is not used consistently across all learning areas. Too few teachers provide constructive and helpful written feedback on learners' work to enable them to develop their literacy skills further.

Key Question 3: How good is leadership?

Judgement: Good

Managers in learner support services and essential skills qualifications have clear roles and responsibilities. They have a very thorough understanding of the needs of the learners and have recently completed a useful review of the strengths and areas for improvement for their departments. However, responsibilities for the general improvement and development of literacy skills of all learners across the college are underdeveloped. This means that learners who are not receiving learner support or who are not taking essential skills qualifications are not aware of the skills they need to develop.

Managers in learner support plan the support provision effectively. They deploy support staff efficiently to areas of need within the college. This has contributed well to the improving outcomes for learners.

The college uses assessment information effectively to ensure that learners study essential skills at an appropriate level. It gathers and collates information on the progress learners make in achieving their Essential Skills Wales qualifications. This monitoring has contributed to improved success rates over a three year period.

The college has developed a useful skills policy for developing learners' literacy skills and has developed a mark scheme to help monitor the quality and consistency of teachers' marking of learners' work. However, this is not used consistently well in all curriculum areas.

Numeracy

Learning area context

Numeracy at the college is taught through learner support, Essential Skills Wales classes, Welsh Baccalaureate classes and Adult Basic Education (ABE). We did not inspect ABE and GCSE mathematics as part of this learning area.

The college also has a commitment to improving the numeracy skills of all learners across all courses and all sites.

The college uses a standard initial and diagnostic assessment tool to identify learners skills needs. Outcomes of initial assessment for 2013-2014 show the following numeracy results:

- 0.11% of learners are pre-entry
- 1.90% of learners are entry 1
- 7.40% of learners are entry 2
- 28% of learners are entry 3
- 31% of learners are level1
- 24% of learners are level 2
- 3.4% of learners are level 3 or higher

Learning area recommendations

- R1 Ensure that all learners have a clear understanding of the specific numeracy skills they need to improve and develop and have short, specific targets to support this
- R2 Ensure that all teachers use assessment results effectively to plan opportunities for learners to develop their numeracy skills during lessons
- R3 Establish clear lines of accountability for managing and co-ordinating the development of numeracy across the college

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Judgement: Good

The success rate for overall Essential Skills Wales (ESW) application of number, across the college, has improved year-on-year. However, for 2012-2013, the college successful completion rate is 77% across all levels, which is four percentage points below the national average of 81%. Entry level 2 is significantly below the national comparator and shows a downward trend from 2011-2012. However, successful completion at level 3 has shown significant improvement, rising from 50% in 2011-2012 to 89.2% in 2012-2013. The college unpublished data for 2013-2104 shows that the upwards trends are continuing for most levels.

In many learning areas, a minority of learners use their numerical skills well to carry out calculations. In particular, learners studying 'A' Level biology and physics display a high degree of care and accuracy when performing calculations. Many learners in both engineering and construction develop their numeracy skills well when these occur naturally within their main programmes of study. They present diagrams and data neatly and accurately. Learners in practical classes in hospitality and catering use their numeracy skills very well to increase and decrease recipe quantities. However, both within and across all learning areas, learners make inconsistent progress in developing and practising their numeracy skills.

Nearly all learners who receive specialist basic skills support use their initial and diagnostic numeracy results well. They know the specific areas of numeracy that they need to develop and make effective progress in their learner support sessions. However, there are a very few learners who do not receive specialist support who are aware of the specific numeracy skills they need to develop. They have no means of monitoring their own progress and are not able to practise and consolidate their skills across all of their classes.

Most learners are aware of the level of the numeracy qualification they are studying. They are able to relate this level well to their prior learning and achievement. They have a clear understanding of the qualification assignments and the activities and work they need to complete. However, very few learners access the on-line resources that are available to help them to develop and practise specific skills in number, measure shape and space, and data handling.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Judgement: Adequate

Nearly all learners have an initial assessment to identify their numeracy skills level. Essential skills teachers use this information well to ensure that learners study essential skills at a level matched to their ability and prior achievement. All essential skills teachers contextualise numeracy skills development well to learners' main vocational programmes. This helps to maintain learner motivation and interest.

The college has robust systems for identifying learners who are in need of specialist numeracy support. Learners on level 1 programmes and below receive targeted support from specialist basic skills support teachers. These teachers set appropriate individual short term numeracy targets with each learner based on the results of a diagnostic assessment. These targets are recorded on worthwhile individual learning plans and form the basis of a regular review of progress. As a result, outcomes and success rates for learners receiving support are in-line with, or better than, those of their peers.

However, this practice is inconsistently applied across other subject sector areas of the college. In these areas, teachers do not routinely set short specific targets to help learners improve their numeracy skills independently. They rely too heavily on the outcomes of the initial assessment and the resulting long list of generic skills targets. As a result, learners do not know which targets they need to prioritise to help them develop their numeracy skills. They are not able to measure their own progress easily or to practise their skills in other contexts and learning.

Teachers in a minority of classes make appropriate use of naturally occurring opportunities to introduce and practise numeracy skills. For example, in a class activity in A2 physics, learners were asked to perform calculations on gas laws. In construction, teachers encouraged learners to perform calculations for size and quantity in practical activities. However, this practice is inconsistent across the learning areas.

Key Question 3: How good is leadership?

Judgement: Good

Leaders and managers in learner support services and essential skills have clear roles. They understand their responsibilities well and there are well structured lines of accountability. They have a very thorough understanding of the needs of the learners they support and plan effectively to provide quality provision. They have recently completed a useful review of the strengths and areas for improvement for their departments. They have a sound understanding of the performance of learners within their areas and measure learner outcomes against suitable benchmarks. They monitor and track learner progress very well, and this has contributed to the upward trends in learner outcomes.

Managers plan well for learner support. They deploy support staff efficiently to areas of need within the college. Skills workshops are easily accessed by learners who require drop-in support.

The college has a sound ethos of improving the skills of learners and has recently developed a marking scheme for numeracy. This has been produced through useful partnership work with other colleges and has been planned well to help monitor the quality and consistency of teachers' marking of learners' work. However, it is in the early stages of staff development and it is too early to see the impact on standards of learning.

The leadership for numeracy in general, across all areas of the college and for all learners who are not in receipt of specific support or in essential skills classes, is underdeveloped. The lines of accountability for general numeracy development are unclear. This means that there is no clear focus or strategy on developing the numeracy skills of all learners from their individual starting points. This has resulted in poor learner voice outcomes for the skills questions. A majority of learners are not able to recognise if they are developing their numeracy skills.

Hospitality and Catering

Learning area context

Cardiff and Vale College deliver Hospitality and Catering training courses at the Colcot Road and Trowbridge campuses. Hospitality and Catering is part of the Department of Tourism, Hospitality, Sport and Public Services. There are 78 learners currently training within the department. The college offer a number of training courses including:

- NVQ 1 Hospitality
- VRQ 1 Professional Cookery
- VRQ 2 Hospitality
- NVQ 2 Hospitality Services
- NVQ 3 Hospitality Supervision
- Pre-entry VRQ Hospitality
- VRQ 1 Professional Cookery

Learning area recommendations

- R1 Develop teaching and learning techniques to encourage learners to use vocational terminology through the medium of Welsh
- R2 Make sure that quality assurance systems are fully effective in driving improvement and raising standards

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Judgement: Good

Almost all learners in hospitality and catering successfully complete their qualifications. Compared to other colleges, the learning area is in the top quartile for the successful completion of all courses.

Success rates for learners on substantial courses (those equal to or greater than 150 guided learning hours) are generally above the national comparator for both level 1 and level 2. However, learners on level 3 supervisory courses do not attain their qualifications or successfully complete their learning as well as in other colleges in Wales. Trends in the attainment of qualifications and successful completion of courses have improved over a two-year period. The college unpublished data for 2013-2014 shows a slight improvement across all qualifications.

Generally, learners make good progress from level 1 and level 2 qualifications. Learners produce a good standard of practical work and develop many new skills to equip them for work or further learning. However very few learners progress from level 2 to level 3 qualifications. Many learners leave the college and go to work in the hospitality industry, or transfer onto a level 3 course in a different learning area, such as tourism.

Almost all learners are articulate and have good communication skills. Learners on level 1 courses improve their literacy and numeracy skills well through menu planning, menu design and preparing restaurant bills for customers. They calculate quantities accurately through adjusting recipes to suit more or less portions, and estimate and check cutlery requirements when laying up the restaurant for service.

Learners' portfolios contain a suitably wide range of evidence for assessed tasks. These tasks are regularly marked by tutors. However, a few spelling errors are not corrected and tutors do not always clearly show learners how to improve their work. Learners understand the progress they are making to achieve their main qualification. However, not all learners understand the progress they have made in their Essential Skills Wales qualifications.

Learners enjoy college life and participate well in college activities. They feel safe and know where to go if they need to report any bullying or harassment issues. Learners pay good attention to health and safety in the realistic working environments.

Learners are confident and have good social skills when dealing with members of the public. They are well-presented in practical sessions and take pride in their appearance and in their work. They present a professional image to the public during restaurant service. They work together professionally in teams and enjoy their learning.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Judgement: Good

The college offers a suitable range of courses that meet the needs of learners, hospitality employers and the community well. The curriculum is planned well to allow learners to follow courses that appropriately match their needs. There are good opportunities for learners to progress, or transfer onto, different courses within the sector, such as tourism or sport.

Teachers use the realistic working kitchen and training restaurant efficiently to provide learners with valuable work experience. Staff promote education for sustainable development and global citizenship (ESDGC) well. They use a number of useful learning activities to inform learners about issues such as the number of air miles it takes to import coffee beans and how farmers in those countries are financially supported. Almost all learners have a sound understanding of global citizenship. Staff organise a number of themed dining experiences for lunch and dinner in the training restaurant. They use these well to promote special events such as St David's Day and to use local Welsh produce.

Teachers challenge learners and stimulate learning well in almost all practical training sessions. This ensures that learners are engaged and motivated in taught sessions. Teachers plan learners' work well to ensure they work at a suitable pace that matches both their own needs and the service needs of the training restaurant. Teachers have high expectations of all learners.

Teachers have good up-to-date knowledge of their learning area and specialist subjects. They plan their lessons effectively. Schemes of work and lesson plans are comprehensive, with clear objectives. Most staff use a good range of teaching strategies to link theory and practical sessions well. Teachers and classroom assistants give learners good levels of support in class.

In the training kitchen and restaurant, teachers use a good range of practical skills. The assessment of practical tasks meets awarding body standards. Teachers give learners comprehensive feedback at the end of each task. This ensures that learners know the progress they have made, and what they need to do to achieve the qualification that they are aiming for.

Teachers promote wellbeing effectively and pay appropriate attention to learners' health and safety. The college provides learners with valuable advice when they apply to study. This helps to make sure that they are placed on the right course.

Accommodation is appropriate, well equipped and welcoming.

Key Question 3: How good is leadership?

Judgement: Good

Department managers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Both are new to their roles and keen to drive improvements throughout the department. Staff, many of whom have been in post for many years, also understand their roles well.

College and faculty meetings are scheduled appropriately for the year ahead. However, there is no schedule for departmental team meetings and these are not always formally planned.

Managers monitor appropriate key performance indicators on a weekly basis. They access this information easily through the college's electronic quality management tool (dashboard). Areas of underperformance are identified efficiently and remedial actions are discussed. The college is currently developing a formal process to address shortcomings. However, it is too early to see the impact of this initiative.

Systems to monitor learner progress in their vocational subjects are clear and generally well understood. Teachers and managers know what is expected of them in supporting learners to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Appraisals and graded teaching observations are scheduled well. However, the links between appraisal outcomes and improvements in teaching and learning are not clearly defined. Performance management does not include robust monitoring of individual staff performance targets.

Managers control their budgets well to make sure both sites have suitable resources.

The department self-assessment report is brief, descriptive and not evaluative enough. It does not focus well enough on how data has informed judgements and it lacks critical analysis.

Targets in the quality development plan (QDP) are not strategic, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely (SMART) enough to influence improvement planning effectively. Managers do not use national comparators consistently to set targets and the plan is not reviewed frequently enough to monitor and track progress.

The college has started to introduce learning walks and share good practice, especially in relation to teaching and assessment. However it is too early to judge the effectiveness of these initiatives in bringing about improvements.

Managers use learner voice responses well to improve learner experiences. Learners feel that they are listened to and action is taken when they raise concerns.

The department works closely with a wide range of high-profile employers. A few learners benefit from this relationship and take up opportunities for work experience, employment and master craft classes.

The department works well with Sector Skills Council, Pan Wales Hospitality Group and Colegau Cymru and is starting to use these relationships to inform curriculum development and share good practice.

The department uses centralised systems well to monitor staff deployment and make best use of their time and experience. Overall, practical and theory classrooms have resources and equipment that are fit for purpose.

Independent Living Skills

Learning area context

The independent living skills department provides education for learners with a wide range of learning needs. These include learners with autism, speech communication and language difficulties and learners who struggle to manage their behaviour.

Learners are assessed on entry to the college and study in one of four main learning areas. These are: Horizons, Enterprise workshop, BTEC, and Vocational access. Learners are placed on a course broadly determined by the behavioural and social competences of learners. Nearly all are working to entry level qualifications.

Learning area recommendations

- R1 Ensure that learner progress is measured against comprehensive baseline and ongoing assessment data
- R2 Reduce the number of NEETs
- R3 Improve the range of vocational learning experiences for all learners
- R4 Ensure that individual learning plan targets are a) based on the full range of learners needs; b) specific and measurable; and c) linked clearly to learner destinations
- R5 Ensure that all teachers provide learning experiences that challenge learners
- R6 Ensure that the learning environment is appropriate for all learners
- R7 Continue to develop arrangements for self-evaluation
- R8 Develop a strategic approach to working with a wide-range of partners in order that the learning and other needs of learners are identified and fully addressed
- R9 Ensure that staff training is appropriate

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Judgement: Adequate

Over the past three years the overall success rates for learners has improved. In 2014 nearly all attained their main qualification.

Nearly all of the learners following the vocational access course achieved entry level certificates in employability and personal development. Many learners following the enterprise workshop course attained certificates at entry level in 'skills for independence and work'.

Learners across the department make appropriate progress against qualification targets in literacy, numeracy and ICT. However, initial assessments do not adequately reflect the abilities of all learners, or take into sufficient account the range of their needs. Individual learning plans and targets for improvement are not comprehensive enough for learners to progress to the best of their ability.

In numeracy, learners are developing a range of appropriate skills. They accurately identify the characteristics of two and three-dimensional objects. They use data to make simple additions and subtractions. More able pupils confidently read scales, estimate and use prediction skills. However, there is little evidence of the depth of learners' understanding as many activities are related to qualification learning outcomes.

More able learners develop their understanding of double negative statements and use the correct form in both writing and in speech. Learners are beginning to write for different purposes. As part of their personal and social development learners construct basic letters, use conjunctions well and edit their work. A very few are supported in developing handwriting skills.

Learners develop an appropriate range of skills in ICT; this includes word processing, using simple spreadsheets and producing simple posters using desktop publishing software. However, the use of ICT across all course areas is underdeveloped. In 2014, a third of leavers were classed as NEET, and the college is unable to account for their whereabouts of many of these vulnerable learners. A few learners have progressed from the ILS department and accessed mainstream courses at the college.

A minority of learners, where appropriate, access an independent travel programme. As a result, their anxiety in using public transport decreases. Learners on the Horizons course develop appropriate skills in cleaning, hovering and healthy cooking. Learners are able to talk confidently about the rights and responsibilities of themselves and others. This includes the importance of making appropriate choices in their personal lives.

Nearly all learners are attentive in class. They listen well to staff and to their peers. They are polite and courteous to visitors. The behaviour of learners is exemplary.

Each course has a learner representative. These are elected and they discuss issues of concern to them. However, they are not clear how their suggestions are acted upon.

Many learners feel safe at college and know what to do about bullying, and nearly all feel that they are treated with respect.

Overall attendance within the department is 95%.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Judgement: Adequate

Overall, the college provides a broadly relevant curriculum that offers most learners an appropriate range of experiences. However, the course timetable does not always meet the needs of individual learners well enough. There are missed opportunities for learners to develop a broader range of practical skills. In particular, opportunities for learners to gain work related experience are limited.

There is a strong emphasis on essential skills within all courses, which allows learners to consolidate and develop their skills. However, there are few opportunities for learners to improve their Welsh language skills in lessons.

The department makes good use of assessment tools to assess learners' abilities in literacy and numeracy. However, there is no assessment in place to assess learners' additional personal and social needs. Targets for many learners in individual learning plans are not specific or measurable. Overall, the curriculum and learning experiences focus too much on classroom-based activities and do not prepare learners well enough for the skills they will need when they leave college.

In all lessons, teachers and support staff create positive relationships with learners. They manage learners' behaviour well and focus appropriately on the development of learners' skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy. In many lessons, teachers use questioning well to extend learners' work and to develop their understanding.

However, in a few lessons there is a lack of challenge and purpose. Support staff do not always promote learners' independence well enough. In a few lessons, there is an over-reliance on worksheets and completing tasks at a low level. In many lessons, work is not matched well enough to the abilities of individual learners. Assessment practices across the department are not consistent and not all teachers provide enough opportunities for learners to reflect on their own learning.

The college does not provide regular feedback for parents.

The department provides opportunities for learners to learn about a range of issues that influence their health and wellbeing, for example sexual health and alcohol abuse. Learners receive appropriate levels of support in their lessons. However, there is no specialist support in college for learners who have more complex needs.

The department successfully creates a calm and inclusive environment in which learners feel safe, and which values the contribution of each individual. Classrooms and teaching spaces are generally adequate for their purpose but do not provide stimulating learning environments. Displays are often tired and dated and do not promote learning.

Key Question 3: How good is leadership?

Judgement: Adequate

Both the head and deputy head of department have been appointed within the last year. They have responded appropriately to the previous quality development report. They are beginning to provide a clear direction and vision for the work of the department and set suitably high expectations for all staff.

Minutes of departmental meetings generally focus on procedural issues. They do not focus well enough on improving the standards of learners.

Job descriptions are clear and include both whole college and departmental responsibilities. There are clear lines of accountability and expectations around performance objectives. There is an appropriate performance management cycle that includes observations of teaching. However, staff are generally unable to articulate targets for improvement.

The department self-assessment report provides a summary of progress in relation to the previous quality development plan. Due, in part, to changes in the management within the department, many of these targets have yet to be implemented fully. The report summarises current strengths and areas for improvement and many of the areas for improvement are appropriate. However, the overall evaluations are too positive and do not identify well enough key areas for improvement. The role of staff, learners and wider stakeholders in the process of self-evaluation is under-developed.

The current quality development plan incorporates the improvement areas not met in the previous plan and those areas for improvement identified in the self-assessment report. The department has set itself a range of challenging tasks. Responsibilities are clearly assigned and review and completion dates set. However, the plan does not align tasks to strategic objectives. Interim milestone targets, against which progress can be measured, are not included and the plan is not fully costed.

Overall, improvement planning and self-evaluation are in the early stages of development.

The department has identified the need to develop stronger links with schools, other providers and parents in order that staff benefit from professional dialogue in relation to curriculum developments and have a greater understanding of the needs of learners.

There are appropriate links with statutory agencies with appropriate referrals being made when necessary. However, links with specialist support services are not

secure and as a result staff are not sufficiently aware of the needs of learners or how to amend practices to accommodate these.

Teachers in the department are appropriately qualified. However, training for staff in relation to the specific special educational needs of learners is underdeveloped.

Learners do not always have access to an appropriate range of learning resources.

Science and mathematics

Learning area context

The learning area of science and mathematics sits within the college's Department of General Education. The department as whole provides a wide range of GCSE courses, including English and mathematics GCSE resit programmes; Access to HE provision; a good range of AS and A level courses; and the Welsh Bacalaureate Qualification at advanced level.

For this learning area we inspected are GCSE science courses and legacy vocational science at level 2, and Access to Higher Education and AS and A level science and mathematics courses at level 3. We did not include level one basic numeracy courses, level 2 numeracy and GCSE mathematics courses.

Learners on science and mathematics courses within the department typically study at the college's City Road campus (for psychology and mathematics) and the Trowbridge campus (for physics, chemistry and biological sciences) where there are appropriately equipped teaching laboratories.

Learning area recommendations

- R1 Improve the rate at which learners successfully complete their qualifications
- R2 Improve learners' punctuality
- R3 Implement an alternative science and mathematics programme for learners not suited to A level study
- R4 Ensure that teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies, including questioning, to engage, stretch and challenge learners of all abilities
- R5 Develop systems for formally reporting the progress of learners aged under 18 to parents
- R6 Develop the use of target setting in tutorials to include all aspects of a learner's programme of study, including literacy and numeracy
- R7 Increase the rate at which actions identified in the learning area self-assessment to improve quality of teaching and learning are implemented

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Judgement: Adequate

Overall, learners in science and mathematics successfully complete their qualifications at rates below the national comparators. Published data for 2012-2013 shows that, on the whole, learners across a range of science GCSE courses successfully complete their qualifications at rates around or slightly below the national comparators. Learners studying A level and AS science and mathematics courses generally successfully complete their qualifications at rates below or well below the national comparators. Learners on life sciences Access courses successfully complete their courses at rates similar to national averages. Three year trends show a consistent pattern.

The college's own unpublished data for 2013-2014 shows a small overall improvement in success rates. However, the rate at which learners successfully complete science and mathematics A level and AS level qualifications is still low.

In general, learners come in to the college to start their AS and A level studies in science and mathematics with lower than average GCSE scores. The college's commercially produced value-added analysis shows that, on average, learners who complete their courses achieve grades in their science and mathematics AS and A levels that are in line with expectations based on their GCSE grades. Over a three year period, in a few subjects, notably chemistry, learners who complete their courses have achieved higher than expected grades.

Many learners make good progress on their courses. Most learners listen attentively and engage with activities in their classes well. Most learners write useful notes during lessons and combine these with handouts, material on Moodle, and text books, to form a useful record of learning.

Learners work well in pairs and in groups on tasks such as organising biological information into taxonomies, developing posters to illustrate chemical reactions, and carrying out practical activities in physics to measure the discharge from capacitors.

Many learners contribute purposefully to discussions, although only a few offer extended or detailed explanations to questions. Learners whose first language is not English do not contribute enough to class discussions and so do not practise enough their use of scientific and technical terms through class discussions.

In their subject classes, learners discuss their short term targets to improve with their teachers and most are aware of what they need to do to improve. However, only a few learners are aware at the start of their courses the grades they are expected to achieve or the overall expectations of them.

Learners in science and mathematics feel safe in college. Nearly all learners feel well supported by their tutors and value the inclusive environment at the college. A

few learners on the Access to Life Sciences course have set up peer study groups and enjoy learning with their peers.

A minority of learners arrive late for their classes, both in the morning and following breaks during the day.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Judgement: Adequate

The learning area provides a wide range of GCSE, AS and A level courses in science and mathematics. There are low entry requirements for admission onto the AS level programme, which encourages inclusivity and widens access for learners with lower GCSE profiles. Part-time learners have the opportunity to study fast-track A levels by attending in the day or evening. However, there are currently no vocational qualifications at levels 2 or 3 for learners who would be more suited to this type of course. All full time learners study the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification alongside their main studies. Through the Welsh Baccalaureate, learners have good opportunities to learn about global citizenship and sustainable development as well as to develop their knowledge of Wales and the Welsh language. Most learners undertake initial assessments in literacy and numeracy. However, only a minority of teachers use target setting effectively to develop learners' skills.

Many teachers plan a range of activities that meet the needs of the majority of learners. However, in a minority of cases, lessons are too teacher led resulting in learners not being fully involved. In many lessons, teachers use IT effectively and make good use of Moodle to allow learners to access a wide range of teaching materials and resources. Nearly all teachers have good subject knowledge and in many cases, they deliver lessons with enthusiasm.

Teachers set regular homework and make good use of a range of examination questions. Nearly all teachers mark work regularly and provide helpful feedback for learners to improve. Teachers keep good records of learners' marks on the learner management system and use these effectively to set individual subject targets for learners. However, only a minority of personal tutors use this information effectively with learners to set overall targets. On the whole, teachers use the literacy and numeracy marking scheme effectively. However, in a few cases, teachers do not correct learners' spelling, grammar and numeracy consistently. In the majority of lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to check learners' knowledge and understanding. However, too few teachers use questioning strategies to challenge and extend their learners. In a few cases, teachers do not give learners who have English as their second language enough time to respond to questions.

Most teachers use tutorials well and promote learners' wellbeing effectively through sessions on positive relationships. In nearly all cases, teachers form good professional relationships with learners and support them well. Teachers have high expectations of learner behaviour. However, in a minority of cases, teachers do not challenge learners who arrive late for classes. Teachers are aware of safeguarding procedures.

The learning area does not provide the opportunity for learners and, if relevant, parents, to have formal feedback through progress reports and parents' evenings. The learning area promotes a culture of equality of opportunity and diversity effectively. There is a good approach to social and educational inclusion and nearly all teachers use 'restorative approaches' well to deal with unacceptable behaviour. Nearly all learning resources and accommodation are fit for purpose.

Key Question 3: How good is leadership?

Judgement: Adequate

A new management structure provides clear roles and lines of responsibility and accountability in science and mathematics. The director is supported by a head of department and two deputy heads. Regular, structured and minuted management team meetings ensure that strong lines of communication are in place.

Managers have monthly meetings with senior data and quality staff, which provide a useful focus on quality and data, and help give direction in improving standards.

The learning area delivers courses at two main campuses and managers are based at both sites to promote efficient communication with staff and learners. Teaching staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Course teams contribute to the overall departmental quality assessment through subject quality reviews.

The college has recently undertaken an internal review of the learning area, which has produced an accurate self-assessment, and an action plan that informs quality improvement for A level provision. Managers have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the learning area and have effectively communicated these to all staff.

Managers have identified and are implementing an appropriate range of strategies to improve quality. These include sharing of good practice, staff training and the use of teaching and learning champions. In addition, the learning area has changed entry requirements for A level courses and new vocational courses are planned. However, it is too early to identify the impact of these measures. Managers have yet to develop and implement strategies to resolve learners poor punctuality. Overall, there is a lack of urgency in responding to the issues identified.

The college is a member of the Cardiff Schools' Partnership. This strategic alliance between the college, 20 Cardiff secondary schools and the local authority provides increased opportunities for learners across the city to access a broader range of A levels.

All teaching staff are well qualified and are knowledgeable in their subjects. Most staff participate in appropriate continuing professional development and annual appraisals.

The learning area has well planned budgetary processes. The departmental budget is developed from the annual curriculum plan and resources are fairly allocated based on the requirements of the courses.

Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies

Learning area context

The Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies learning area offers a range of courses from Entry level to level 3. In the current year, 2014-2015 there are 399 full time learners. Engineering provision is delivered over three main sites. The department also offers school link programmes in motor vehicle and higher level programmes in aircraft engineering at the International Centre for Aerospace Training (ICAT) centre.

Learning area recommendations

- R1 Improve learner success rates in substantial courses
- R2 Ensure that learners have value added targets linked to their substantial qualifications in order to raise learner standards and aspirations
- R3 Share best practice in teaching and assessment across the area
- R4 Make sure that teaching strategies meet the needs of individual learners to provide sufficient challenge
- R5 Improve learner punctuality for sessions
- R6 Make sure that all staff are engaged in self-assessment processes and in action planning for quality improvement
- R7 Improve partnerships with industry

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Judgement: Adequate

For all courses, the engineering learning area has a success rate slightly below the national comparator. Success rates in substantial courses are well below the national comparator and the learning area is in quartile 4 of all colleges in Wales. Trends in performance over the last three years have been consistently in quartiles 3 and 4.

The college unpublished data for 2013-2014 is robust and shows that the all course success rate has remained consistent with the rate last year.

A majority of learners make reasonable progress in classes. They recall previous work well and develop their problem solving and thinking skills competently. In a majority of classes, learners develop good practical skills. They demonstrate a good understanding of interpretation of engineering data, processes and technical information. Overall, in all areas of engineering, most learners in class make good

progress in developing their skills and can apply these in learning within an engineering context.

Most engineering learners work safely and productively and are able to apply previous learning activities well to new contexts. Motor vehicle learners have worthwhile task-based units and during practical sessions are self-motivated and take control of their own learning.

Learners on level 3 programmes demonstrate good levels of literacy and are articulate when discussing and presenting engineering topics. For example, level 3 electronics learners present their project work confidently and competently using good ICT skills and technical vocabulary relevant to industry.

Although learners are keen to discuss progression opportunities to employment or further education within Wales, there is little evidence of learners developing their Welsh language skills.

Nearly all learners regard college as a healthy and safe environment. Most are aware of signposting for support and know where to go to receive help and advice. Most learners enjoy their learning, participate well and feel that they are on the right course. Many learners prepare for the world of work well and raise funds for charity through worthwhile activities in the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification. A majority of classes have student representatives. However, few learners participate in enrichment activities. In a minority of sessions, punctuality is an issue with a few learners arriving late to classes.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Judgement: Adequate

Engineering in the college offers a broad curriculum, appropriately supporting education and training needs in the area. The department has a sound focus on the development of engineering skills and employability is a high priority in most courses. Teachers encourage progression to higher level courses, higher education (HE) and apprenticeships. However, only a minority of courses have suitable links with industry and only a few learners access appropriate engineering work experience. Many workshops offer realistic work environments.

Teachers make sure that higher level literacy and numeracy skills are taught to a few learners who have achieved skills qualifications or GCSE English or mathematics before. In main course sessions, where literacy and numeracy occur naturally, teachers develop these skills effectively. However, in most sessions, planning for improving learners' literacy and numeracy skills is underdeveloped.

Nearly all teachers have up-to-date subject and technical knowledge and plan sessions well. Most teachers have high expectations and foster good working relationships that encourage learning. Technicians are used effectively and support many practical sessions well. However, in around half of sessions teachers do not use extended, probing questions to challenge learners well enough.

A few sessions lack pace and do not effectively provide demanding work to meet the needs of all learners, irrespective of their ability. In a few sessions, a very few learners are disengaged.

A few teachers and learners use electronic individual learning plans (eILPs) well to track learner progress. However, a majority of learners only use the system for checking their attendance and educational maintenance grant entitlement (EMA). In a very few sessions learners review their own work and set their own targets.

Most learners know how well they are progressing and around half know how to improve their performance. However, value added targets are not set formally for graded qualifications and the college does not provide the opportunity for learners, and parents where appropriate, to have formal feedback on progress.

Most teachers reinforce health and safety well, particularly in practical lessons. The college offers appropriate support systems and most learners can gain specialist support if required. Safeguarding policies are in place and give no cause for concern. Most courses have a student representative. However the majority are unaware of meetings.

Many learning areas are well resourced and maintained with up to date equipment. Most practical learning areas have excellent resources that support engineering skills development well. However, a few learning areas are housed in dated accommodation with limited resources.

Most teaching areas do not reflect Welsh language or culture. However a few learners develop useful bilingual skills through opportunities in Welsh Baccalaureate classes.

Key Question 3: How good is leadership?

Judgement: Adequate

Managers generally understand their responsibilities well and manage provision across more than one campus site. There are clear roles and lines of accountability are well structured.

Managers hold meetings at regular intervals and the majority of leaders frequently meet with their staff. The college uses the intranet effectively to communicate the minutes of the meetings. However, the college's standardised agenda and format for recording meetings is not used consistently. This means that only a minority of meetings include discussions about the progress and performance of learners.

The engineering self-assessment report identifies key areas for improvement accurately. However, managers and teachers do not understand or use self-assessment well enough to consistently inform quality improvement.

Managers use data well to identify gaps in attainment and completion rates of learners. However, managers' success in improving substantial course outcomes over the past three years has not been effective enough and progress is too slow.

Managers have identified where outcomes are below national comparators and, in the majority of cases, they have implemented strategies to improve performance. However, the process for communicating key performance indicators and targets systematically to teachers to bring about improvement is unclear.

Managers observe teaching sessions as part of the quality improvement process for teaching, learning and assessment. The outcomes are validated efficiently and there is a structured system of support for teachers judged as adequate or unsatisfactory.

The directorate plans continuous professional development (CPD) well. There are worthwhile awareness sessions as part of the college's commitment to safeguarding and these are attended by nearly all staff. The engineering departments make effective use of e-learning for mandatory training programmes such as data protection.

Overall, the department's partnership work with stakeholders and industry is underdeveloped and this is recognised in the self-assessment report. However, the automotive department works very closely with local schools, employers and other partners. As a result, progression from school-link programmes in this department to full-time courses is good.

Managers effectively deploy teaching and support staff well, making best use of their time and skills. The college has an ambitious estates strategy and the new facility opening in September 2015 will benefit around half of learners studying engineering.

Construction, Planning and the Built Environment

Learning area context

The Construction department provides approximately 7% of Cardiff and Vale College's (CAVC) provision and 12% of all full-time (FT) construction learners in Wales. The courses are delivered at three campuses in Cardiff and Barry.

Construction, planning and the built environment is delivered by two departments, the construction and the engineering departments. The construction provision delivers a wide range of full-time and part-time courses.

Currently the provision delivers courses in: construction operatives, brickwork, plastering, wall and floor tiling, carpentry, bench joinery, painting and decorating, electrical installation and heating and ventilation. Courses are generally available on a full-time and a part-time basis. The majority of courses are available at level 1 and level 2. A minority of courses are available at level 3.

Learning area recommendations

R1 Make sure that learners develop higher level practical skills and theory knowledge when appropriate

R2 Make sure that learners act on written feedback to improve their performance

R3 Ensure that teaching is challenging and appropriately paced

R4 Ensure that teachers consistently set specific targets for learners to allow teachers and learners to monitor and track progress in learning and skills

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Judgement: Good

Overall, the all course success rate in construction is at or above the national average and it has improved over the last three years. This places the college in the top quartile of all colleges in Wales. The success rate for substantial courses (those that are equal to or greater than 150 guided learning hours) are also above the national comparator and for these courses the college is in the second quartile. The college unpublished data for 2013-2014 shows that the department's performance will be maintained.

Many learners demonstrate practical competence in their learning and a minority demonstrate higher-level practical competence and theory knowledge in sessions. The majority of learners take action appropriately on receiving feedback from teachers on how to improve their performance. Most learners know the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve further.

A majority of learners complete the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification. Learners attain this qualification at about the rate of the national average. These learners gain very good knowledge and understanding of the importance of community involvement and many learners gain decision-making skills through work experience opportunities with local employers. Many learners are effectively involved in community enrichment events.

Learners' portfolios show work that is at an appropriate level for the course that they are studying and nearly all contain a wide range of evidence. Learners present their work well using accurate and correct spelling, punctuation and grammar that is appropriate to their level of study.

Learners develop a wide range of employability skills and experiences. They benefit from work experience opportunities of good quality and from the college's strong links with a range of local employers. Learners have useful opportunities to undertake training and assessment in Welsh. However, currently demand is low.

Overall, learners show good levels of enthusiasm, respect and behaviour and are well motivated to develop their learning, achieve their qualifications and progress to the next level. Learners develop improved confidence while attending their course. They develop effective working relationships with their peers and teachers.

Learners feel safe and well supported and report that they generally enjoy their learning at college. Almost all learners are happy with their courses and feel that they are using their time effectively. They develop the skills they need for employment and their future personal development well.

Nearly all learners show respect to each other and to their teachers. Learners benefit from good working relationships and value highly the mature way in which they are treated by their teachers. Overall, learners' attendance rates are good.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Judgement: Good

The construction provision delivers a comprehensive range of courses that meet the needs of learners, employers and the local community well. The provision uses labour market information well to identify courses that are in demand currently by industry. This has resulted in new courses being delivered, such as tiling and plastering. Learners on these courses are well supported by a wide range of employability activities that prepares them well for employment in the industry.

The provision offers a wide range of enrichment activities that relate very well to the learning area and the culture of Wales. These include the Timber Thinkers and the Falkland Islands project. These projects engage learners to develop a wide range of new skills and opportunities to work with diverse communities.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and technical skills. They use this experience well to develop learners' practical competence and theory knowledge. Most teachers provide learners with appropriate challenge to help them to develop their skills effectively. However, a few sessions are slowly paced and not challenging enough. Most teachers plan sessions well with clear aims and objectives. They use an appropriate range of teaching and training methods including practical and classroom-based theory sessions. Teachers pay particularly good attention to developing learners' employability skills. This includes making sure that learners are fully aware of workplace practices and demands, including being prepared to start work on-time, understanding the task, and learning how to develop appropriate working relationships with peers and supervisors. Teachers assess learners' practical skills very well. They record the outcomes of assessment consistently and most provide learners with useful feedback on how they can improve their future performance. However, in a few examples written feedback is not detailed enough.

Teachers provide learners with a comprehensive induction at the start of their course. Staff in this area of provision have appropriate arrangements in place to support learners with individual support needs. Managers and other staff access a wide range of specialist support staff and agencies when required to meet learners' specific needs. This support is effective in making sure that learners continue with their courses and achieve their qualifications.

Across all centres where the provision is taught, there is a supportive and welcoming environment for learners. The facilities at the college's construction centres are generally of good quality. This means that learners have access to a good range of facilities and resources that effectively meet their needs.

Key Question 3: How good is leadership?

Judgement: Good

Senior and middle managers provide effective leadership that has had a positive impact on the performance of the learning area. The construction management team work well together to oversee and deliver the college's strategic priorities.

Managers use college data information well to measure and challenge most aspects of course delivery against key performance indicators. They use this information well to identify when courses are underperforming and to develop appropriate action plans for improvement.

Communication across the construction provision is good. The department holds regular meetings where managers review key aspects of the provision and keep all staff updated on developments and the provision's progress against targets. These meetings have been effective in contributing to improving learner outcomes. Managers use the college's arrangements for the review of staff performance appropriately. Annual performance reviews are well supported by a comprehensive range of continual professional development activities.

Managers have effective arrangements in place to monitor and improve quality and standards. They use the college's dashboard well to scrutinise and evaluate data for the department. The department's self-assessment report is a useful document that reviews a wide range of information. However, the report does not focus clearly enough on identifying areas for development.

Managers have developed good strategic and operational partnerships with local secondary schools, work-based learning providers, employers and the local community.

Managers in this learning area manage resources well. They allocate budgets effectively and monitor spending across the departments carefully. Managers deploy staff appropriately to the needs of the learners.

Appendix 1

Learner satisfaction

We use the outcomes of the Welsh Government Learner Voice survey to inform all our inspections of post 16 education and training. Learner Voice is a learner satisfaction survey conducted by the Welsh Government between January and February each year.

The survey asks learners a range of questions about the following key themes:

- the information, advice and support provided to them
- provider responsiveness, learning environment and student wellbeing
- the quality of teaching and training
- overall satisfaction

Each theme contains a range of questions requiring learners to rate their provider's performance.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Gill Sims	Reporting Inspector
Sandra Barnard	Team Inspector
Huw Davies	Team Inspector
Mark Evans	Team Inspector
Steve Bell	Team Inspector
Catherine Evans	Team Inspector
Nicholas Tyson	Peer Inspector
Amanda Morgan	Peer Inspector
Catrin Rees	Peer Inspector
Adam Twells	Peer Inspector
Alexander Edwards	Peer Inspector
Ian Andrew Lumsdaine	Peer Inspector
Gill Davies	Peer Inspector
Jane Morgan	Peer Inspector
Gavin Davies	Peer Inspector
Dafydd Evans	Peer Inspector
Caroline Peek	Peer Inspector
Ian Dickson	Peer Inspector
Michael Jervis	Peer Inspector
Richard Mark Tither	Peer Inspector
Eleanor Davies	Quality Assurance Inspector
Kay Martin	Nominee