

The College of Animal Welfare

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		01-05 October 2012
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- Learners achieve high success rates and develop good standards of technical, practical and personal skills. They show a strong empathy with animals.
- The College of Animal Welfare (college) provides learners with good individual care and support which help them to succeed. It expects them to demonstrate high standards of professionalism and attention to health and safety.
- Learners have exceptionally high progression rates into employment or education and training on completion of their training. Employers recognise that learners are very well prepared for employment.
- Teachers and supervisors link classroom-based learning to the work place well. Learners have access to good quality college resources and facilities and many excellent work placements.
- Good leadership and management ensure that learners are taught and coached by well qualified and experienced teachers, supervisors, assessors and workplace coaches.
- An extensive range of specialist programmes from intermediate level to higher education provides learners with good access to flexible learning opportunities.
- The college's quality improvement activities are thorough and make very effective use of the views of learners, carers and employers.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Learning activities do not provide learners with sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.
- The range of teaching and learning activities is not always wide enough.
- Teachers and supervisors do not sufficiently develop and reinforce themes relating to equality and diversity in learning activities.
- Participation rates of minority ethnic groups and men are low.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Support teachers and supervisors to develop their teaching, learning and assessment skills through more effective use of lesson observations to identify key areas for improvement.
- Make more effective use of lesson observation assessments and plans for improvement during the performance management of teachers and supervisors.
- Develop, implement and monitor strategies that ensure teaching, learning and assessment promote learners' understanding of equality and diversity
- Promote veterinary nursing and animal care as a career option to minority ethnic groups and men to increase their participation rates.
- Provide learners with more opportunities to take responsibility for their learning in lessons, progress reviews and other learning activities by making more use of learner-centred activities.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- In the last three years learners have maintained a high success rate in animal care and veterinary science at 88%. This is well above the national rate. Learners are making good progress relevant to their starting points and learning goals.
- For the majority of learners, who are on veterinary nursing apprenticeships, the success rate is exceptionally high at 96%. Most learners complete their course in a timely way.
- Learners with a disability perform particularly well. However the few men on work-based learning programmes do not achieve as well as women.
- In 2011/12, the success rate of a small number of animal care learners in the South of England was low in comparison to the rest of the country. More recently, the college's data indicate that this success rate is improving and is at the national rate.
- Learners organise their portfolios well. The majority of learners have good standards of written work and demonstrate good research and problem solving skills.
- Learners develop their mathematics and English skills very well. Learners who take tests in functional skills have a very high success rate of 93%. Their good development of these skills is highly valued by employers.
- Veterinary nursing learners develop good communication skills and are able to work effectively to support their clients and their pets. They develop good team working, technical and practical skills and have a strong sense of awareness of how to stay safe in work. These skills enable them to fit in well with work colleagues and to work with confidence.
- Many veterinary employers consider that apprentices develop excellent skills and become highly competent nurses ready to take on appropriate responsibility in the industry after they qualify. Learners are often given additional responsibilities before they have completed their learning programme.
- Animal care learners carry out research into their choice of work placements and complete assignment work whilst on placement. This improves their understanding of the skills they need to develop in order to work effectively in the workplace. They develop a good and relevant range of practical skills for working with a wide range of animals.
- Learners have a good understanding of the progression opportunities available to them. At intermediate level, most learners either progress into employment or progress onto an advanced

level training programme. The proportion of learners who are in employment following the completion of their advanced level programme is particularly high at 97%.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching learning and assessment are good and are greatly enhanced by the college's particularly strong links with each learner's workplace. Learners are able to apply well what they have learnt in the classroom with the skills they are developing in the workplace. These links contribute well to learners' high success rates.
- Teachers, supervisors and workplace coaches have high expectations of their learners. They expect high standards of professionalism. Learners are well motivated to learn and have strong empathy and interest in working with animals. They are particularly positive about how well they are developing their practical skills.
- Classroom teaching has improved since the last inspection and is good. Teachers draw well on their extensive subject knowledge to make learning interesting and relevant to learners. Teachers use learners' workplace experiences well to reinforce learning.
- The range of learning activities is not always wide enough. In these, teachers make insufficiently effective use of, for example, group work, individualised learning checks, debate and challenge.
- Learners are well supported to develop their research and academic writing skills. Portfolios are well organised.
- Teachers' written feedback on learners' work identifies accurately what learners have achieved and where there are any omissions. However, feedback doesn't consistently provide sufficient guidance to help learners understand how they can improve future work. Teachers' verbal feedback on learners' practical assessments is clear with succinct and constructive guidance on how to improve.
- The college has made excellent progress in the way it delivers functional skills. Learners benefit from learning which is well planned and integrated effectively into learners' vocational programmes.
- Learners with additional learning needs and those at risk of leaving their course early receive good support. Teachers and supervisors are very approachable. They provide learners with good levels of academic and pastoral support on an individual basis.
- Learners make good use of the college's high quality information technology resources both inside and outside the classroom. The college is developing well its virtual learning environment (VLE) which is used effectively to support learners with their learning outside of the classroom. For example, veterinary care assistants use the VLE well, enabling those far from the college to achieve their first steps towards a career in veterinary nursing.
- Learners have access to excellent work placements or employment and the college liaises effectively with workplaces to ensure appropriate and timely access to good expertise and facilities.
- Teachers and supervisors place a strong focus on health and safety during induction and they reinforced these well during later reviews. Learners are quickly able to carry out, independently, risk assessments in all areas of their work. They are able to ensure appropriate adjustments are implemented to minimise risk and they have a good understanding of personal protective equipment and the consequences of not using it correctly.
- A nominated supervisor visits learners frequently at their work placements to carry out progress reviews. This approach provides consistency and improves progress. It ensures individualised support and help for each employer and their learner(s) are effective.
- Supervisors monitor learners' progress thoroughly and set clear targets to achieve theory and practical task deadlines. However, in many reviews supervisors take insufficient account of each

learner's other learning needs or challenge more able learners. Learners do not always participate sufficiently well in their reviews.

- Veterinary nursing learners are supported well by workplace clinical coaches who are well trained for their role and monitored closely by the college. Learners effectively evaluate their employability skills and discuss these with their coach and supervisor.
- Learners receive good information, advice and guidance. These ensure learners are well informed about their career choices and are able to choose a course that is best suited to meet their individual circumstances. Learners are supported well to evaluate their career choices as they progress through their course.
- Although many aspects of equality and diversity, such as religious and cultural beliefs and social attitudes towards animals form part of the vocational curriculum, teachers do not sufficiently develop or reinforce this learning through other learning activities. Equality of opportunity is routinely reinforced at reviews.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The college benefits from good leadership and management. The college has a very clear strategic direction and mission and has been highly successful in meeting its objectives. It continues to train and supply well qualified veterinary nurses in a skills shortage area.
- Managers at all levels are highly ambitious for the learners and have maintained a high level of outcomes. Teaching, learning and assessment have also improved and most of the teaching sessions are now good, including those taught by the subcontractors' teachers.
- Staff are very well qualified, experienced and knowledgeable professionals. The college provides worthwhile training and support for its staff to improve their teaching skills. Teachers, supervisors and clinical coaches' benefit from regular and wide ranging professional updating to develop and maintain their professional skills.
- The college has satisfactory and improving processes for managing the performance of teachers and supervisors. In their appraisals, managers do not focus sufficiently on measuring teachers' and supervisors' skills of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Not all the college's observations of teaching, learning and assessment are sufficiently effective. In weaker observations, observers focus too much on assessing teaching and not learning or attainment. Action plans, resulting from these observations, challenge teachers insufficiently to improve the standard of their teaching.
- Curriculum planning is excellent. Managers are highly proactive at listening to employers and have effectively established an extensive range of programmes from intermediate level to higher education to meet local and national needs. The programmes are run flexibly from several parts of the country and include full- and part-time programmes as well as distance learning courses.
- The college has established outstanding partnerships with an extensive numbers of employers in the sector. These bring substantial benefits, providing learners with very good opportunities to develop their skills and significantly enhance their employment prospects.
- Data management is good. Tutors and assessors have easy and prompt access to relevant information and data. They use these extremely well to monitor learners' attendance and progress and to ensure that learners complete their qualifications within the planned time.
- Since its previous inspection in 2008, the college has made a significant investment in resources to support learning, including the purchase and loan of internet enabled laptops for learners. An increasing number of learners use the extensive range of resources on the VLE to complete their assignments flexibly. Tutors are now making greater use of information learning technology to make learning more accessible to learners.

- The college meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. Learners feel safe and work in safe conditions in work places and premises that are thoroughly checked. They are well protected from bullying and harassment when any issues are raised.
- The college does not have a clear strategy to promote and reinforce learners' understanding of equality and diversity in all aspects of learning. Staff do not share a common understanding of how to promote these in the curriculum.
- The college has a mixed track record of narrowing the achievement gap. Managers have been successful in attracting learners who are unemployed and have plans to extend services to learners in the prison service.
- The college has had limited success in attracting learners from under-represented groups such as minority ethnic groups and male learners. Marketing and publicity activities to promote animal care and veterinary science as a career to underrepresented groups are weak.
- The college's extremely thorough self-assessment processes at centre and course level accurately identified its key strengths and most areas for improvement. The subcontractors contribute effectively to the college's self-assessment. Quality improvement plans are incisive and help managers to direct their efforts to improve the provision and sustain high levels of learner achievements. The college makes very effective use of the views of learners, their carers and employers to make prompt and effective changes to the provision.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

The College of Animal Welfare

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 Learning programmes	16-18 Learning programmes	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Other work-based learning	Employability	Foundation Learning	Community learning
	Overall effectiveness	2				2	2		
	Outcomes for learners	2				2	2		
	The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2				2	2		
	The effectiveness of leadership and management	2				2	2		

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Animal care and veterinary science	2

Provider details

The College of Animal Welfare	
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 0
	Part-time: 566
Principal/CEO	Ms Barbara Cooper
Date of previous inspection	April 2008
Website address	www.caw.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	N/A	N/A	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Part-time	N/A	N/A	67	270	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	0	71	0	379	0	0	0	0
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Open College of Equine Studies ■ Abbeydale Vetlink Ltd 							

Additional socio-economic information

The college operates from Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. It recruits learners from across England, Mid Wales and Scotland. It has centres in Edinburgh, Huntingdon, Leeds and Potters Bar; the latter three provide classroom-based learning for apprenticeships and work-based learning. The company provides training for around 620 employers who are directly involved in funded training, most of whom are small- to medium-sized veterinary practices.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Simon Cutting HMI

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

What inspection judgements mean

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

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

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

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