

Advice note for a pre-registration inspection of an academy/free school/studio school/university technical college (UTC)

School name	Wigan UTC
DfE registration number	359/
Unique reference number (URN)	138229
Inspection number	422333
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Reporting inspector	Lubna Aziz

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Information about the inspection

This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.¹

Context of the school

The Wigan UTC is a University Technical College and it is located in the town centre of Wigan. The college site previously contained a warehouse. The college is currently refurbishing the Victorian building alongside additional newly-built accommodation. The college is part of the Wigan UTC Academy Trust and is due to be opened on 2 September 2013. It intends to cater for 500 boys and girls in the age range 14 to 19 years. 85 students are registered to enrol in September 2013 and the college intends to increase its numbers over the next four years to reach its maximum of 500. The college will accept 24 students in Year 10 and the rest will be admitted in the sixth form. The college currently has no students enrolled who have statements of special educational needs but will accept them should the need arise. The college aims to 'provide young people with an exciting educational offer that will enable them to gain the very best academic qualifications but also to acquire the work-related qualities demanded by the business community'.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The planning documentation indicates that all regulations are likely to be met. However, implementation could not be seen as the college is not operating. The college has an appropriate behaviour policy which describes a system of positive behaviour management and defines the sanctions in the case of any misbehaviour. Students' self-confidence and self-esteem will be raised by working with employers and being involved in employers' projects. The college intends to involve its students in the local community, for example by supporting a local charity 'Compassion in Action'. They will donate soup they will make at college to the food bank run by this charity and will raise funds for the Breast Cancer Awareness and 'Men Matter' charities. In the 'wider world projects' scheme, students will support the Elle McCarthy Project to introduce mobile water pumps and solar-powered streetlights in third-world countries.

Students will attend 'super learning days' when they will meet people representing the fire brigade, police and ambulance services and local magistrates. Alongside the formal citizenship curriculum, this will contribute to students' knowledge of public institutions and give them an understanding of the civil and criminal law. They will

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99

also be taught about the British electoral and parliamentary system and a member of the House of Lords will visit the college to talk to the students. They will be encouraged to take responsibility through membership of the student council and by acting as college prefects. Students will learn about other cultures and faiths through the planned religious education curriculum and the college will invite people from different religions to talk to the students and will provide opportunities for students to visit various places of worship. The college plans to build links with other schools, including schools in Germany and America. The college has a clear element within the teaching and learning policy to ensure that students are presented with balanced political views at all times.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The college's documentation shows that the majority of regulations are likely to be met. The college has satisfactory policies for safeguarding, safer recruitment, behaviour and discipline, prevention of bullying and first aid. The college has booked safeguarding training for its entire staff, including for the designated officer for safeguarding at the appropriate level, prior to its opening in September. A suitable number of members of staff are trained in first aid. There are appropriate policies for health and safety including fire safety. However, due to the refurbishment of the site it has not been possible to undertake the required risk assessments for fire and for the premises, or to obtain a report from the fire authority. A date has been set for the fire authority to carry out a fire safety inspection and produce a report before the college opens. The college will carry out fire and premises risk assessments as soon as the building work is completed. Electronic attendance and admission registers will be used and a suitable format for these is in place. The college has developed a three-year accessibility improvement plan based on the refurbished premises.

In order to meet the requirements in full, the college should:

- comply with health and safety law by producing a risk assessment for the premises (paragraph 11)
- ensure that it has a satisfactory level of fire safety and can demonstrate compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 13).

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The college is likely to meet all the regulations. The college has compiled an appropriate single central register. All the required checks on the suitability of the staff appointed to date have been completed, along with checks on all the governors. The college has no intention to employ supply staff but is aware of its responsibilities if the need arises.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The college is likely to meet all of the regulations. The college has acquired a Victorian three-storey warehouse and it is being refurbished at present alongside a new build. The building work will be completed in two phases. The first phase will be completed by 19 August 2013 and the final handover date for the second phase is set for 16 September 2013. The construction work on the premises was inspected and discussion held with the Principal to ensure that the timescale is reasonable. The refurbishment project is being managed by the Education Funding Agency on behalf of the Department. The Department will wish to liaise with the agency with regard to the building work.

On completion of the refurbishment, there will be sufficient teaching rooms for the intended number of students, including four science laboratories, two engineering workshops, two food manufacturing spaces, a 'vertical farms' space, a food technology room and an electronics laboratory. The classrooms have suitable acoustic insulation and lighting arrangements. There are appropriate toilets, washroom facilities, showers and changing accommodation for the number of students. The temperature of the hot water supply will be controlled. There is a suitable medical room and provision for appropriate labelled drinking water facilities. External lighting is satisfactory. The college intends to use the adjacent Wigan Youth Zone facilities for physical education and outdoor play. This includes sports halls, a gymnasium, a basketball court and a safe outside hard-surfaced play area. All the appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place in regard to the use of this facility.

Provision of information

The provision meets all regulations.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The provision meets all regulations.

Recommendation to the Department for Education

Registration

- **YES. The college can be registered and allowed to open on receipt by DfE of evidence of improvement in relation to the matters outlined above.**

Recommended number of day pupils: 85 (rising to 500 over four years)

Recommended number of boarders: 0

Recommended age range: 14-19 years

Recommended gender of pupils: mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: N/A.

Note: The Department should acquire confirmation from the college before it opens that the planned fire authority report and the fire and premises risk assessments are in place and that the two phases of building work are satisfactorily completed.