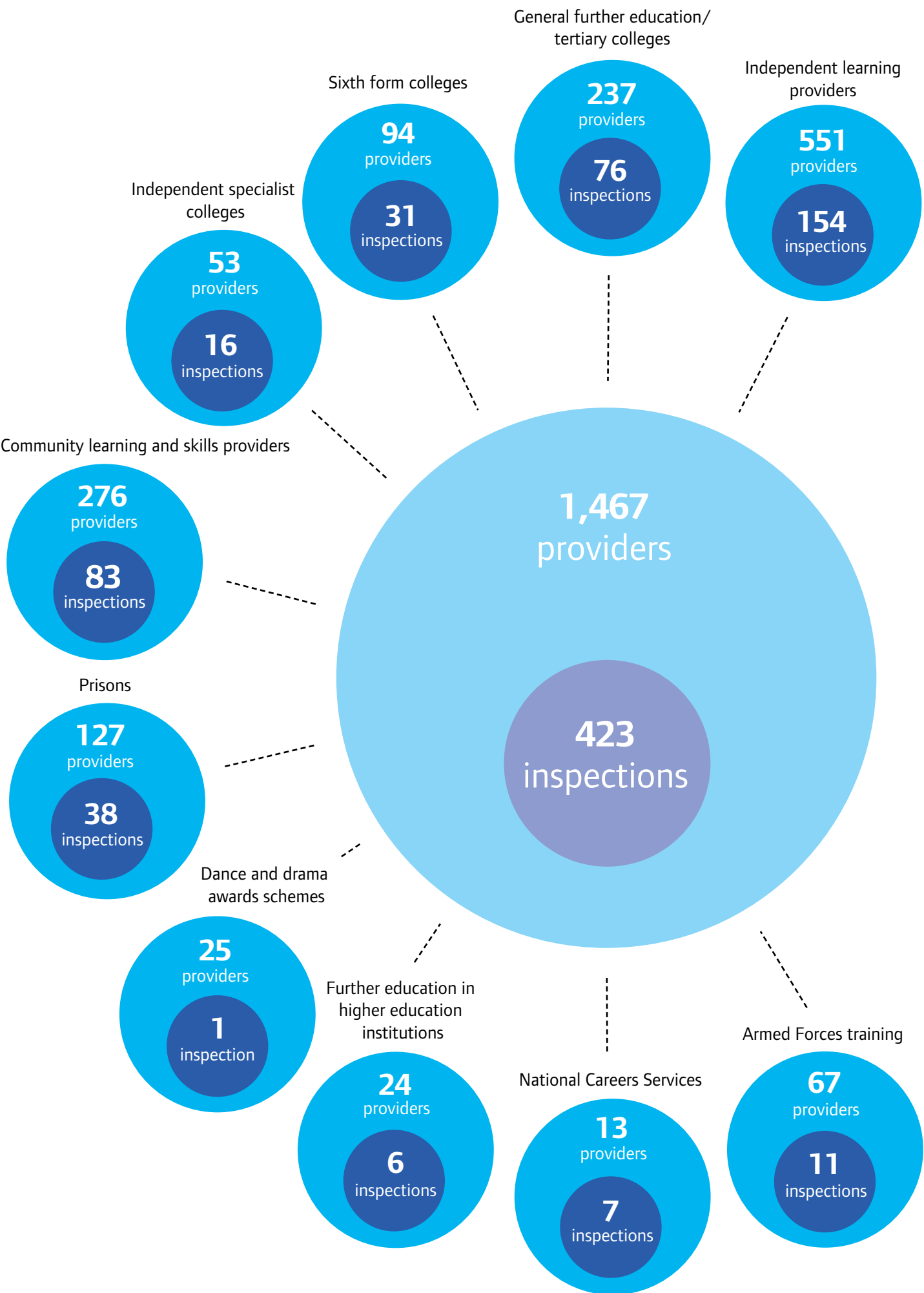


The report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
of **Education, Children's Services and Skills**

Further education and skills



Figure 1: Inspections carried out in 2012/13 and number of funded providers





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Data View: Inspection findings can also be viewed at www.dataview.ofsted.gov.uk. Data View enables users to compare the performance of providers over time from Ofsted inspections across England by region, local authority and constituency area.



Executive summary

- 1. Last year, we raised serious concerns about the further education (FE) and skills sector. This year, we have seen grounds for optimism.** In many of the providers we inspected, we have seen improvements in the quality of teaching, as well as higher expectations for learners. Their leaders were giving greater priority to improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, 13 providers were judged outstanding for teaching and learning, including two general further education (GFE) colleges, the first time any GFE college has achieved this judgement in over three years.
- 2. However, there is still too much provision that is not responsive to local employment needs. This provision is therefore inappropriate for young people, regardless of the quality of teaching.** In most regions, many providers struggle to understand the priorities or the business opportunities in their area. There is currently no structure, accountability measure or system of incentives to ensure that FE and skills provision is adapted to local economic and social needs. Our case study on the City of Bristol on page 18 of this report exemplifies what goes wrong at a local level when lines of accountability are opaque. If the government is committed to raising employment through better skills and to secure economic competitiveness, it will need to fill this gap in strategic accountability urgently.
- 3. Training providers need to ensure that vocational provision is better matched to the needs of local businesses and communities.** Over the next year, we will be looking closely at the appropriateness of provision in meeting local needs and the early impact of government reforms in this area. This will include the provision of English and mathematics, where the quality of current provision is weak.
- 4. Across the whole sector, 71% of providers were judged good or outstanding at their latest inspection as at 31 August 2013.** This is an increase of seven percentage points compared with August 2012. Last year, over a third of learners were in provision that was less than good. This year, this has reduced to a quarter. However, the number of inadequate providers has also increased from 34 to 41, and this includes some large colleges that were previously judged good or outstanding. These must be a priority for the new FE Commissioner.



Outstanding provider case study Royal College Manchester

Students at the **Royal College Manchester**, an independent specialist residential and day college, have complex and severe difficulties. They made outstanding progress in developing their communication skills and their ability to stay calm and manage their own behaviour.

Principal:

‘The leaders of the Trust believe that having a well-defined inclusive strategy, based on a candid evaluation of where the college is (and its fellow services), ensures that its progress and improvement is focused on achieving the best outcomes for students.

This approach, based on the students’ starting points and aspirations, combined with a robust performance management process and a resolute commitment to a culture of continuous improvement, has made the difference in becoming an outstanding provider.

Leaders and staff from the college take responsibility for all of the processes from assessment to ILP planning, service delivery and appraising progress so that the focus never shifts from the students and the outcomes they want to achieve.’

5. **Apprenticeships are still failing to meet their full potential.** Many young people are applying for an apprenticeship, but are not sufficiently employable. This is because young people lack basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, aptitudes in vocational and employability skills and appropriate attitudes for work. For young people under 19, there were seven applicants for every apprenticeship vacancy in 2012/13. People over the age of 25 are much more likely to be given an apprenticeship place. Schools and FE and skills providers must do more to ensure that young people are employable and well prepared for an apprenticeship. Over the coming year, we will be making an initial evaluation of the 16–19 study programmes, which include traineeships as the bridge to apprenticeships.
6. As well as the system ensuring that more young people who want an apprenticeship are ready and able to access one, **providers must improve the quality of apprenticeships.** Too many providers do not work closely enough with employers and, consequently, apprentices fail to get the right training. This year, we judged 9% of apprenticeship provision to be inadequate – this is far too high.
7. **Far too many young people from poorer backgrounds fail to achieve in their post-16 destination and drop out of education, employment or training.** A disproportionate number of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds go into the FE sector. In schools, there is an increasing focus on the achievement of this group of children, influenced by national incentives such as the pupil premium. In the FE and skills sector, it is too often the case that managers and staff do not know who these young people are or what provision and support would be most appropriate for them. The best providers take steps to overcome this, but the regulations that govern the transfer of information from schools are burdensome and bureaucratic.
8. **Training and education in prisons are very poor and are failing to support offenders into employment. This contributes to a cycle of reoffending that costs taxpayers billions each year.** Very few prisoners are getting the opportunity to develop the skills and behaviours they need for work. Despite some prisons having state of the art facilities, the quality of training and education is not good enough in about two thirds of the prisons inspected in the past four years. In many prisons, training and education comes too far down the list of priorities for prison governors and other senior staff. Accountability for the quality of this provision is weak and must be addressed urgently.

71% of providers judged good or outstanding at their latest inspection



What does the sector look like?

9. In 2012/13, provisional data show that 3.7 million learners¹ were engaged in some form of government-funded education or training in the FE and skills sector. GFE colleges² and sixth form colleges remain the major providers, with just over two million learners. Around £7.78 billion of public funds were allocated to the FE and skills sector in this reporting year. This figure denotes a decrease of around **£100 million** on last year.
10. Overall, there are a similar number of providers in the sector this year as in 2011/12. However, the number of independent learning providers that are subject to inspection has increased this year. In 2012/13, 38 independent learning providers that were funded in 2011/12 did not receive funding, but an additional 76 independent learning providers received funding that had not in the previous year.



Outstanding provider case study Training and Learning Company

Staff at the **Training and Learning Company**, a charitable community learning and skills provider, were well qualified, skilled and passionate about their work. Apprentices were enthused and greatly benefited from assessors' excellent experience, producing very high standards of work as a result. The apprentices' development of English and mathematics was outstanding. Many achieve qualifications in these subjects and gain the confidence of knowing they can go further.

¹ Learner numbers are based on provisional in-year data provided by The Data Service.
² GFE colleges include tertiary colleges and specialist FE colleges.



Inspection outcomes in 2012/13

11. Since the introduction of the revised Common Inspection Framework for FE and Skills in September 2012, inspections have focused even more intensively on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the effectiveness of managers in improving teaching. The framework also requires inspectors to consider the destinations of learners on leaving their programmes. Inspections evaluate how well providers tailor their provision to local labour markets and the needs of local communities. Providers now receive two days' notice of inspection.

13. Twelve providers were judged to be outstanding for overall effectiveness this year.⁴ This covers a wide range of provision, from national providers of apprenticeships to small sixth form colleges and other providers serving their local communities, but excludes learning and skills in prisons. Any type of provider – large or small – can therefore be outstanding.

7 – the increase in percentage points of the proportion of providers judged good or outstanding at their latest inspection

The FE and skills sector is responding to the challenge of last year's Annual Report

12. Across the sector, 71% of providers were judged good or outstanding at their latest inspection as at 31 August 2013.³ This is an increase of seven percentage points compared with August 2012. As a result, this year, just a quarter of learners were at providers judged to be satisfactory or requires improvement compared with just over a third of learners last year. However, the number of providers judged to be inadequate increased from 34 to 41.

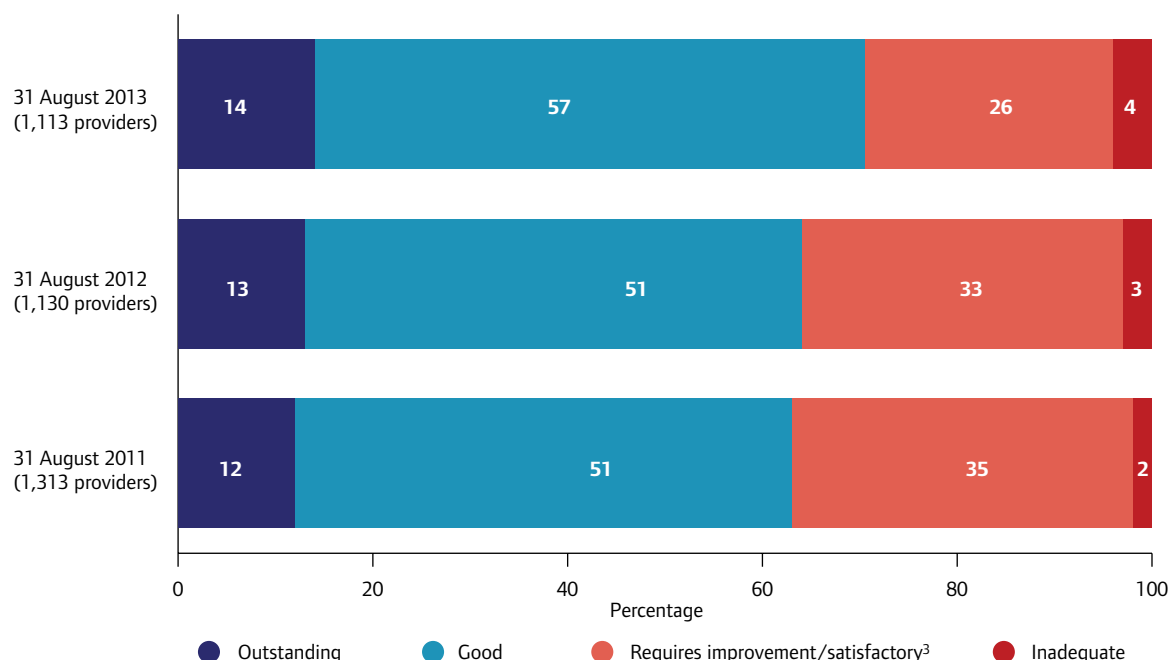


³ This year, of the 360 inspections we carried out in total, 101 (28%) were brought forward because our risk assessment indicated concerns.

⁴ Ofsted also found FE provision in one higher education institution to be outstanding.

Figure 2: Most recent overall effectiveness of further education and skills providers inspected over time^{1,2}

Most recent overall effectiveness of FE and skills providers inspected as at 31 August 2013 compared with the most recent overall effectiveness as at 31 August 2012 and 31 August 2011

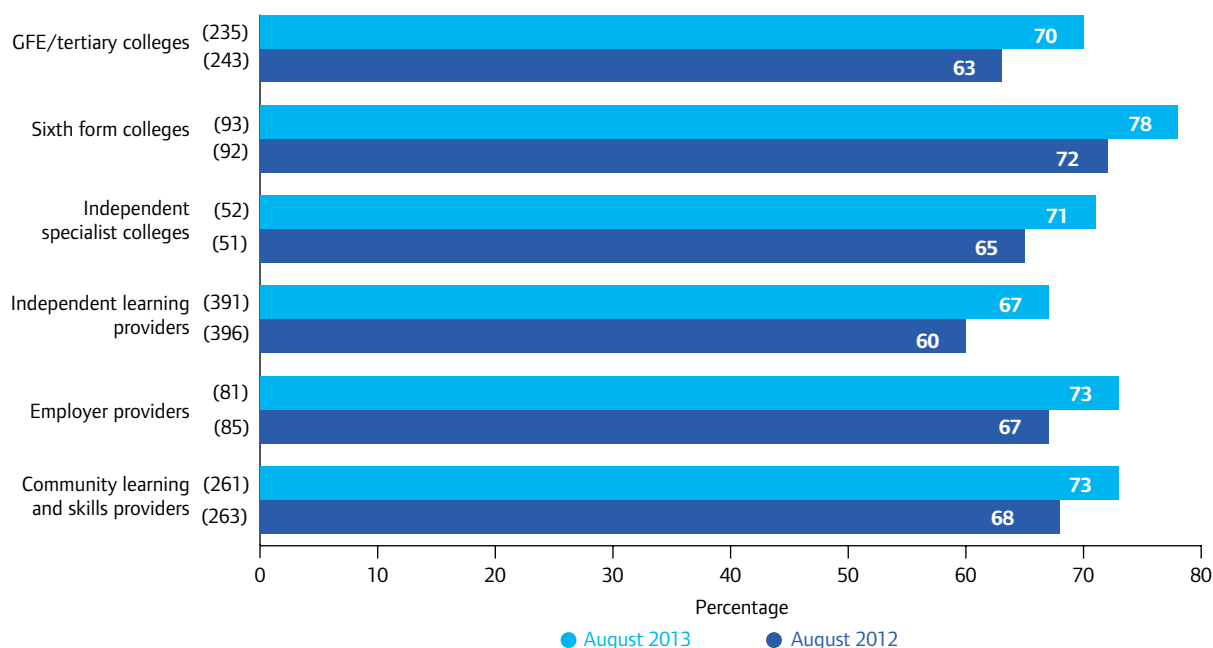


1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to exactly 100.

2. Includes GFE/tertiary colleges (including specialist FE colleges), sixth form colleges, independent specialist colleges, independent learning providers (including employer providers) and community learning and skills providers.

3. As of 1 September 2012, FE and skills providers with the inspection outcome of grade 3 have been judged as requires improvement. Prior to September 2012, FE and skills providers with an inspection outcome of grade 3 were judged as satisfactory.

Figure 3: Overall effectiveness judged to be good or outstanding at the latest inspection by provider type, over time^{1,2}



1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to exactly 100.

2. GFE/tertiary colleges include specialist FE colleges.



14. This year, every one of our main categories of FE and skills providers now has more good or outstanding provision compared with 2011/12. It is very welcome to see that, of the 76 **GFE and tertiary colleges** inspected this year, 29 improved to good or outstanding. The proportion of **sixth form colleges** judged good or outstanding this year also improved, although the proportion of outstanding sixth form colleges overall has dropped slightly.
15. Overall, the cohort of **independent learning providers** is now stronger because of weaker providers leaving the sector. The number of employer providers has remained fairly steady over the past four years and the proportion of good and outstanding provision at employer providers has increased by 10 percentage points.

Of the 76 GFE/tertiary colleges inspected this year, 29 improved to good or outstanding.

16. Community learning and skills providers include local authorities, specialist designated institutions and third sector organisations such as not for profit companies and charities. Performance at the **local authorities and designated specialist institutions** was good or outstanding at 81% of providers. **Not-for-profit or charitable** providers performed less well, with only 60% judged good or outstanding. The weakest programme offered by community learning and skills providers continued to be foundation learning. Providers must learn the lessons from this failing provision as they develop the new 16–19 study programmes, including traineeships. This provision is vital for young people at risk of falling out of education, employment and training.

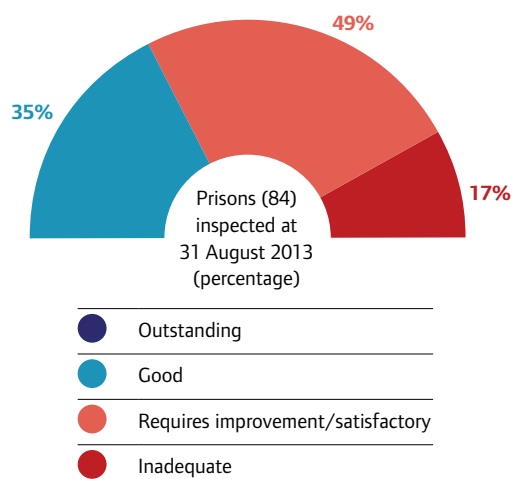
Outstanding provider case study Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College

At **Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College**, learners made excellent progress and their standard of work was outstanding on many courses. These outcomes were underpinned by rigorous quality assurance procedures that also chart the way for further improvement.

17. The quality of learning and skills work in **prisons** was poor. It had the largest proportion of inadequate provision across the whole of the FE and skills sector. No prison had been judged outstanding for 'leadership and management of learning and skills and work' in four years. This year, Ofsted judged 'leadership and management of learning and skills and work' to be inadequate or as requires improvement in 22 (58%) of the 38 prison reports published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons.

Prisons have the largest proportion of provision judged to be inadequate across the whole of the FE and skills sector

Figure 4: Most recent overall effectiveness or leadership and management judgements of prisons inspected, as at 31 August 2013



1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to exactly 100.
2. Data are for the latest inspection outcome where the inspection of the prison occurred after September 2009 and the report was published as at 31 August 2013.
3. From January 2012, Ofsted ceased to award an overall effectiveness judgement. The leadership and management judgement has been provided in lieu of this.



Outstanding provider case study David Lewis College

At David Lewis College, students with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties achieved a very high proportion of their personal targets, which were skilfully designed to be challenging but realistic, and focused well on gaining independent living skills and an understanding of the world of work.

The curriculum provides an excellent range of pathways suitable to students' very different needs, and staff skilfully adapt each programme according to changes in learners' personal development or individual circumstances. Outstanding teaching and learning were complemented very well by individual support from an exceptional range of high quality therapists and specialist staff.

18. Prison regimes often disrupted learning- and work-related activities, resulting in poor attendance and punctuality. The view that this is unacceptable is endorsed by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons. Overall, far too few prisons were preparing prisoners adequately for resettlement and employment with good quality education and training. Take-up of provision in English and mathematics was often very low compared with the level of need assessed at induction. Despite all this, we have seen pockets of excellent practice in prisons: there is nothing inevitable about the mediocrity and inadequacy that is so common. The most effective provision was vocational training where the prison worked in close partnership with employers. Ofsted's recent Annual Lecture focused on education and training in prisons, and made urgent recommendations to improve provision and reduce re-offending.⁵

⁵ 'Seizing the moment', Further education and skills annual lecture, 10 October 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/furthereducationandskills.



Unemployment, apprenticeships and training

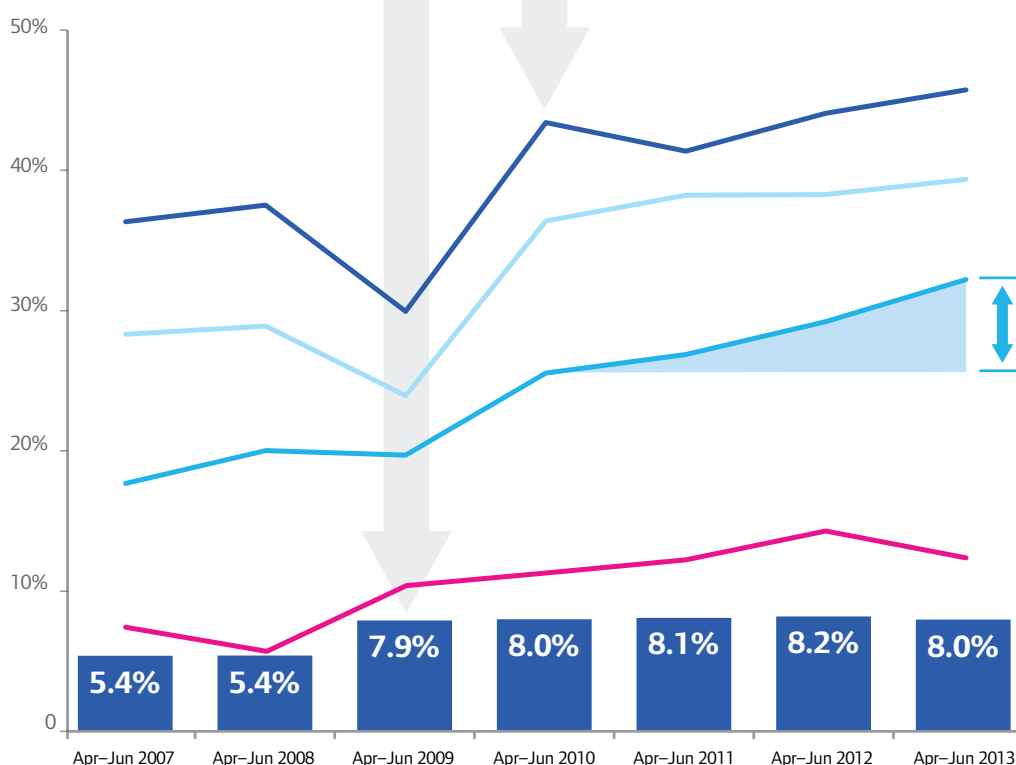


Definitions

The unemployment rate is the proportion of the population who are unemployed.¹

The impact of the economic recession means that the unemployment rate increases in 2009.

The sharp increase in long-term unemployment one year later in 2010 shows the impact of the recession.



Legend

Long-term unemployment rate by age group (12+mth)

- 50 and over unemployed
- 25-49 unemployed
- 18-24 unemployed
- 16-17 unemployed
- Overall unemployment rate

6.7 percentage points

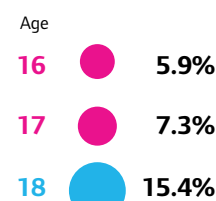
– the increase in the long-term unemployment rate for 18-24-year-olds over the past three years. This includes many new entrants into the labour market, including those who have finished their education.

Source: Office for National Statistics

DfE data on participation in education, training and employment for 16-18-year olds in England show that this age are particularly

vulnerable to falling into the not in education, employment or training (NEET) category

Teenagers in England who are NEET, 2012



¹ It is the proportion of the economically active population (those in employment plus those who are unemployed) who are unemployed.

Unemployed are defined as anyone (including full-time learners) who is out of work, available to start work in the next two weeks, and has either looked for work in the last four weeks or is waiting to start a job they have already obtained.

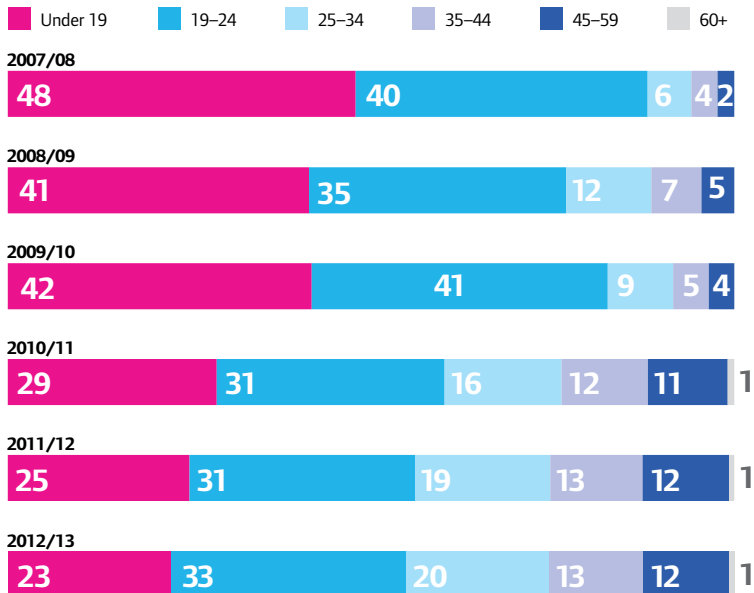
Sources: NEET statistics: DfE, Participation in education, training and employment by 16- to 18-year-olds in England, end 2012:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-by-16-to-18-year-olds-in-england-end-2012

ONS Labour Market Statistics, October 2013: www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/october-2013/statistical-bulletin.html.

Data on apprenticeships have been obtained from The Data Service from the following location: www.thedataservice.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/5EB06887-64FE-41A6-8275-9B652B50EB63/0/Oct2013_Apprenticeship_Starts_REVISIED.xls.

Apprenticeship starts by age group (%)



As a proportion of all starts, the under 19 age group has decreased by more than half since 2007/08, but the actual numbers have increased:

2007/08 **107,550**
2012/13 **111,650**



Applications per apprenticeship vacancy 2012/13

Agriculture, horticulture and animal care	12
Arts, media and publishing	25
Business, administration and law	10
Construction, planning and the built environment	14
Education and training	13
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	14
Health, public services and care	13
Information and communication technology	14
Leisure, travel and tourism	7
Retail and commercial enterprise, including hospitality and catering	8
Science and mathematics	7

Overall effectiveness and teaching and learning of apprenticeships inspected in 2012/13

Overall effectiveness (222 inspections)

The overall effectiveness of apprenticeships inspected in 2012/13 was not good enough, – with only 56% found to be good or outstanding for overall effectiveness.



Teaching and learning (222 inspections)

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate



The social and economic imperative

FE and skills must prepare young people for employment

19. The importance of the FE and skills sector continues to increase. Over one million 16–24-year-olds in the UK are currently not in education, employment or training (NEET).⁶ Of those who are unemployed, the proportion who have been looking for work for more than 12 months continues to increase. It is highly unlikely that employers will take young people on if they do not have the skills and attitudes the employers are looking for. There is now an urgent challenge to schools and the FE and skills sector to ensure that young people are equipped to benefit from the opportunities that apprenticeships and similar programmes provide.
20. The age of participation in education, training and employment was raised to 17 from September 2013. If the expectation of ongoing participation provides an opportunity to embed a commitment to learning and has an impact on rates of unemployment in future, it is the FE and skills sector that is best placed to realise this. However, recently published data show considerable variations in how well local authorities

track participation in education and training among 16- and 17-year-olds. On average, the activity of 4% of 16- and 17-year-olds is unknown and in some local authorities that percentage is as high as 23%.⁷

23 – the percentage in some LAs where the participation in education and training of 16- and 17-year-olds is unknown

21. The social and economic imperative for the FE and skills sector starts with providing access to good quality education, training and support for young people, many of whom have been let down at school. In 2012, only 36% of those eligible for free school meals gained five good GCSEs including mathematics and English compared with 63% of other learners.⁸ By far the most common destination for these young people was an FE college. FE and skills providers must offer opportunities to these young people to break the link between high deprivation and poor life chances.

⁶ Young people not in education, employment or training, October 2013; www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/october-2013/index.html. An estimated 935,000 in England: Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), August 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/neet-statistics-quarterly-brief-april-to-june-2013.
⁷ Participation in education and training by local authority, October 2013; www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/a00214942/local-authority-education-training.
⁸ National and local authority tables in www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-and-equivalent-attainment-by-pupil-characteristics-in-england.



22. Young people who do not achieve five GCSEs at grades A* to C at school must have good careers guidance and targeted support to guide them into the right kind of further education and training. At the moment, providers often lack basic information about these learners and so are unable to target additional support appropriately. Currently, there is no easy system for transferring this information directly from schools or other providers at the age of 16 and procedures for gaining this information from local authorities is far too burdensome and bureaucratic. The outcomes for these groups of learners are not good enough. Compared with other young people, almost twice as many young people eligible for free school meals either dropped out of the programme they progressed to at the age of 16 or were categorised as being NEET.
23. In 2011/12, only 18% of those who did not have GCSE in English and mathematics at grades A* to C at the age of 16 achieved these by the age of 19.⁹ This must be improved and the FE sector now has a clear mandate to do this in the 16–19 study programmes.

Spotlight on the skills shortage areas

24. Recruiting staff with high levels of expertise in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) remains a national high priority for employers, although these were some of the better performing sector subject areas on inspection this year, with about 60% judged to be good or outstanding. The proportion of apprentices successfully completing their programme in engineering, for example, has increased steadily over the last five years and was 78% in 2011/12.¹⁰

25. Despite the high number of learners working towards qualifications in hospitality and catering, retailing, construction, and health and care, especially by apprentices over the age of 25, employers report continuing difficulties in recruiting to these sectors. The problem is likely to be exacerbated for employers by the relatively high average age of many of the current employees in these sectors, who may retire in the near future. This underlines the importance of providers engaging more closely with employers in order to ensure that their learners are readily employable in these sectors on completion of their programmes.

Outstanding provider case study Swindon College

After many years of underperformance, **Swindon College** improved from inadequate to outstanding in five years. Leaders and managers successfully created a culture of respect and ambition. Staff throughout the college contributed to a culture in which learners take absolute priority. They had an unrelenting determination that each learner should achieve her or his best.

Principal:

‘Unrelenting focus on the needs of learners and on how to improve teaching and learning. Really effective distributive leadership across the college. Good overview and support from governors – and a good understanding by governors of teaching and learning. Really effective support structures to improve teaching; a system of action plans and learning coaches to support teachers to move up from good. A strong performance management system to ensure teaching is at least good.’

26. Although skills in social care and construction are frequently in demand by employers, provision in about two fifths of the providers we inspected this year was not good enough. Weaker provision in social care was often characterised by a high turnover of trainers and assessors in a number of subcontractors that significantly disadvantaged many learners. In construction, the weaker provision was in apprenticeships offered by FE colleges. Employers were typically unable to plan on-site training to complement training in the college.

⁹ Attainment by young people in England measured using matched administrative data: by age 19 in 2012, statistical first release, March 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/attainment-by-young-people-in-england-measured-using-matched-administrative-data-by-age-19-in-2012.

¹⁰ Apprenticeship Success Rates, April 2013; www.thedataservice.org.uk/Statistics/fe_data_library/Apprenticeships/.



Of the main national skills shortage areas, the hospitality and catering provision inspected this year had a higher proportion judged good or outstanding. At the Ministry of Defence (Army), military catering skills are cross-mapped particularly well to the chefs' apprenticeship. At the City of Plymouth College, teachers had high expectations and were passionate about their craft.

Still no clear measure of the true impact of provision on meeting local needs

27. Every provider has an important role in ensuring that its courses are both matched to local needs and make a real difference to individuals, but currently there is no requirement for providers to justify the number of learners in each vocational area in relation to local business and economic needs. The ability to judge the true effectiveness of provision will depend, among other things, on the availability of robust data on learners' destinations. The government has begun to collect and publish data on learners' destinations at the ages of 16 and 18, and on leaving their programmes for those aged 19 and over. These measures must quickly become more complete and accurate so that they provide a reliable national indicator of impact.
28. The adult skills budget continues to give providers flexibility in determining their curriculum for post-19 learners, first introduced in the 2011/12 academic year. Our survey on local autonomy and accountability in colleges¹¹ showed that progress in responding to the new flexibilities across the sector has been slow. Most of the colleges sampled offered a broad range of courses at different levels that led to nationally recognised qualifications. However, these colleges did not adequately ensure that courses were targeted to the needs of local employers so that they would give learners the skills they needed to progress successfully to their next step. Only three of the 17 GFE colleges visited for the survey had revised their curriculum content and structure considerably to focus on preparing learners better for opportunities in local employment and enterprise and to fill local, regional or national skills gaps that had been identified. Our case study in Bristol on page 18 shows that only a very small proportion of FE courses even directly relate to, or are likely to lead to higher level study in, the priorities identified by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

29. The survey identified three main barriers to developing a curriculum that met local employers' needs:

- Staff lacked professional expertise in working with employers and other partners to ensure that they adapted the curriculum offer in response to local business needs and, more specifically, to reduce skills shortages.
- Most colleges struggled to get the labour market intelligence they needed to know exactly what the local priorities or the forthcoming business opportunities in their local area were.
- The lack of consistent, sector-wide measures of learners' destinations, including into sustainable employment, has hindered college governors' ability to evaluate the wider impact of their college's work in the local area.

30. A key challenge therefore remains for college governors: to hold their college to account for the quality of provision and for its true impact. Governors need to know what happens to their learners after they leave. Ofsted will be launching a Data Dashboard for FE and skills providers in 2014 to ensure that governors have accessible data to hold leaders and managers to account. For learners, outcomes mean more than the achievement of a qualification. Provision should lead on to further or higher education, training or employment.



¹¹ *Local accountability and autonomy in colleges* (130067), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/local-accountability-and-autonomy-colleges.

Outstanding provider case study Rochdale Sixth Form College

Performance management at Rochdale Sixth Form College was rigorous and transparent, with high levels of accountability. Teaching was energetic and often inspirational, and built students' confidence to achieve their potential. Particular attention was given to improving the quality of students' written work.

Principal:

'Outstanding as far as we are concerned is an unrelenting focus on keeping things simple with strong, focused leadership and a culture that focuses upon maximising student achievement with high levels of accountability throughout the college. This means never taking our eye off the ball in terms of classroom practice and being forensic with assessment and tracking. We twin this with individualised pastoral care so that that no one student gets left behind.'



33. The example of the Bristol area shows the impact of poor coordination across the FE and skills provision in the area and lack of clear accountability for the quality and relevance of that provision.

No overview or accountability for local provision

31. An even more significant barrier to planning post-16 provision is the lack of accountability for the range and relevance of provision in a specific geographical area. Local authorities have the statutory duty to ensure that there is sufficient provision for all young people up to the age of 17 and to monitor their participation. At the moment, however, no one has the strategic responsibility for ensuring that local provision supports local economic and social needs.
32. In most parts of the country, local bodies have formed non-statutory LEPs, with the aim of promoting economic development. If the LEPs were to step into the strategic role for FE and skills, they would need to show more commitment to supporting the sector. Most of the LEPs interviewed for the local accountability and autonomy survey¹² were not sufficiently well informed about the FE and skills provision in their area or the role of local providers in reducing unemployment and supporting economic growth. Only around one third of all LEPs had a direct representative of FE and skills on the LEP board.

Outstanding provider case study Walsall MBC Adult and Community College

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council's **Adult and Community College** placed exemplary focus on sustainability that benefited learners, the college and the community through very good use of resources. The quality of learners' work was exceptional and showed their considerable progress throughout their programmes.

Principal:

'Know your patch, and be clear that is the patch you serve. Have a good understanding of your context: the demography, the social and financial challenges, and development needs... Make sure you have brilliant teachers... It is leaders' responsibility to remove obstacles to great teaching; to get the best performance from teachers, and to be honest if performance is not up to standard... Everyone contributes to aims of the college, whatever their role; the whole college makes the difference.'

¹² *Local accountability and autonomy in colleges* (130067), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/local-accountability-and-autonomy-colleges.



Spotlight on the City of Bristol

The City of Bristol has a population of over 400,000.¹³ It is home to two universities and two large FE colleges. Once a thriving port, the city's economy now depends largely on the creative media, electronics and aerospace industries. Unemployment stands at 8%, just above the national rate. The proportion of young people aged 16–18 who are known to be NEET was 7.9% at the end of 2012.¹⁴ Of the eight providers that have been inspected in the Bristol area over the last five years, six were judged to be good or outstanding at their latest inspection and two were inadequate, including the large City of Bristol College, which accounts for over 17,000 learners.¹⁵

The curriculum of providers in the West of England, including Bristol, does not sufficiently match local employment priorities. Only 20% of learners at FE colleges in the West of England are on courses that either directly relate to the LEP priority sectors or are likely to lead directly to higher study in them. These sectors are: advanced engineering; aerospace and defence; low carbon industries; creative and digital; professional and financial services; microelectronics and silicon design; and tourism.

Too few learners on other courses are being prepared sufficiently for the jobs and apprenticeships available in Bristol. The perverse incentives in the system for funding colleges encourage them to provide courses that appeal to learners rather than ones that meet the employment needs of the community.

Apprenticeships are still not highly regarded by local young people or sufficiently promoted by schools. While some employers in Bristol's specialist engineering industries are able to recruit apprentices easily, at least two large employers have recently had difficulty recruiting apprentices in sectors where employment is expected to grow. Employers report that new, young employees do not adopt the disciplines of the workplace sufficiently well and lack the positive attitude and motivation required. However, employers do not offer enough work experience placements.

Forums for bringing colleges and employers together have not been effective in Bristol. However, the West of England LEP is currently implementing a range of initiatives designed to improve the link between training provided by colleges and the needs of local employers. All colleges have engaged with these initiatives, but it is too early to see any impact.

Over **17,000** learners attend City of Bristol College, which was judged as inadequate

Outstanding provider case study Working Men's College

Most learners at the **Working Men's College**, a small community learning and skills provider in London, have very low starting points and many have significant barriers to learning. Their progress is often exceptional, with outstanding achievements.



¹³ Nomis, Source: www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157348/report.aspx.

¹⁴ 2012 local authority NEET figures; www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/neet/a0064101/16--to-18-year-olds-not-in-education,-employment-or-training.

¹⁵ Only includes providers funded in 2012/13.



Teaching, learning and assessment

With increased focus, teaching is improving

34. The revised inspection framework has particularly highlighted the quality and leadership of teaching. In response, many leaders and governors have given greater priority to improving the quality of teaching and training across much of the sector this year. The resulting increase in the proportion of providers with good or outstanding teaching, learning and assessment is clear.¹⁶ In the providers that either dropped a grade or remained at requires improvement or inadequate, leaders and managers had usually not focused enough on monitoring and improving the quality of teaching, which tended to vary considerably across their provision. Self-assessment at these providers was not sufficiently evaluative and leaders' expectations were far too low. Inspection will continue to prioritise these issues.
35. This year, inspectors observed more than double the number of teaching and learning sessions than in the previous year, at nearly 9,000. The proportion of sessions judged to be good or outstanding was 69%. Employer providers stood out as the type of provider with the highest proportion of good and outstanding

training, at 85% of the 199 observed sessions. Inspectors observed nearly 4,500 sessions in GFE colleges and the quality of teaching had improved. This year, inspectors judged two GFE colleges to have outstanding teaching, learning and assessment, the first time any GFE college has achieved this judgement in over three years.

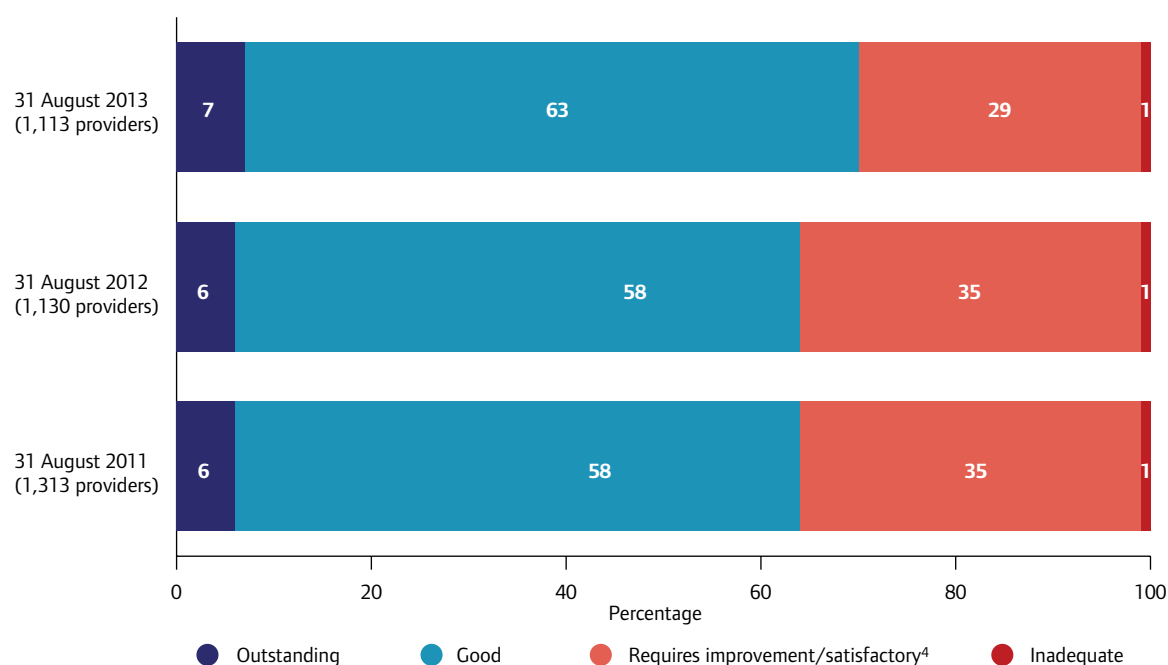
36. Improving the quality of teaching and learning must continue to remain a high priority for the sector. In the past year, 6% of providers were judged to have inadequate teaching.
37. Getting quality assurance and performance management right are core to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Where procedures were ineffective at improving teaching, the systems for monitoring the quality of teaching frequently failed to identify where and why teaching was not effectively supporting all the learners. Similarly, managers typically failed to use data on learners' performance to identify areas of provision with weaker teaching. All too often, these weaker providers either failed to listen to their learners or took too much notice of positive satisfaction learner surveys without checking whether the questions were analytical enough.

¹⁶ Providers with the most recent inspection data prior to 1 September 2009 do not have a teaching and learning grade. Teaching and learning grades for these providers have been projected based on the relationship between overall effectiveness and teaching and learning grades for inspections after 1 September 2009.



Figure 5: Most recent teaching and learning inspection judgement of further education and skills providers over time^{1,2,3}

Most recent teaching and learning inspection judgement of FE and skills providers inspected at 31 August 2013 compared with the most teaching and learning inspection judgement at 31 August 2012 and 31 August 2011



1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to exactly 100.

2. Includes GFE/tertiary colleges (including specialist FE colleges), sixth form colleges, independent specialist colleges, independent learning providers (including employer providers), and community learning and skills providers.

3. Prior to 1 September 2009, teaching and learning grades were not reported as part of the Ofsted inspection framework. Providers with a last inspection date prior to 1 September 2009 do not have a teaching and learning grade. Teaching and learning grades for these providers have been projected based on the relationship between overall effectiveness and teaching and learning grades for inspections after 1 September 2009.

4. As of 1 September 2012, FE and skills providers with the inspection outcome of grade 3 have been judged as requires improvement. Prior to September 2012, FE and skills providers with an inspection outcome of grade 3 were judged as satisfactory.

English and mathematics provision remains a significant concern

38. Mathematics is a key area of FE and skills provision. On the one hand, these skills are a high priority for employers, both at the higher technical level, coupled with statistics, and as a basic foundation skill for work. On the other hand, many FE and skills providers are working with learners who failed to achieve level 2 in these vital skills at school. However, foundation mathematics continues to be one of the weakest subjects in FE colleges, with only around two fifths of the provision inspected this year judged to be good or outstanding.
39. All too often, lessons in mathematics are characterised by learners' slow progress and poor attainment. In 2011/12, only 40% of the 26,000 young people aged 16–18 who took GCSE in mathematics, frequently as a repeat, gained a GCSE

at grade C or above; a further 5,000 young people had dropped out during the year. Too often, the teaching simply failed to motivate learners or help them understand the concepts and apply their skills. The number of young people who achieved a level 2 qualification in functional mathematics in colleges was better, at 68% of those who started the programme.

40. The picture for English is even worse. Only 33% of the young people aged 16–18 in the FE and skills sector who sat GCSE in English in 2011/12 achieved a grade C or above. Success rates in functional English for young people in colleges were better, but still low at 52%.
41. The weak provision and poor outcomes for learners are deeply concerning, especially as the introduction of the 16–19 study programmes from August 2013 have raised the stakes for all providers to deliver good quality teaching for learners without a GCSE in English and/or mathematics at grade C or above. The

Outstanding provider case study CITB – Construction Skills

With over 3,300 apprentices aged 16–18 and over 2,300 apprentices aged 19+, **CITB – Construction Skills**, a charitable community and skills provider, offered consistently excellent training and high quality facilities and support for employers across the country, whether the apprentices were enrolled directly with CITB or at one of its subcontractors.

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has also made funding available for this provision for learners up to the age of 25. The key components of good provision are initial assessments to identify each learner's level of skill and needs, and teaching and learning in each subject that underpins the rest of their programme. In traineeships, apprenticeships and vocational provision, learners must be able to apply their English and mathematical skills in work-related contexts.

23% – the proportion of young people under 19 starting an apprenticeship – lower than last year

Apprenticeships – still not good enough

42. Not enough apprenticeships are providing enough young people with a good quality option for work-based training. The weaker apprenticeships do not enable young people to develop substantial skills or an adequate understanding of their industry or use meaningful jobs as a basis for their training. The poor programmes are in danger of devaluing the brand.
43. Apprenticeships also often fail to provide the source of vocational skills that the national economy needs. The drive to increase the number of 16–18-year-old apprentices has had little effect. There have been substantially more applications for apprenticeships this year, but although 63% of applicants were under 19, just 23% of all starts were aged 16–18, a lower proportion than last year. Competition for places was fierce this year, with seven applicants for every apprenticeship vacancy for young people under 19.
44. In 2011/12, GFE colleges accounted for around 31% of apprenticeship starts, while private sector and third sector providers accounted for the largest proportion of apprenticeship starts at around 359,000 (69%). Inspectors judged the quality of teaching to be lower in these sectors, with 57% of providers judged to be good and only 3% to be outstanding.
45. Too often, those with responsibility for overseeing the apprenticeship concentrated on assessment and assessment planning at the expense of structured, high quality training and development activities directed towards a defined and demanding job role. The quality of teaching for apprentices at colleges has improved and it continues to be good on apprenticeships provided by local authorities.
46. The active involvement of employers is the most significant factor that differentiates strong from weak provision. In the poor provision inspected this year, apprentices made slow progress and too few succeeded, or succeeded within the time allocated. This was often due to poor links between the providers and employers. Providers did not ensure that all of the employers they worked with were sufficiently committed and able to provide the high quality work, development and support needed to sustain a high quality apprenticeship. All too often, the employers did not know how to support their apprentices or what progress they were making at college or during off-the-job training.

Outstanding provider case study Walsall GFE College

Walsall GFE College's determination to improve the quality of teaching and learning and students' experience was captured in very clear strategic ambitions and values that permeated all the college's activities and placed students at the heart of the college's work. Students developed practical skills well above the standard expected for the level of their course. The college makes excellent use of labour market intelligence to ensure that most of the courses are carefully matched to local, regional and national socio-economic needs.



Outstanding provider case study

Defence Equipment & Support, Defence Munitions Gosport

The training at **Defence Equipment & Support, Defence Munitions Gosport**, was inspiring and highly effective for all apprentices. Managers, tutors and apprentice masters had high expectations of apprentices as they developed skills in processing explosives and the maintenance of complex weapons systems. Their standards of work were exceptional, they were highly aware of health and safety issues and they demonstrated robust safe working practices in a potentially hazardous environment. On completion of their training in mechanical engineering with the employer provider, every single apprentice progressed into engineering employment in the defence industries or with prestigious employers.

47. In the better provision at all types of providers, trainers and assessors ensured that apprentices were skilled at linking theoretical knowledge to industry practices and they promoted industry practice and standards throughout the programme. The development of technical skills, communication, teamwork and independence went hand-in-hand. Highly effective arrangements were in place for linking off-the-job training with the practice and application of skills at work. These apprentices benefited from comprehensive coaching and training in the workplace from experienced mentors and supervisors.
48. In outstanding apprenticeships, providers and employers collaborated very effectively to ensure that all training and work activities were very well coordinated. Apprentices worked independently and alongside experienced workers, and frequently undertook complex work activities, making an important contribution to their employers' business. They matured quickly in a demanding work environment and became confident, capable employees demonstrating good analytical and discussion skills and high standards in written and verbal communication.

7 – the number of applicants per apprenticeship vacancy this year for young people aged under 19

49. This type of provision must be replicated in all apprenticeships. Ofsted welcomes the government's plans to give employers the central role of taking responsibility for defining industry standards and designing qualifications as recommended in the Richard Review.¹⁷ Employers must also be supported in committing a greater number of apprenticeship places, especially for those under the age of 19. In turn, schools and providers must ensure that apprenticeships are given a much higher profile to young people and their parents. These changes would need to go hand in hand with efforts to improve the quality of provision. Inspections will continue to focus on how well providers engage with employers to ensure that apprentices' development matches the specific skills needs of the relevant vocational area.

Outstanding provider case study

Foxes Academy

Staff at **Foxes Academy**, an independent residential specialist college, were highly skilled at using therapeutic support methods to help learners manage their own behaviour, reduce stress levels and improve their concentration. The academy had an outstanding record in preparing learners to move on, with the large majority going on to semi-independent living and finding paid or voluntary work.

Principal:

'Keep the end point in sight all the time. How can we through what we do secure the best possible outcomes for our learners and provide a meaningful springboard into the rest of their lives? Learners at Foxes Academy do not learn how to live more independently in the classroom, they learn how to do it in the homes we provide. They do not learn to work through short-term work experience, they learn how to work by training in a real hotel environment (Foxes Hotel), throughout their course.'

¹⁷ *Richard Review of Apprenticeships* (BIS/12/1323), Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2012; www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-richard-review-of-apprenticeships.





Key statistics

Overall effectiveness of colleges by type at their most recent inspection as at 31 August 2013¹

	Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
		Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement/satisfactory ³	Inadequate
GFE/tertiary colleges ²	235	17	53	29	2
Sixth form colleges	93	34	44	20	1
Independent specialist colleges	52	15	56	27	2
All colleges	380	21	51	26	2

1. Percentages are rounded and do not always add to exactly 100.

Source: Ofsted

2. GFE/tertiary colleges include specialist FE colleges.

3. As of 1 September 2012, FE and skills providers with the inspection outcome of grade 3 have been judged as requires improvement. Prior to September 2012, FE and skills providers with an inspection outcome of grade 3 were judged as satisfactory.

Overall effectiveness of independent learning providers funded in 2012/13 at their most recent inspection as at 31 August 2013¹

	Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
		Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement/satisfactory ³	Inadequate
Independent learning providers ²	472	12	56	27	5

1. Percentages are rounded and do not always add to exactly 100.

Source: Ofsted

2. Includes employer providers.

3. As of 1 September 2012, FE and skills providers with the inspection outcome of grade 3 have been judged as requires improvement. Prior to September 2012, FE and skills providers with an inspection outcome of grade 3 were judged as satisfactory.

Overall effectiveness of community learning and skills providers funded in 2012/13 at their most recent inspection as at 31 August 2013¹

	Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
		Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement/satisfactory ²	Inadequate
Community learning and skills providers	261	6	67	22	5

1. Percentages are rounded and do not always add to exactly 100.

Source: Ofsted

2. As of 1 September 2012, FE and skills providers with the inspection outcome of grade 3 have been judged as requires improvement. Prior to September 2012, FE and skills providers with an inspection outcome of grade 3 were judged as satisfactory.

Overall effectiveness of further education and skills providers inspected between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013¹

	Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
		Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Colleges	123	6	52	38	4
Of which:					
GFE/tertiary colleges ²	76	3	54	38	5
Sixth form colleges	31	6	48	42	3
Independent specialist colleges ³	16	19	50	31	0
Independent learning providers ⁴	154	1	50	40	10
Community learning and skills providers	83	5	51	30	14
All provision	360	3	51	37	9
Dance and drama awards schemes in colleges ⁵	1	0	100	0	0
FE in higher education institutions ⁶	6	17	67	17	0
National Careers Service	7	0	100	0	0
Prison and young offender institutions ⁷	38	0	42	39	18

1. Percentages are rounded and do not always add to exactly 100.

Source: Ofsted

2. GFE/tertiary colleges includes specialist FE college.

3. As of 1 September 2012, FE and skills providers with the inspection outcome of grade 3 have been judged as requires improvement. Prior to September 2012, FE and skills providers with an inspection outcome of grade 3 were judged as satisfactory.

4. Includes employer providers.

5. Inspection outcomes for dance and drama awards schemes in colleges relate to the specific course only and not providers as a whole.

6. Inspection outcomes for further education in higher education institutions relate to the further education provision and not providers as a whole.

7. Inspection outcomes for prisons relate to the judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management of learning and skills and work activities.

Inspection outcomes of further education and skills providers inspected between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013^{1,2}

	Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
		Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness	360	3	51	37	9
Outcomes for learners	360	6	47	39	8
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	360	4	53	38	6
Effectiveness of leadership and management	360	6	49	36	9

1. Percentages are rounded and do not always add to exactly 100.

Source: Ofsted

2. Figures include GFE/tertiary colleges (including specialist FE); sixth form colleges; independent specialist colleges; independent learning providers (including employers); community learning and skills providers.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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