

# Wigan UTC

New Market Street, Wigan, Greater Manchester, WN1 1RP

**Inspection dates** 19–20 May 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b> <b>2</b>
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Sixth form provision	Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- A strong executive principal with a razor-sharp focus on continuous improvement has established a culture of high aspirations and expectations for both staff and students.
- Senior leadership and staff have embraced the focus on achievement articulated by the executive principal.
- Good teaching and learning are enabling all students to achieve expected progress and a significant number to achieve above expected progress.
- Robust and comprehensive systems for tracking and monitoring student progress and enabling appropriate intervention are accelerating progress.
- Students have a strong commitment to learning and model strong work-related skills and attitudes.
- There are very good links with employers that inform and add to the quality of the curriculum, particularly in post-16 provision.
- Governors are highly supportive and enhance links with the world of work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough students achieve higher grades on AS and A-level courses.
- Improvement planning requires a greater focus on evaluating the impact of teaching and learning as well as actions undertaken to enhance provision.
- Not enough teaching and learning is outstanding. Sometimes teachers do not help students to identify and correct errors in spelling and grammar in their written work.
- The excellent resources available at the UTC are not as well-utilised as they could be.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of subjects taught across the UTC to Year 11 and post-16 students. Two lessons were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors looked closely at samples of students’ written work across a range of subjects, including mock test papers, assignments and exercise books. They also observed behaviour around the UTC.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, groups of teachers, and two groups of students. Inspectors met with a member of the governing body, and a representative of Bright Futures Educational Trust.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including: self-evaluation and development plans; data relating to students’ attainment and progress; information on attendance; documents and records about behaviour and safeguarding; records of the monitoring of teaching and learning and of performance management; and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to be analysed by Ofsted. Inspector’s reviewed the UTC’s own records of parental and student feedback. They also took account of 11 questionnaires completed by staff.

## Inspection team

Patrick Geraghty, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Peter McKay

Additional Inspector

Russ Henry

Her Majesty’s Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The Wigan University Technical College (UTC) opened in September 2013. In March 2015 it was taken under the umbrella of Bright Futures Educational Trust. The UTC specialism is engineering.
- The current executive principal took up post in August 2014. Since the UTC's inception there have been significant changes at middle management level and in the composition of the teaching staff.
- Wigan UTC currently has 15 students in Year 11 and 43 in post-16 provision.
- The UTC has been unable to recruit for Year 10 in 2014/15. Governors have agreed that there will be no Key Stage 4 provision in the 2015/2016 academic year. A redesigned Key Stage 4 provision will be re-introduced in September 2016.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students eligible for support through the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The first student cohort to be entered for GCSE examinations will be the current Year 11.
- The UTC does not enter students for GCSE examinations earlier than the usual time.
- The UTC has no alternative provision.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to build upon current good practice to ensure that the percentage of higher grades for GCE AS and A-level increases.
- Ensure that all improvement actions within self-evaluation and development plans are evaluated for their impact on learning and progress.
- Ensure that teachers help students to improve their literacy skills by identifying and correcting mistakes in their writing, particularly with regard to spelling and grammar.
- Ensure that the UTC's outstanding resources are used to maximum effect.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The UTC underwent rapid change at the start of the current academic year, following a traumatic first year. Students spoke to inspectors of 'an entirely different place' in reflecting on changes and improvements.
- The new executive principal, who took up appointment in August 2014, has brought a robust focus, energy and exceptional application to the improvement agenda. He has driven improvement quickly, while embedding strong staff commitment and high aspirations for all.
- Senior leadership now forms a strong and cohesive group. Following the first year, about 8 out of 10 staff are new. A new direction has been established and senior leaders have worked hard and effectively to re-establish momentum and create a clear vision for the UTC.
- Data systems and monitoring processes have improved significantly. Student attainment and progress are monitored robustly. Leaders have established a progress operational room, where daily discussions are held between senior and middle leaders and teaching staff around progress monitoring and the development of appropriate intervention strategies. All staff have embraced this agenda.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. However, both in self-evaluation and development-planning documents, there is insufficient reference to the evaluation of progress and learning.
- The management of teaching and learning has improved significantly. Staff bring finely tuned skills and purpose to teaching and learning. Staff new to the academy and established practitioners have good training and development opportunities, including weekly continuous professional development sessions. A strong culture has been established which focuses on improving teaching and the sharing of good practice. Bright Futures Educational Trust plays a pivotal role in developing teachers' professional skills and aspirations.
- Subject leaders are highly skilled and have a strong focus on departmental improvement and promoting the quality of teaching and learning, as well as a purposeful atmosphere of learning within their areas of responsibility. They are excellent models for students in respect of the business and work-related skills environment that the UTC is establishing.
- The 14-16 curriculum currently provides a range of GCSE subjects largely focused on the specialism of the UTC. GCSE subjects are delivered alongside a Level 2 Principal Learning qualification in engineering. Religious education is taught through the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development programme (SMSC) and tutorials. The promotion of SMSC is comprehensive and covers areas such as radicalisation, child sexual exploitation and safety, as well as the nature and responsibilities of citizenship within a democratic society.
- A strong focus is placed upon the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Additional sessions are arranged to ensure that all students make sufficient progress and achieve an appropriate level in literacy and numeracy from their various starting points.
- Senior leaders and governors have acknowledged issues and challenges surrounding recruitment at Key Stage 4. Future planning documents outline the new recruitment strategy.
- There is an excellent range of exceptionally well-equipped laboratories and workshops. These are sometimes under-used because of a lack of staff with appropriate skills.
- Pupil premium funding is focused well on improving the progress of these students. Consequently, gaps in progress between disadvantaged students and their peers are closing rapidly.
- Performance management is robust and comprehensive.
- The UTC has excellent links with employers which have enhanced and informed its curriculum offer. The UTC is working well to promote itself within the local community. Communications with parents are good.
- The Bright Futures Educational Trust took over responsibility for the UTC in March 2015. Bright Futures has been working with the UTC since the end of the last academic year and has played a central role in supporting the ways and means towards rapid and sustainable improvement.
- The arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements. Staff and Governors receive suitable safeguarding training.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are highly supportive and have a clear understanding of the UTC's strengths and weaknesses. They acted swiftly to improve leadership, provision and direction at the conclusion of its first year of operation.
  - The governors have a clear oversight of the UTC finances, including how pupil premium funding is used and its impact on improving the achievement of disadvantaged students.

- Governors monitor performance management well. They visit the UTC frequently and have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students behave very well in lessons and around the campus. They are exceptionally polite and very well presented in smart suits. They take great pride in the UTC environment, what it offers and its excellent resources.
- Students have embraced a culture of respect and responsibility.
- Students demonstrate a high level of maturity and a professional business demeanour. They are polite, engaging and pleasant with visitors and staff. Students are keen to learn and have developed strong work-related attitudes and skills. They are acquiring strong confidence and presentational skills.
- Attendance rates are at the national average for the Key Stage 4 cohort and improving.

### **Safety**

- The UTC's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Students feel very secure and safe in lessons and around the UTC.
- Students said that incidences of bullying were very rare, but if they occurred, they were dealt with quickly and effectively by staff. Students are made aware of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and homophobic and racist bullying through a very well designed and comprehensive SMSC programme. Students have a clear understanding of how to promote their own safety.
- Work safety in laboratories and workshops is monitored very well and documentation and procedures are reviewed regularly and comprehensively.
- Positive student attitudes are exemplified by high attendance rates and no exclusions during the current academic year. Specialist groups visit the UTC to enhance its work on safety. Strong links with external agencies provide additional welfare support for students, when required.
- UTC records of parents' responses indicate that during the present academic year parents feel that their sons and daughters are safe and well cared for.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching and learning are good. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly during the last academic year. UTC records indicate that inadequate teaching has been eradicated and that students' application to learning is now very positive. However, senior leaders acknowledge that not enough examples of teaching and learning are yet outstanding.
- In well-planned lessons students are eager to learn and apply themselves to challenging activities. They take pride in deepening their skills and developing their understanding of topics. Teachers' subject knowledge is evident in their probing and skilful questioning. One-to-one dialogue with teachers is highly effective in developing students' knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers have a sharp focus on the progress they expect students to make. Both students and teachers use technology well to promote and embed learning.
- In a few lessons students did not demonstrate a level of subject knowledge that should be expected at this stage of the programme. In these lessons teachers did not make sufficient use of their assessment of students' progress to adjust their teaching or the tasks that the students completed.
- The marking of students' exercise books and assignment work is frequent. While there is a strong focus on the development of literacy across the provision, spelling and grammar mistakes are not always corrected in some students' work. Year 11 students have weekly literacy focus sessions as part of their tutorial programme.
- Good relationships between teachers and students enhance learning opportunities. Students are keen to learn.
- Teaching assistants are used well to promote learning and understanding.

**The achievement of pupils is good**

- The UTC has no previous examination results for GCSE subjects. It currently has no Year 10 students. All students in Year 11 enrolled in Year 10.
- The UTC has robust and comprehensive progress tracking data.
- Current UTC progress data for Year 11 students indicate that they are all making expected progress and many are making better than expected progress. For English GCSE, all current Year 11 students are making expected progress and a significant majority is making better than expected progress. For GCSE mathematics, almost all students are making expected progress and the percentage making better than expected progress reflects the national average for the subject. This picture is mirrored in other GCSE subjects.
- Gaps are closing quickly between disadvantaged students and their peers. The more able students are making better than expected progress.
- The progress of disabled students and those with special educational needs is good.
- A comprehensive scrutiny by inspectors of students' test and assignment papers and exercise books indicates that students are making good progress and confirmed the UTC's progress tracking data. This was further corroborated in the lesson observations undertaken by inspectors.
- Students are well prepared for their next steps in education or employment. All the current Year 11 cohort are progressing to Year 12 at the UTC to undertake Level 3 courses or have secured High Status Technical Apprenticeships.

**The sixth form provision is good**

- Students on post-16 provision follow the BTEC two-year Level 3 Extended Diploma course in engineering. A few students supplement this with courses in mathematics, physics and chemistry at AS and A-level.
- Monitoring and tracking systems are robust for checking on students' progress. Managers are aware of the strengths and areas for improvement at the UTC and their action plans set clear objectives and targets.
- The curriculum at 16-19 is well planned. The combination of academic and vocational qualifications is coherent and the inclusion of NVQ German reinforces the UTC's growing links with German companies. The 16-19 curriculum fully meets the requirements of study programmes, with appropriate provision in English and mathematics, enrichment activities and work experience and work-related learning. There is a well-developed enrichment programme that includes computing, sport, Greenpower, music, food hygiene and business.
- There are effective advice and guidance systems on entry to post-16 provision and in promoting student understanding of progression and destination opportunities. Governors monitor post-16 provision carefully. Opportunities for work placements are good. For example, two students spent five weeks in Germany on work placements with an electronics firm. This placement is to be offered again next academic year and expanded.
- A key strength of the UTC's provision is the excellent links with local and national employers and their contribution to the enhancement of the curriculum and the development of work-related skills and aptitudes.
- Resources are excellent, but some exceptionally equipped laboratories and the innovative vertical farm are under-used.
- Pastoral support for students is good. Students said that they feel safe and well prepared on safeguarding and welfare matters. The curriculum, extra-curricular activities and tutorial programmes enable them to deepen their understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Attendance rates are well above national averages.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Students apply themselves well to their studies and demonstrate strong independent learning skills. They use technology well to enhance their learning activities. Teachers have high expectations of students. Students are challenged in their learning and resources and tasks match their needs and ambitions. Lessons are well planned. Students are well prepared in curriculum vitae writing and in oral presentational skills. For example, a group of students was observed giving a very engaging and effective conference presentation on the advantages and disadvantages of different gear systems.
- The UTC has only one set of previous examination results for a very small cohort at AS in 2013/14. Results were below the national average. Students are re-sitting these examinations and inspection evidence indicates significant improvement. Year 13 BTEC units on the Extended Diploma in engineering have been

completed and moderated. UTC data indicate that 83% of students have made expected or above expected progress and that the pass rate is well above the national average for this course. Inspectors' scrutiny of assignment work confirmed at least good progress in both cohorts in Year 12 and 13 on this course.

- UTC records indicate that students doing AS and A-level courses in mathematics, physics and chemistry are making good progress. However, senior leaders recognise that not enough students achieve the higher grades on both AS and A-level courses.
- Retention during the first year of the BTEC Extended Diploma course was below the national average. Retention for the 2014/15 academic year has stabilised and is currently good.
- Students are very well prepared for progression and future destinations. A number of current Year 13 students have secured places on to very competitive and prestigious apprenticeships; others have offers of places on either combined university courses and apprenticeships or go directly into employment with training provision.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138229
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Local authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	450011

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	University technical college
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	58
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	43
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Martin Ainscough
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Hatherall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01942 614440
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:contactus@wiganutc.org">contactus@wiganutc.org</a>

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