

UTC Cambridge

Robinson Way, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB2 0SZ

Inspection dates

16–17 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The new headteacher has acted quickly to establish a culture where teachers and students enjoy working hard in an atmosphere that is highly conducive to learning.
- Leaders' systematic and organised approach has rapidly and successfully addressed the flaws found at the previous inspection. As a consequence, students are happy and safe.
- Students' personal development is exceptionally strong. Students take a real pride in the UTC and are enthusiastic ambassadors for its values.
- There is outstanding pastoral support for students.
- The preparation for the world of work is exceptional.
- The excellent behaviour of students in lessons and around the college creates an environment in which it is a joy to teach and study.
- The highly positive impact of the new assessment system in helping students make good progress and teachers' planning for students' differing interests and abilities is clearly evident.
- The sixth form is very well led. Students are well cared for and make good progress in most subjects. In the sixth form, outcomes in applied courses are not as good as for academic courses.
- 'Challenge projects' provide students with wonderful opportunities to work with scientists and explore scientific issues beyond the examination curriculum.
- Some teachers, especially in science, do not provide sufficient opportunities for students to develop their reading and writing skills.
- Leaders' hard work has resulted in the improved attendance of disadvantaged students, but a small group do not attend as well as they should.
- Provision for students' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is well planned, but its quality is not checked, leaving gaps in students' learning.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

When UTC Cambridge was inspected in September 2016, it was judged to require special measures. Subsequently, the UTC was inspected on two occasions. At the previous monitoring inspection, leaders and managers were judged to be taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers, especially in science, have higher expectations of students' reading and writing.
- Ensure that students on 16 to 19 study programmes leading to applied qualifications achieve as well as those studying for A levels.
- Check that the good planning for PSHE is effectively delivered and receives the same quality assurance as other areas of the curriculum.
- Build on the effective work already established to improve attendance in order to ensure that the remaining small group of students who still do not attend regularly do not miss out on learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Over the last nine months, the leadership of the UTC has been transformed. 'It was unorganised here and now it is organised,' was one student's comment that summed up the common view of students and staff.
- The new principal and senior leaders combine calmness and passion. 'We are led by a vision,' claimed one middle leader and other leaders supported this view. An example of passionate and effective leadership can be seen in students' dramatically improved attendance and punctuality over the last nine months.
- Leaders have clear responsibilities and staff know to whom and for what they are accountable. The principal rightly challenges practice that does not meet her high expectations. Most staff welcome being held to account for the quality of their work. New performance management is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Staff training is effective. Teachers cite examples where 'continuing professional learning', as it is known in the UTC, is improving their practice. For example, teaching in mathematics has improved due to work with teachers from the local sixth form college and also a local outstanding secondary school.
- Leaders work successfully to engage with parents. The new principal has listened to parental concerns and acted upon them. There is considerable evidence of the impact in the UTC's own surveys, which confirm the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. For example, the UTC has provided greater information on curriculum, pastoral care and careers. As a result, significantly higher proportions of parents feel better informed on these issues. Senior leaders understand the importance of working with parents on a case-by-case basis. There is especially strong partnership work with parents in supporting vulnerable students.
- Parents feel better informed through the parents' forum and regular newsletters. Through the student council, the views of students are given a much higher profile than at the previous inspection. The council has been instrumental in helping leaders and students understand each other's concerns.
- UTC leaders are ensuring that funding to support students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well spent. These students benefit from precise support which is often developed in agreement with parents. Money is not only spent on academic support but also wider aspects of each student's personal development. As a result, students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities typically make good progress socially and academically and develop the confidence to continue to the next stage of their education.
- Leaders spend the additional funding wisely to meet each student's individual needs. This tends to be in the form of buying equipment or helping with transport costs.
- Within the context of a UTC and its particular focus on science, mathematics and technology, the curriculum is reasonably broad and balanced. In key stage 4, there is provision for humanities, a modern foreign language and physical education as well as English, mathematics and triple science. Provision for PSHE has been planned and

mapped across the curriculum, 'Big Question' days, assemblies and form time. Some aspects, such as enterprise, are monitored and assessed very well, so for example all students in Year 10 gain external accreditation for enterprise.

- Leaders recognise that in most areas of PSHE, they cannot be confident that students gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they need. For example, the UTC's focus on fundamental British values is quite new and students were not able to demonstrate their deep understanding of this to inspectors.
- The curriculum is enhanced by the 'challenge projects' that give all students opportunities to work directly with scientists in professional settings on a wide range of investigations. In the 16 to 19 phase, these projects are increasingly being validated by the extended project qualification. Examples include, 'Exos Lucius (Northern Pike) damaging or essential to the ecosystem?' 'Designing and making a steam powered engine', 'Build and design a ukulele' or 'Can we stop the destruction of habitats in the ocean?'
- Leaders have sought and acted upon external advice. Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided safeguarding training. A representative of the local authority has visited the UTC and worked with the principal to ensure that processes and records around recruitment reflect best practice. The UTC has commissioned and acted upon the detailed report on safeguarding from an external consultant.
- The Parkside Federation Academies continues to provide effective and well-judged support as UTC joins its multi-academy trust. For example, a leader from the trust has recently audited the UTC's provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC). This audit found evidence of strong SMSC promotion.
- The promotion of students' SMSC takes a number of forms. For example, assemblies have focused on events such as Remembrance (Poppy) Day, Holocaust Memorial Day and the Chinese New Year. 'Big Question' days have featured issues particularly relevant to morality and science such as 'the right to life' and challenge projects often consider ethical dimensions. The outcome is that students are tolerant of differences and well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- Governance is currently the responsibility of an interim management board (IMB). Members bring expertise from the world of education and the business of science, which aligns with the particular focus of this UTC. Members have set the strategic direction of the UTC as it becomes a formal part of the Parkside Federation.
- Members of the IMB were able to demonstrate to inspectors how they had a positive impact on improvement through challenging leaders effectively, based on a clear understanding of information about the progress of students, for example those on different 16 to 19 courses.
- The IMB reviews all policies regularly. It ensures that policies are up to date and comprehensive.
- The member responsible for safeguarding regularly checks leaders' work in this area and ensures the quality of documentation. Prior to the previous inspection, current members of the IMB who were previously governors had challenged leaders over the

adequacy of safeguarding.

- Members scrutinise the arrangements for the management of teachers' performance diligently including challenging decisions of senior leaders regarding pay progression.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All statutory requirements are met. Records are carefully checked. Staff training is appropriate and systematic. Staff know what to look for and what to do if they have any concerns. They have confidence that senior leaders act promptly if any concerns are raised and child protection files confirm that this is the case. Records in bullying logs, students and parents all agree that bullying is extremely rare.
- The leadership of safeguarding is now highly effective. Procedures are robust. The requirement to secure the safeguarding procedures for the most vulnerable students is now met. Staff have received additional training on safeguarding including the anti-radicalisation 'Prevent' strategy. E-safety has been reviewed and given a high priority. Students explained that assemblies have been used to promote internet safety and to promote fundamental British values such as respect for democracy, tolerance and the rule of law.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection. This is due to the effective leadership of this area of work including an effective training programme. Over the last nine months, the UTC has used performance management as a vehicle to improve the quality of teaching. On a previous monitoring visit, teachers agreed with one of their colleagues who said that what has really helped her is that lesson observations lead to relevant professional development that meets their individual needs.
- Assessment information is used well by teachers including that about provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, in English a student explained clearly the range of strategies used by the teacher to help her make better progress. This description matched the range of strategies identified in the teacher's planning.
- Consistent strengths in teaching are good subject knowledge and well-planned learning. These combine to ensure that, in most lessons and in most subjects, students make good progress. In a very small proportion of lessons, the strong subject knowledge and planning fall down in the delivery. Teachers have high expectations of students, for example by insisting on correct terminology. Sometimes, this insistence on high standards is not so evident in written work, where especially in science, students' mistakes in spelling and grammar are not picked up.
- Teachers adhere to the UTC's feedback policy very well and this is having a highly positive impact on the progress students make. For example, the use of a feedback form with targets for students promotes their reflection very effectively.
- Teachers' use of questioning is developing, but its impact is variable. Sometimes

teachers use well-targeted questions to challenge students to extend their thinking. On other occasions, inspectors saw less successful examples, for example where the teacher did not wait and answered her own question too quickly, failing to deepen students' knowledge. In another lesson, rapid questioning was effective at maintaining a fast pace and checking students' knowledge, but again there was little opportunity to ask questions to challenge the most able.

- 'Challenge projects' enable teachers to stretch the most able students and to meet their needs well.
- Teaching frequently makes explicit links to the world of work and develops work-related skills. For example, students develop communication skills well through the presentations they deliver to their classmates. One student commented on this specifically and explained how she is able to give and take constructive criticism now.
- Learning proceeds uninterrupted in lessons because students and staff show respect for each other and as a result students show a highly positive attitude to learning. Students greatly appreciate the dedication of their teachers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The UTC's work to promote students' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Students report that they feel safe.
- Students feel well supported and enjoy the community feel of this small school. Students say that if they have concerns they can speak with any adult.
- Leaders are acutely aware of students' potential barriers to learning. Vulnerable students are supported well through good use of external agencies. These students' attendance has improved and the careful tracking shows many make good progress. There are alerts in place if a vulnerable student is late.
- Links to employers are very impressive. Employers are enthusiastic partners and express a real interest in the work of students. This is helping students develop skills necessary for the next stages of their education. Students have a realistic view of the wide range of careers open to them in the local labour market. Students develop an in-depth knowledge of their skills and how they can be used in their careers. Therefore, they are well placed to make informed judgements. A wide range of local employers are involved in working with the UTC on business-relevant science 'Challenges'. The UTC makes the most of its location next to a major hospital and on a bio-medical park. As a result of the high-quality work produced by students, employers see the UTC as a fertile ground for recruiting.
- Students show pride in their work. They talk enthusiastically about their projects and what they have achieved at the UTC. Employers confirmed the 'usefulness' of the projects in achieving what they described as 'real outcomes'.
- Vulnerable students are cared for exceptionally well. Inspectors discussed case studies detailing the really strong impact of leaders' work to support these students. On an

earlier monitoring visit, a teacher said that the focus on safeguarding had 'heightened his radar' regarding attendance and punctuality, commenting, 'I am much more focused on attendance and the whereabouts of individual students.'

- Information and guidance events are now a strength and have a positive impact on student choices. This was not the case a year ago. As a result, students were recruited onto inappropriate courses. Leaders and the IMB are determined that this will not be repeated. All students ending Year 11 and Year 13 continue in education, employment or training.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes around the site is exemplary. Students get on very well together. Students and staff say that behaviour is excellent and lessons are extremely rarely disturbed. Inspectors visited the dining hall on both days of the inspection. Students were getting on very harmoniously.
- Overall attendance has improved and is at least in line with other schools nationally. Persistent absence has improved sharply. While the attendance of disadvantaged students has improved sharply, leaders rightly regard further improvement as a priority.
- As a result of pressure from the college, transport arrangements such as the bus service have improved, greatly improving students' punctuality. Procedures to check on the whereabouts of late students have a very positive impact on punctuality.
- Lessons start punctually and students move around the site purposefully and calmly. Their interactions at social times are a joy to behold.
- Students are polite and respectful to each other and to staff. In lessons, they listen carefully to each other's views and opinions.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- At the previous inspection, outcomes were judged to be good. The progress of students currently in the UTC is good and this is true of all groups, except the very small group who do not attend regularly enough. The most able make good progress, producing work in lessons that is of high quality. Disadvantaged students make at least as good progress as other students nationally. Their attainment is similar to other students. This is because leaders spend the additional funding wisely to meet each student's individual needs.
- The progress of students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with that of other students. They make good progress because teachers plan for their needs well and act on those plans in lessons.
- Students make good progress in mathematics and English. Mathematics is central to the work of students in most of their subjects and they use and apply their skills proficiently. The development of literacy skills across the curriculum is too variable. However, English teaching is effective and helps students to do well. In 2016, a

technicality in the way students were entered for different courses resulted in published information on English progress under-reporting how well students achieved. The UTC is particularly effective at providing students with the skills which employers seek. Students speak articulately with representatives from the business community and industry. They are confident around adults.

- Students enjoy reading for pleasure. Leaders have adopted an effective reading scheme that is successful at promoting reading skills among students who are lacking confidence in reading when they arrive. Time is set aside in tutor time for reading, but the extent to which this or other planned tutor time activities happen is variable.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Provision for Year 12 and 13 students meets the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes. The provision that was judged to be good at the previous inspection has improved further.
- Leaders have high expectations. Over the last nine months, there has been significantly improved monitoring and tracking of students' progress and as a result outcomes have improved. Students say that a lot is expected of them, that they have to work hard and if they fall behind they are chased up.
- Senior leaders meet subject leaders weekly to discuss post-16 students' progress. Interventions are put in place if a student falls behind. These include: weekly meetings with the subject teacher; weekly surgeries, which students are 'invited' to attend; or meetings with parents. Students confirm that these activities are put in place by leaders as necessary and are useful.
- Programmes of study are distinctive and provide progression and challenge. They also provide the opportunities for those who do not have a GCSE in English and mathematics to study these. These students make good progress towards achieving their C grade.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the 16 to 19 study programmes is good. The strengths reported in key stage 4 are equally evident such as well-planned learning and teachers' strong subject knowledge.
- The provision for students on applied courses is very impressive. The organisation and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are exemplary. Students' attainment is not matching the quality of the provision, because in the past students who had been rejected for level 3 courses by other institutions were accepted at the UTC onto courses for which they were not well suited.
- The information and guidance for current Year 12 and 13 students prepares them well to make informed decisions about their futures. They have frequent and regular talks from apprenticeship providers, businesses or universities. They welcome the careers interviews and regular updates they are provided with. They value the 'challenge activities' a great deal. For example, the 'tissue culture challenge', 'the protein challenge' and 'water treatment challenge'. They give examples of how highly they value these activities and opportunities to work closely with potential employers and other professionals. Their comments include 'very useful for my future', 'provide opportunities I may not get elsewhere' and 'we get to learn new skills'.

- Information and guidance for students coming into the 16 to 19 study programmes were not precise enough previously. As a result, some students are taking courses not well suited to their interests or capabilities. This is a legacy of the previous regime. As a consequence, retention has been poor and achievement too low. However, retention is improving on both A-level and BTEC courses.
- Behaviour is exemplary. Students are proud of their UTC and would recommend it to others, although they are reflective enough to recognise that it would not be appropriate or attractive to all because of its distinctive nature. Students know how to conduct themselves, have mature attitudes to learning and are being prepared well for their futures.
- Students are taught about safety and well-being and, as a result, know how to keep safe. They are prepared well to make good life choices through PSHE days which cover issues such as personal well-being, safe driving, drug and alcohol awareness.
- Largely due to an attempt to recruit students onto courses for which they were not suited, but also a lack of systems at the time to ensure student progress, the 16 to 19 standards were not met last year. However, standards are rising. The college's tracking information shows most A-level students on track to make good progress. This information is supported by evidence in students' work and learning observed in lessons. There are now effective systems to monitor the progress students make.

School details

Unique reference number	140265
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10026547

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Technical
School category	University technical college
Age range of pupils	14 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jon Green
Headteacher	Sian Foreman
Telephone number	01223 724300
Website	http://utccambridge.co.uk
Email address	info@utccambridge.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 September 2016

Information about this school

- The UTC meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The UTC complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- In early October 2016, the national leader of education who had been supporting the UTC became the executive principal. Following the September inspection, the specialist leader of education who had been supporting the UTC was allocated to the UTC full time and appointed as acting principal on 1st November. She became the headteacher

in April 2017.

- The UTC is smaller than the average secondary school.
- The majority of students are White British.
- A small proportion of students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The specialism of the University Technical College Cambridge is science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The main sponsor is Cambridge University Health Partner. The college is governed by a board of trustees who are also governors.
- The college does not use alternative providers, nor does it have specialist provision on the premises.
- Parkside Federation Academies has been contracted to provide support to the UTC. The chief executive officer of Parkside Federation Academies has taken on the role of executive headteacher of the UTC since October 2016. It is anticipated that the UTC will formally join the Parkside multi-academy trust in September 2017.
- In 2016, students' progress from the end of key stages 2 to 4 led to the college being below the current floor standards.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Ofsted inspector.
- At the time of the inspection, normal lessons had ended for students in Year 13 and Year 11 as they prepared for external examinations. As a result, opportunities for direct observation were limited.
- The inspectors visited 11 lessons, to observe behaviour, teaching and learning. Around half of these were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with students formally and informally to discuss their behaviour and lessons, and reviewed their work.
- Meetings were held with the principal and other leaders, staff, students and members of the IMB.
- Inspectors took account of 56 questionnaire responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors looked carefully at the UTC's information on students' current attainment and progress, the UTC's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, procedures for managing the performance of teachers, and the UTC's development plan.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of students were examined by inspectors.

Inspection team

Adrian Lyons, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Lucas	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ceri Evans	Ofsted Inspector

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