

# Mobile Care Qualifications Limited

## Focused monitoring visit report

---

**Unique reference number:** 53407

**Name of lead inspector:** Sheila Willis HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 25 January 2012

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** Shields Road  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE6 2YP

**Telephone number:** 0191 265 3003

## Focused Monitoring Visit: Main Findings

### Context and focus of visit

Mobile Care Qualifications Limited (MCQ) is a private training company established in 1994. The head office and main training centre are based in Newcastle upon Tyne with satellite centres in Middlesbrough and York. MCQ contracts with the Skills Funding Agency in the North East and Yorkshire and Humberside to offer apprenticeships and workplace learning in health, public services and care. Recently the provider has expanded provision to include apprenticeships in business administration and customer service.

MCQ was inspected in January 2010. The overall effectiveness, capacity to improve, and all aspects of provision were judged to be satisfactory with the exception of safeguarding which was judged to be good. This report focuses on the themes explored during the monitoring visit.

### Themes

#### Self-assessment and improvement planning

<b>What progress has been made in using quality assurance systems, including self-assessment, to address weaknesses and bring about improvement?</b>	<b>Reasonable progress</b>
--	----------------------------

At the previous inspection, quality improvement arrangements were judged to be satisfactory but many of the processes were focused on compliance rather than continuous improvement. Following the inspection, the company acknowledged that the current quality systems and staffing structures were continuously reproducing satisfactory performance and were not moving the company forward sufficiently. In response, a new staffing structure has been implemented and a new post of quality improvement manager has been created and filled.

The reorganisation places staff in small teams within their areas of learning. Early indications are that the teams are functioning more effectively. Improved communication identifies learners' underperformance quickly, allowing timely interventions to help learners improve.

Quality systems underwent a thorough review and new processes have been developed. Staff teams are involved in developing and implementing the quality improvement systems. The new systems have not gone through a complete cycle and the impact on learners' outcomes cannot yet be judged.

The current self-assessment process is inclusive but the judgements in the report are not explicitly informed by stakeholders' views. The self-assessment grades for capacity to improve and learner outcomes are overly optimistic and based on the

pace of improvement without taking sufficient account of the company's performance when compared with national success rates.

### **Outcomes for learners**

#### **What progress has been made in improving the achievement of learners since the last inspection?      Insufficient progress**

At the last inspection, overall outcomes for learners were satisfactory. Success rates in 2008/09 for Train to Gain programmes were satisfactory. Success rates for apprentices on early years programmes were in line with national rates but success rates for health and social care apprentices remained below national rates.

MCQ has improved success rates on most programmes over three years but performance has not matched or exceeded national rates. On Train to Gain programmes, rates have been below sector averages for three years up to 2009/10. In 2010/11 overall success rates exceeded national rates by three percentage points but rates for learners who completed within their planned time remained below national rates by five percentage points.

On apprenticeship programmes, while the provider demonstrates a three-year improvement trend, in 2010/11 overall success rates remained below national rates by two percentage points. Learners who completed their programme within their planned time were nine percentage points below national rates. Advanced apprentices, who make up the largest cohort of learners, are performing well. However, success rates for intermediate apprenticeships are low, being between six and 12 percentage points below national rates.

### **Quality of provision**

#### **What progress has been made to improve the links between assessments, individual learning plans and targets so that all learners have a clear idea of their progress?      Reasonable progress**

At the last inspection, assessment and tracking information was not used effectively and assessments were not linked closely enough to individual learning plans. A number of improvements have been introduced and learners' progress is now tracked more effectively. Assessment records and individual learning plans are held and managed online. All assessors and managers can access and update learner records remotely. Some learners use an online e-portfolio system to complete their National Vocational Qualification. Assessors operate in smaller teams, allowing team leaders and managers to monitor their work more closely using the online system. Learners access the online system, allowing them to gain a much clearer idea of their progress and employers use the system to monitor the progress of their employees. Learner reviews are carried out frequently and are effective in ensuring learners and

employers are well informed when measuring progress and setting new targets. Assessment records are regularly updated and provide an accurate and timely record of progress. The system is closely monitored and where slow progress occurs action is taken to help learners complete before the target end date.

**What progress has been made to improve the quality and consistency of written feedback in order to challenge and develop the knowledge and skills of learners?** **Reasonable progress**

At the last inspection the quality and consistency of written feedback did not sufficiently challenge and develop the skills of learners. Following the inspection, assessors received training to improve the written feedback they give to learners. The quality of written feedback is now closely monitored by team leaders as part of the quality improvement process and the outcomes of the monitoring inform the performance management system for assessors. Improvement actions are taken to support poorly performing assessors. Written feedback given to learners after assessment has improved in quality and is more focused on developing their knowledge and skills. It is valued by learners who now have a clearer understanding of the progress they make and the skills they have gained. They are clear about what work they have to complete before their next assessment. Assessors' feedback on learners' assignments and written work satisfactorily informs learners of what they have done satisfactorily or better and how they can further improve their work.

### **Leadership and management**

**What progress has been made in the use of management information systems to monitor and analyse the performance of staff and programmes?** **Reasonable progress**

At the previous inspection, inspectors identified that data were not sufficiently well used to inform and influence management decisions. Success rate data were not used sufficiently to plan interventions and improve learner outcomes. Since the inspection, the provider has taken reasonable steps to improve the use of management information to inform improvement measures more effectively. Outcomes for learners are shared with staff at regular staff meetings. Individual staff and staff teams are set performance targets that are monitored regularly by the quality team and the senior management team.

Good use is made of an electronic tracking system to monitor individual learner performance. The new staffing structure enables more regular monitoring of assessors' performance against targets. Monitoring systems are being further developed to more effectively measure what learners should have achieved at key points in their training.

**What progress has been made in further developing and embedding the observation of teaching and learning as part of the quality improvement arrangements? Reasonable progress**

At the previous inspection the observation process was judged as being satisfactory in its impact to raising the quality of teaching and learning. Since then the observation of teaching and learning arrangements have been further reviewed and improved. In partnership with a number of other locally based training providers, MCQ has participated in a peer review system designed to ratify and benchmark teaching and learning observation grades across all the providers taking part. The reliability of judgements and the quality of observations have improved. Guidance for conducting observations is detailed and comprehensive. Themed observations are carried out quarterly by a team of trained observers with the appropriate vocational and occupational knowledge. As part of the peer review system, observers are also able to carry out joint observations at partner organisations as part of their own personal development.

Records of the observation of teaching and learning are detailed and provide a good level of feedback to tutors. Those who are identified as performing poorly are given support through additional training. The records are used effectively to inform staff appraisals.

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 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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231 or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)