

# Beckett Corporation Limited

## Inspection report

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**Unique reference number:** 58367

**Name of lead inspector:** Janet Rodgers HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 24 May 2012

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** College Fields Business Park  
Unit 5 Prince Georges Road  
London  
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**Telephone number:** 020 8640 6710

## Information about the provider

1. Beckett Corporation Limited (Beckett) is a private hire transport company, based in Colliers Wood, London. The company was formed in 1999 by the two current directors and specialises in accessible transport for disabled and vulnerable adults and children. Beckett has a Skills Funding Agency contract to deliver vocational qualifications at level 2 under the Adult Skills Budget. Forty learners are self-employed minicab drivers taking qualifications in road passenger vehicle driving and two learners are Beckett employees taking business administration qualifications. Road passenger vehicle driving learners attend a three-day off-the-job training course at the Colliers Wood training centre. All other training and assessment is delivered by Beckett's trainer assessors in the learners' workplace. All learners are aged over 21. Learners are recruited from across the London region.
2. The training programme is managed by a training manager who has a team of three trainer assessors. Beckett also delivers privately funded training in topographical skills. The company runs a minicab business, trading as Tina's Cars, and has a garage that offers vehicle servicing, testing and repairs. The government-funded training accounts for around a third of all Beckett's work.
3. The taxi and private hire industry has large numbers of micro businesses, part-time and self-employed workers. Very few minicab drivers are women and a high proportion are migrant workers or from minority ethnic heritage groups. Around half the workforce has qualifications at level 2 or above and one fifth has no recognised qualifications.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
<b>Employer provision:</b> Train to Gain	577 learners

## Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision		Grade 2
Capacity to improve		Grade 2
		Grade
Outcomes for learners		2
Quality of provision		3
Leadership and management		2
Safeguarding		3
Equality and diversity		2
Subject areas		
Transport operations and maintenance		2

## Overall effectiveness

- Beckett is a good training provider. Learners achieve outstandingly and in 2010/11, all learners completed their training within their agreed timescales. They develop good skills, knowledge of legislation and confidence which greatly increases their employment prospects. Learners become more positive in dealing with a range of clients and reducing the risks that arise when working at night or with difficult or abusive customers. They increase their awareness of how good diet and exercise affect their effectiveness as minicab drivers.
- The quality of training and assessment is satisfactory. Trainer assessors provide good individual coaching and demonstrations. They use their extensive industry knowledge to illustrate learning sessions with good examples. However, trainer assessors deliver theory training that lacks variety and is sometimes dull. Trainer assessors assess learners' practical skills well but do not always check their knowledge as carefully. Beckett delivers very flexible training programmes that fit well around learners' work patterns and their clients. Trainer assessors provide good advice and guidance about what the training programme involves, but insufficient help for learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills or future development.
- Directors and managers set high expectations which result in outstanding and increased achievement rates. They accurately recognise what Beckett does well

and what it needs to improve. Managers use learners' and industry partners' views well when designing programmes and to focus improvements. Staff create a strong culture of diversity, highly respect individual learners' needs and remove potential barriers to learning. Managers adequately safeguard learners and trainer assessors. They regularly check the quality of training and assessment sessions being delivered by trainer assessors but do not set them sufficiently focused actions for improvement.

## Main findings

- In 2010/11, achievement rates were outstanding and all learners gained their intended qualification. Learners make excellent progress towards completing their qualification within the agreed timescales.
- Learners greatly increase their employment prospects and job security through completing their training, which enables them to accept a wider range of work. They improve their customer service skills and personal appearance. Learners develop good levels of confidence.
- Learners have a good understanding of health and safety, their rights and responsibilities. They improve their personal safety at work and their ability to deal with difficult, abusive and violent customers. Trainer assessors facilitate good discussions with learners about healthy eating and how this affects their well-being and effectiveness at work.
- The quality of training and assessment is satisfactory. Trainer assessors provide clear demonstrations, good individual coaching and use their experience well to enhance learning with examples. However, they use insufficient variety in learning activities which makes some theory lessons uninspiring. Learners complete appropriate initial assessments of their literacy, numeracy and language levels, but they do not receive appropriate support to develop these skills.
- Trainer assessors effectively assess learners' skills as minicab drivers. Learners receive detailed reports confirming the skills they demonstrated during assessment. Trainer assessors do not separate the training from assessment sufficiently which means that some learners cannot prepare well for assessment or answering questions that check their knowledge.
- Trainer assessors carry out very effective reviews of learners' progress which motivate learners to achieve. They set insufficiently individual or challenging targets for learners.
- Beckett plans its training programmes well to meet the needs and aspirations of employers and learners. Trainer assessors arrange activities very flexibly around learners' shift patterns. They develop productive relationships with learners and employers. Employers greatly appreciate the improved effectiveness of learners who work for them as drivers.
- Learners receive satisfactory care, guidance and support. Trainer assessors give learners very clear initial advice and guidance about what their programme

entails. They provide learners with effective practical help, particularly in organising their work. Few learners get sufficient guidance about further course or career progression after their programme.

- Directors and managers set high expectations for training, assessment and achievement which resulted in greatly increased success rates. Their clear strategic direction helps sustain the business through diversifying into new areas and programmes and meeting identified industry skills shortages. Beckett reinvests funding well in developing its training accommodation, facilities and resources.
- Staff promote equality and diversity particularly well. They use their good awareness of learners' religious and cultural differences and individual needs to reduce potential barriers to learning. Most, but not all, trainer assessors use effective questions during progress reviews to extend learners' understanding of equality and diversity.
- Staff take learners' views seriously and use them well to improve the programme and Beckett's facilities. Directors and managers take good account of industry partners' and employers' needs within their strategies and delivery. Learners and employers express very high levels of satisfaction with their training.
- Managers effectively assure the quality of training and assessment and involve staff fully in quality improvement initiatives. Observers accurately recognise and discuss what needs to be improved following their observations of trainer assessors. However, they do not set them sufficiently focused action plans that improve the quality of training and assessment.

### **What does Beckett Corporation Limited need to do to improve further?**

- Make better use of the initial assessment of learners' literacy, numeracy and language levels to provide effective support and develop their skills.
- Raise the effectiveness and range of learning activities and targets and maintain a clear division between training and assessment.
- Set and monitor more thorough action plans with trainer assessors following observations of their training and assessments to improve the quality of delivery.

## **Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors**

### **What learners like:**

- the helpful and supportive staff
- the clear explanations of the legislative requirements that affect minicab drivers
- achieving a qualification that goes beyond their driving skills
- the good resources at the training centre
- the flexible assessment in the workplace
- being treated with respect and the welcoming environment at the training centre.

### **What learners would like to see improved:**

- locating a training centre in North London to reduce travel costs.

## **Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors**

### **What employers like:**

- the way drivers dress more professionally, are more polite and have better customer service skills
- the flexibility of the training around the work patterns.

### **What employers would like to see improved:**

- employers did not identify anything they would like to see improved.

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

**Grade 2**

7. Beckett's strong leadership and management, including the high expectations set by directors and managers, give the company good capacity to improve. Beckett has improved significantly the quality of training rooms and facilities, particularly in response to different cultural and religious groups, since the last inspection. Managers took very successful action which increased success rates to 100%. They monitor very effectively the progress of individual learners towards achievement. All staff contribute regularly towards self-assessment and progress with the quality improvement plan during meetings. The well established self-assessment process results in a concise, focused and accurate report. Managers make good use of staff, learners' and partners' views to improve programmes and facilities. Although staff quality assure the work of trainer assessors appropriately, their resulting action plans do not sufficiently improve the quality of training and assessment. Beckett fully addressed all the areas for improvement at the last inspection and its inspection grades remain mainly good.

### Outcomes for learners

**Grade 2**

8. Over the last three years, overall success rates are consistently outstanding and in 2010/11 all learners achieved their qualifications. This trend continues in the current year. Learners make excellent progress towards achieving their qualifications within the agreed timescales. Success rates for Asian learners, who represent the largest group of Beckett's learners, are consistently very high. In 2009/10, the few White British learners and women had lower success rates, but achievement rates by both groups increased well the following year and are now the same as those of all learners.
9. Learners make good progress in improving their customer service skills and personal appearance at work. They gain a greater understanding of legislation, their rights and responsibilities, particularly concerning minicab driving. This gives learners excellent opportunities to increase their employability, job security and secure repeat customers.
10. Learners increase their awareness of safe working practices and feel safer as a result of completing their training. They quickly gain confidence in dealing with antisocial behaviour, recognising locations that might be dubious for collecting or taking customers, resolving difficult situations and handling money.
11. Learners greatly enjoy their training sessions and drawing on their trainer assessors' skills and experience. Trainer assessors reinforce healthy lifestyles and the importance of regular exercise very effectively during training sessions. They make good links between diet, exercise and increasing learners' personal effectiveness as minicab drivers.

## The quality of provision

## Grade 3

12. The quality of training and assessment is satisfactory overall and good for the few business administration learners. Trainer assessors use their vocational experience and knowledge well to engage learners. They make good use of their personal experiences, and those of learners, to enliven topics. Trainer assessors quickly develop an effective working relationship with learners. They plan and organise training sessions well. Learners complete informative learning activities to develop their skills and knowledge. They compile comprehensive and useful portfolios of their work which they often use as a source of reference. However, trainer assessors use insufficient variety in learning activities which makes some theory sessions dull. They do not always question learners well to check their understanding or add pace to training sessions. At times, trainer assessors do not leave a clear gap between learning and assessment which means some learners cannot prepare well for assessment and answer knowledge questions independently. Trainer assessors assess learners' literacy, language and numeracy skills appropriately at the start of their training. Although they direct learners to recognised websites for literacy and numeracy skills development, Beckett does not provide sufficient help for learners to develop these skills and realise their full potential.
13. Trainer assessors systematically and efficiently assess learners' skills at work which enables them to achieve promptly. They use their experience well to identify areas that learners could improve. Following assessment, learners receive a full and detailed report describing the skills they have demonstrated but not sufficiently judging the quality of their work.
14. Trainer assessors develop good working relationships with learners, inspiring them to succeed. They review learners' progress effectively which helps learners to achieve their qualifications by agreed deadlines. Trainer assessors set insufficiently individual or challenging targets for learners.
15. Staff plan training programmes very well to meet learners' and employers' needs and aspirations. Trainer assessors visit learners frequently and regularly at work to assess their skills. They arrange assessment flexibly to fit learners' varied work and shift patterns. Employers speak highly of the way in which Beckett's training improves drivers' knowledge, skills and professional approach to their work.
16. Learners receive good advice during recruitment and induction to their training programmes. They understand clearly what the programme entails and their expected contribution. Learners receive good practical help from trainer assessors, particularly in organising their work and handouts. However, road passenger vehicle driving learners receive insufficient guidance about the next steps in their development.



## Leadership and management

## Grade 2

17. Directors and managers set a clear strategic direction and exhibit a passion for high-quality training. They work productively with partners and industry representatives to ensure a highly relevant training programme that addresses skills shortages and incorporates changes in legislation and practice. Directors have successfully diversified Beckett's main business of minicab hire and training by adding complementary services, such as the garage and vehicle testing, to attract new learners and partners.
18. Beckett's management information systems have improved since the last inspection. Managers monitor the progress of individual learners thoroughly to ensure maximum achievement rates. They have increased learners' success rates, which are now outstanding. Managers recognise that their data system restricts their ability to monitor ongoing trends and plan to resolve this.
19. Beckett meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding. Managers suitably check road passenger vehicle driving learners and trainer assessors with the Criminal Records Bureau. Trainer assessors use their safeguarding training well to increase learners' awareness and confidence. Managers carry out appropriate risk assessment and actions with Beckett's own drivers, but these systems do not fully incorporate all activities of the training team.
20. Staff promote equality and diversity well and demonstrate exceptional awareness of the cultural and religious needs of their learners. They discuss equality and diversity regularly during team meetings and give particularly good consideration to Muslim learners' needs when planning resources, training times and activities. Staff take great care to reduce barriers to learning. Managers took very successful action to increase success rates by women and White British learners, which are now the same as achievement by all learners. Learners understand how equality and diversity affect them and their work, but not all trainer assessors discuss this sufficiently during their progress reviews.
21. Staff routinely gather and respond to learners' feedback. Directors and managers use learners', partners', employers' and staff views well to develop resources, facilities and programmes. They thoroughly analyse the effectiveness of their actions for improvement, such as changes in the arrangements for initial advice and guidance which resulted in increased levels of learner satisfaction.
22. Beckett's well established quality assurance systems effectively ensure compliance with external organisations' requirements. Managers very accurately self-assess the organisation's strengths and areas for improvement, thoroughly analysing success rate data and learners' views. They involve staff fully in self-assessment and monitoring progress with the quality improvement plan during team meetings. Observers regularly monitor trainer assessors' work and very accurately identify what needs to be improved. They agree action plans with trainer assessors, but these do not sufficiently improve the quality of training

and assessment. Observers rarely follow up trainer assessors' actions at subsequent observations or share best practice within the team.

23. Beckett offers good value for money. Learners' success rates are outstanding and learners develop good skills and confidence. Directors invest significantly in developing good quality training accommodation, facilities, staff and learning resources. Employers and learners express very high levels of satisfaction, particularly about improvements to drivers' effectiveness.

## **Information about the inspection**

24. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's training manager, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, the previous inspection report and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
25. Inspectors used group and individual interviews and telephone calls to gain the views of learners and employers. They also looked at questionnaires learners had recently completed for the provider. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in both of the subject areas the provider offers.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

## Beckett Corporation Limited

**Learning types: 14 – 16:** Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades <b>using the 4 point scale</b> 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	Employer responsive
<b>Approximate number of enrolled learners</b>		
Full-time learners	42	42
Part-time learners		
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	2	
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	1	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	1	
How well do learners progress?	2	
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2	
How safe do learners feel?	2	
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well-being?*</i>	2	
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	n/a	
<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3	
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2	
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	3	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3	
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2	
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	n/a	
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3	
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2	
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2	
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3	
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2	

\*where applicable to the type of provision

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