

# Academy Education Limited

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		5-8 February 2013
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

## Summary of key findings for learners

### This provider requires improvement because:

- Overall success rates are just in line with the national average for similar hairdressing provision.
- The planning of learning is not sufficiently focused on all aspects of the learners' development; the good practical hairdressing skills learners develop are not consistently matched by training that is of a good or better standard.
- Not enough employers sufficiently link in-salon training to that of the training provider.
- Assessment planning works well for the majority of learners who regularly attend the training centres; however, for those who experience personal or work-related issues, the lack of flexible arrangements to assess learners in the workplace impedes some from achieving an apprenticeship and/or having the skills they have developed formally recognised.
- The provider over-estimates the quality of its provision and fails to develop action plans for improvement systematically and effectively; the use of accurate, detailed and timely data is not sufficiently well established to monitor all aspects of the provision's performance effectively.
- Quality assurance arrangements are under developed.

### This provider has the following strengths:

- Learners are particularly enthusiastic, well motivated and enjoy attending the training centres.
- Teachers use their industry knowledge and experience effectively to develop learners' good practical hairdressing skills, particularly on the intermediate programme.
- Access to clients and models is good and this contributes well to the practical training of learners.
- Learners are well informed of the progress they are making.
- The provider has a strong focus on meeting industry needs and works effectively with partners to the benefit of learners.

## Full report

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

- Very clearly plan learning to include all aspects of training and fully take account of the learners' starting points and ensure that the learners are challenged throughout to achieve the best of their ability, academically, practically and personally.
- Ensure that all learning is at least good or better, particularly hairdressing theory, English and mathematics.
- Introduce a flexible approach to assessing learners' competence that ensures that any learner unable to attend the training centres can formally have recognised the skills they attain.
- Take a critical view of the quality of provision that includes detailed and accurate use of timely data and robustly plan for improvement, setting challenging targets.
- Formally introduce a broad range of quality assurance measures that lead to sustained and continuous improvement.

### Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In 2011/12, success rates are broadly in line with national averages for similar provision. Success rates in barbering are very high, but very low for advanced hairdressing. The latest data for advanced apprenticeships indicate much improvement.</li> <li>▪ Learners demonstrate good standards of commercial hairdressing skills, particularly on the intermediate apprenticeship course. Many of these learners develop skills that are well above the requirements of the qualification. However, relatively few learners progress to the advanced programme. Many learners benefit from effective in-salon training and participation in specialist manufacturers' courses; a high percentage of learners who achieve the apprenticeship maintain employment in the industry.</li> <li>▪ Learners enjoy the hairdressing training and are enthusiastic and motivated to achieve well. Attendance at the training centres is good. Many learners make good progress, particularly those learners on the barbering course. However, for a few learners, progress is too slow. Many learners are not challenged sufficiently to improve upon their high attainment levels in English and mathematics.</li> <li>▪ Overall, the development of learners' social and personal skills is satisfactory. A few employers take effective measures to improve further their trainees' skills through a range of extra-curricular activities, for example off-site team-building exercises or involvement in fashion photo-shoots. The analysis of achievement and progress data is limited and does not clearly link to improving success rates for different groups of learners.</li> </ul>	

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement and this is reflected in the provider's overall success rate over the past three years. Teachers are well qualified hairdressers and use their up-to-date industry knowledge and experience well in developing learners' practical hairdressing skills. From an early stage, learners are quickly introduced to cutting and colouring, and they have sufficient access to a wide variety of clients to practise their skills. Some teachers offer good individual coaching and inspire learners to be creative and self-assured; the ratio of learners to teachers is generally good.</li> <li>▪ For most learners, the quality of in-salon training is at least satisfactory and for some very good. However, the provider recognises that a few learners do not receive appropriate levels of in-</li> </ul>	

salon training. Practical hairdressing resources in the Ipswich training centre are very good and in London satisfactory. Overall, learners quickly improve their confidence and talk positively about the practical skills they are developing. Learning resources are good for advanced level learners and adequate for intermediate learners. However, intermediate level learning resources contain a few errors. The use of information and learning technology to encourage effective learning is under developed.

- The teaching of hairdressing theory, English and mathematics and the promotion of equality and diversity in lessons are not sufficiently well planned. In some lessons observed, the range of teaching methods used by teachers is limited and learners are not always challenged and stretched to their full potential.
- Overall, assessment practice is satisfactory. More able learners are formally assessed early on in their training and make good progress. The use of question and answer by some teachers to assess learning in lessons is not always effective, and feedback by teachers on practical and written assessments is not always detailed enough to inform learners what they have done well and what they need to improve. The assessment process lacks sufficient flexibility to recognise learners' skills when at work, particularly for those learners unable to attend the training centre due to changes in their circumstances.
- The planning of English and mathematics and provision for those learners with additional learning needs is weak. Intermediate learners complete an English and mathematics test at the start of the programme, but the results are not used appropriately to plan learning. Too many learners are enrolled on to qualifications that are below the level of their existing qualifications or abilities. No advanced learners receive an initial assessment. Learners are taught about ratios and volume when mixing products in hairdressing lessons and how effective communication improves relationship with clients. However, teachers do not take advantage of naturally occurring opportunities to relate such activities to reinforce learning. Functional skills have yet to be introduced and the ability of appropriate staff to deliver these qualifications is unclear. No arrangements are made for learners requiring additional learning support.
- Advice and guidance are satisfactory. Learners and employers are informed well of the learner's progress at the training centre, and some employers use this information very effectively to integrate in-salon training. However, the targets set at progress reviews lack sufficient detail or breadth to inform learners how they can improve further; employers do not assess which vocational, personal or social skills can be improved when in the salon.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Requires improvement

- Academy Education Limited has a very strong focus on working with, and meeting the needs of, the hairdressing industry. Links with professional bodies and employers are well established and generally used effectively. Managers are very approachable and encouraging and the small team works professionally and enthusiastically together to benefit learners. Staff understand their role and ensure learners quickly develop good hairdressing skills to secure employment in the industry.
- Since the previous inspection, the provider has opened a centre in Ipswich and introduced an advanced hairdressing programme. Initial operational problems have now been resolved. The majority of learners are enrolled on the intermediate level course and success rates have increased marginally year on year and are broadly in line with the national average. The extent of practical training on the intermediate programme exceeds the requirements of the qualification.
- Staff benefit from regular opportunities to develop their professional hairdressing skills and best practice in the centres is regularly shared. The management of assessment practice appropriately meets the requirements of the awarding body. However, effective and formal systems to assess the quality of teaching and learning are under developed. Some staff appraisals allude to required improvements in teaching and learning, but this process is not

sufficiently thorough or used effectively to help the organisation systematically improve teaching and learning.

- Communication between staff is good and operational actions for improvement are dealt with quickly. Since the previous inspection, some key recommendations for improvement have been appropriately implemented, for example an improved focus in the reporting of off-the-job training to employers. However, quality improvement arrangements are mainly informal and are not sufficiently robust to lessen the variability in some key processes, such as the standard of employers' workplace training. Effective systems to assess the quality of provision and set challenging and specific actions for improvement lack rigour and a critical eye. The latest self-assessment report is too descriptive and includes too many positive judgements. The quality improvement plan lacks clarity and purpose and staff are not sufficiently involved. Accurate and timely data are not used effectively to plan and monitor performance.
- The curriculum is well established and the off-site vocational training is managed well. Learners' and employers' feedback is regularly sought and, where necessary, leads to improvement. The provider is well respected by employers and learners who are happy to recommend the training to others. However, the planning of learning is not sufficiently thorough. The provider recognises that a few employers do not participate sufficiently to support the development of the learners they employ.
- The provider's approach towards the promotion of equality and diversity requires improvement. Learners and staff are protected from harassment, bullying and discrimination. Policies and procedures are appropriate and learners are made aware of these at the start of the programme. Staff have a reasonable understanding of equality and diversity, but they miss naturally occurring opportunities to raise the subject in lessons and learners' understanding varies too much. Data are not used to plan for the reduction in achievement gaps between different groups of learners. Appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place; the provider meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Academy Education Limited

<b>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</b>  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Apprenticeships</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	3	3
Outcomes for learners	3	3
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	3

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Hairdressing</b>	3

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	96	19	9	27	0	0		
Number of learners aged 14-16	NA							
Number of community learners	NA							
Number of employability learners	NA							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<div> <div></div> <div>No subcontractors</div> </div>							

## Additional socio-economic information

Academy Education Limited offers apprenticeship training in hairdressing and barbering. Learners attend Academy Education Limited training centres in London or Ipswich and work in salons across London, the south and east of England.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Richard Beaumont HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the Director of Education as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions and visited salons. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



Learner View is a new website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to [www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk) or if you have any questions about Learner View please email Ofsted at:

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, 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 4234, 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 provider inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013