

Arthur Rank Training

Re-inspection monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Harmesh Manghra HMI

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Address: Arthur Rank Training
Princes Drive
Kenilworth
CV8 2FD

Telephone number: 01926 852111

RE-INSPECTION MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Context and focus of visit

Arthur Rank Training (ART) is a voluntary sector training provider of programmes for 16 to 18 year old learners who are socially and educationally disadvantaged. Serving Coventry and Warwickshire from its base in Kenilworth and through support from City College Coventry, it is the only provider of publicly funded Foundation Learning programmes of construction and motor vehicle as well as functional skills in English and mathematics in the area. School pupils aged 14 to 16 from various local schools also attend the work-related training. Approximately two-thirds of the pupils on these programmes progress to Foundation Learning.

At its inspection in September 2012, ART was judged inadequate for the outcomes for learners, quality of teaching, learning and assessment as well as leadership and management. In November 2012 the Education Funding Agency decided not to contract with the provider beyond the end of the contract year in July 2013 and instructed a freeze on further recruitment. At the time of the visit 61 learners were on the programme. During the monitoring visit inspectors were unable to observe teaching and learning due to the centre being closed for the Easter holidays. This report focuses on the themes explored during the visit.

Themes

Self-assessment and improvement planning

What impact and progress has Arthur Rank Training made to improve the quality of its self-assessment and improvement planning? **Reasonable progress**

In September 2012, the inspection team judged that ART did not have a clear idea of the quality of its provision. Leaders and managers had not maintained the previously good quality of provision since its most recent inspection in April 2009. Although the involvement of local schools, community groups and external agencies was good, ART did not seek their views to review and evaluate the provision. A quality management system was not fully in place.

The current arrangements for self-assessment are robust. With valuable help from the college, ART has produced an accurate and evaluative report of its provision by using broad ranging evidence. However, historically the managers have not conducted a sufficiently thorough analysis of the available data to set targets to improve the rates of learners' progression and achievement of qualifications. The quality improvement plan is appropriately detailed with a sharp focus on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and leadership and management. Action plans are clear and focused on the impact of the actions, with clear lines of accountability and a challenging timescale. Many elements of the revised quality

improvement system such as collection and use of learners' views and developmental observations of teaching and learning are working well. These actions have shifted the company's focus from a management-led quality improvement system to one that is fully supported by staff.

Outcomes for learners

What progress has Arthur Rank Training made to improve the outcomes for learners, particularly by increasing the achievement rates of qualifications and progression rates into further education, employment or training?

Significant progress

At the previous inspection, learners' achievement of qualifications and progression into further education or employment was low. Achievement of qualifications was particularly low in construction. Attendance rates were low. Retention rates were inadequate as nearly half of the learners did not stay on the programme.

Current learners are making good progress and most are on course to complete their qualifications in construction and motor vehicle. Achievement of qualifications for construction learners have improved significantly from a very low rate and are now good. Retention rates have vastly improved and are now good. Learners' attendance has also marginally improved. The proportion of learners who progress into further education, employment and apprenticeships has also improved to 65% and is satisfactory. Achievements of qualifications in the functional skills of mathematics are good and satisfactory in English. Learners' confidence and skills development is good. They enjoy their learning and make good use of the skills learnt to help repair their family cars and do some construction work in their homes. The provider does not offer any qualifications in the functional skill of information and communication technology although learners continue to develop these skills through research work and using technology in classes.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

How much progress has Arthur Rank Training made to improve the inadequate planning and reviewing of individual learners' progress?

Reasonable progress

In September 2012 learners did not have any meaningful individual learning plans. Staff did not use initial assessment to identify additional support needs, plan learning or set appropriate targets. Reviews of learners' progress were not carried out. Recording of individual learners' progress was not systematic and learners were not fully aware of the progress they were making.

The planning and review of learners' progress as well as tracking has improved to a reasonable level. Learners and staff have much clearer awareness of progress through the programme. With the help of an external consultant, staff have revised individual learning plans for all learners to cover all aspects of their learning. They

are more aware of the various stages of the learners' progress and how their contribution at each stage helps them succeed. Staff have developed the confidence and skills to implement a robust individual learning plan that can be completed on-line. The results of diagnostic assessment are still not available to staff in time. This has restricted their ability to direct their support promptly to deal with the specific needs of learners to ensure faster skills development and achievement of qualifications in English and mathematics. ART recognises that bringing all processes and record keeping into one document is not yet fully established.

What progress has Arthur Rank Training made to improve the integration of the teaching of functional skills with vocational skills?

Reasonable progress

Inspectors judged the development and assessment of learners' functional skills in English and mathematics to be weak at the previous inspection. Integration with vocational learning was poor and the communication between functional skills and vocational teaching staff to coordinate effective learning required improvement.

Since then, ART has doubled the time allocated to discrete tuition in English and mathematics. Communication between functional skills and vocational skills tutors is much improved with the former giving support to contextualise the discrete provision to the vocational areas. Vocational tutors are now convinced of the importance of integrating English and mathematics in their teaching and learning sessions. This is reflected appropriately in their lesson plans and in the newly introduced review documentation. Staff correct learners' written English as required and take greater care with their own grammar and spelling. This has been further facilitated by the introduction of electronic documents and the use of interactive software in teaching and learning sessions which incorporate spelling and grammar correction.

How much progress has Arthur Rank Training made to improve the inadequate teaching, learning and assessment?

Significant progress

At the previous inspection much teaching and learning was uninspiring and too teacher-led with limited use of technology to support learning. The use of initial assessment to assess additional support needs, assess standards of English and mathematics and set targets was poor. The planning of teaching and assessment was weak and tutors did not devote sufficient time to the development of English and mathematics skills. Assessment outcomes did not inform the next stage of learning.

Since then the provider has started to use a better system of initial assessment for English and mathematics with well advanced plans for further improvement. Lesson planning is much improved. Both functional skills and vocational tutors make better use of technology to engage learners. Learners enjoy learning through a variety of activities. They are very well engaged in sessions as they make greater use of interactive technology and independent research. Most tutors are undertaking higher levels of teaching qualifications, developing their skills and improving their classroom practice as a direct result of informative and valuable feedback from their course

tutors and the external consultant. They have become more reflective practitioners and actively seek further improvement. Improvements to initial assessment, target setting and the newly introduced review system have helped to motivate learners to make more rapid progress.

Leadership and management

How well has Arthur Rank Training improved the use of data, staff development and performance management to improve the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the programme? **Significant progress**

At the last inspection leadership and management was inadequate despite the introduction of a number of changes made in recognition of the poor state of the provision.

Many of these are now having a significant positive impact on improved outcomes for learners and on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. ART has benefited from close working with City College Coventry, through the college's involvement in the provider's board and the appointment of a college vice principal as part-time Chief Executive Officer (CEO). To improve the capacity of the company further, the board has recognised that a full-time CEO would further improve leadership and management and has appointed someone to start in May 2013. It has also approved the establishment of two new posts for a teaching and learning coach and an accredited observer to assist in further improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The company displays satisfactory capacity to offer the Study programme including work experience to the learners through its pre-existing strong links with a good range of employers.

A consultant employed by ART since January 2013 has made substantial improvements to many of the areas for development identified at inspection. Internal communications are now much improved with a series of whole organisational, management, teaching and other focused meetings, which now ensure that staff are well informed and are no longer working in isolation. The provider has also instigated a learner forum to elicit the views of learners. Data gathering is now more robust but managers recognise the need to develop more in-depth analysis. Staff skills, qualifications, confidence and performance have improved significantly. Managers have invested heavily in resources including the installation of interactive whiteboards in all classrooms and in staff training in their most effective use.

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