

E.Quality Training Ltd

Independent Learning Provider

Inspection dates		18-21 June 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- Most learners progress to education, training and employment.
- Most learners achieve their qualifications.
- All learners benefit from good, well-managed work placements and most develop valuable employability and technical skills.
- Teaching and learning are good. Learners gain from a high standard of individual coaching and particularly good practical training.
- Staff provide good initial advice and guidance and personal support for learners. They are very effective in ensuring that learners are suited to their programmes of learning and do not leave early without achieving their qualification.
- Learners and staff benefit from good management of staff performance and development, and high expectations from managers.
- Directors collect, manage and use data effectively to improve teaching and learning.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Not enough teaching and learning is outstanding.
- No effective plan is in place that brings together and clarifies learners' targets and other activities for all aspects of learners' programmes.
- Too much learners' written work is poor.
- Staff and managers do not set formal targets to improve the promotion of equality and diversity. Arrangements for the management of equality and diversity are too informal to monitor activities effectively.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase outstanding provision by giving more emphasis to learning during lessons. Ensure that feedback and improvement plans help tutors focus on how to provide outstanding learning and encourages them to better use information and learning technologies (ILT) in the classroom.
- Bring together all information on planning learning and learners' targets to provide a single coherent plan to guide learners through their programme of study.
- Ensure tutors identify and correct spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in learners' work and learners receive clear guidance on how to improve in these areas.
- Introduce more structured arrangements for the promotion of equality and diversity including setting challenging improvement targets.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Rates of progress into employment, education and training have increased substantially year-on-year. In 2012/13, two thirds of learners had already moved into employment, education and training. Learners make good progress in lessons and on their programmes of study. Managers monitor the destinations of leavers carefully and effectively. A high proportion of early leavers do not complete their programmes due to pregnancy or moving away from the area. Very few learners have achieved qualifications prior to entering the course. For example, only three of the current cohort of learners have achieved grade C in GCSE English and mathematics.
- Success rates for classroom-based learning including functional skills have increased markedly since the last inspection and are currently much higher than average for similar providers nationally.
- No significant variations exist in success rates for different groups of learners.
- Learners develop good workplace and personal skills. They communicate effectively in class and in the hairdressing training salons and treat clients with respect and courtesy. Learners' attendance and punctuality are good.
- Learners develop good vocational skills and produce a high standard of practical work. For example, the hairdressing salons attract a high number of regular clients from the local community who are pleased with the service they receive.
- Learners' written work is broadly satisfactory, but a minority is of a variable standard. A few learners produce well-presented work with good spelling and punctuation. Others produce poorly written work containing spelling and grammatical errors. Overall, the development of learners' English and mathematical skills requires improvement. However, learners develop appropriate skills in English and mathematics for their job roles and for the requirements of their qualifications.
- All learners benefit from good work placements in hairdressing salons and childcare centres. The experience they gain during placements makes a significant contribution to learning and to the development of workplace skills. Staff monitor learners carefully throughout their placements and in many cases, these placements have developed into apprenticeships. A few learners have secured permanent employment from their work placement.
- Learners have a good understanding of health and safety and safe working practices both in the training centre and during work placements. Learners report that they feel safe in the training centre and in their work placement.

- Learners adequately understand their rights and responsibilities and demonstrate appropriate respect and behaviour towards each other and the vulnerable service users in their care.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are of a high standard which reflects the good outcomes for learners. Staff and managers have designed programmes that prepare learners well for progression to employment and further training by developing their vocational, personal and social skills. Staff support learners very effectively to develop these skills.
- Tutors have high expectations of the learners undertaking hairdressing and childcare training and they have high levels of professional expertise and experience. Tutors are appropriately qualified and they use their skills and experience well, to plan and deliver interesting and effective learning activities.
- Learners gain from a high standard of individual coaching and support, well suited to the small class sizes. Staff provide good support for learners, particularly for the personal and practical problems that many face. Staff monitor learners attendance well and follow-up absences rigorously. Most learners respond well to the provider's bonus system which financially rewards learners for full attendance.
- The quality of most lessons is good. Tutors engage learners in well-planned practical activities and effectively link theory to its application in the workplace. For example, in one lesson, childcare learners undertook interesting and creative craft work which their tutor explained clearly how they could use these activities with pre-school children in childcare. Tutors' demonstrations of hairdressing skills are clear, systematic and delivered at an appropriate pace. Tutors often prepare learners effectively for working in commercial salons by using time limits for specific tasks. Most tutors make good use of probing questions to check learners' understanding and to develop their critical thinking skills.
- In weaker lessons, planning is often ineffective because tutors do not always link tuition to the learning objectives. In these lessons, a minority of tutors talk too much, consequently learners are too passive and they do not encourage learners to undertake follow-up independent work to reinforce and extend what they have learned in these lessons.
- Learners appreciate the valuable work experience they receive. It is a strong feature of their learning programmes. Staff effectively assess learners' readiness to attend a work placement which benefits both learners and employers. During their placements, learners undertake a range of challenging tasks that enable them to apply and practice the vocational skills that they develop in the training centre. Staff monitor learners' performance and progress in the workplace carefully to ensure they take maximum benefit from the experience.
- Learners benefit from an initial assessment that accurately identifies and records their starting points. When planning learning programmes, staff record the qualifications learners are to undertake. However, staff do not use a cohesive individual learning plan that brings together this information and includes targets for personal and social skills development. Learners are clear about the requirements of their childcare and hairdressing awards and their progress towards them, but are less clear about the broader objectives of their programme including the development of English and mathematics skills.
- Assessment is fair, accurate and reliable. Tutors assess learners' practical and written work frequently and provide them with clear and constructive verbal and written feedback on the vocational content. However, they do not consistently provide learners with feedback on spelling, grammar and punctuation. Tutors do not always bring errors to the attention of learners, nor do they give learners clear guidance on how to make corrections.
- The development of learners' English, mathematics and ILT skills requires improvement. Managers have identified this issue and are working with staff to incorporate functional skills

into vocational lessons. For example, developments include the use of ratios in childcare lessons in the context of mixing paint.

- Tutors provide good information, advice and guidance to learners. Prospective learners receive accurate information on programmes of learning and staff use interviews to assess effectively their suitability. Staff place a strong focus throughout the programme on learners progressing to employment or further training. When learners have completed the foundation learning programme and are waiting to begin an apprenticeship, tutors provide additional training to ensure learners maintain their motivation to continuing learning.
- Most tutors promote equality and diversity well during their lessons and through attractive displays on the walls of classrooms and social spaces. Learners have an appropriate understanding of equality and diversity, gained mainly through their vocational studies.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Learners, managers and staff benefit from a clear strategic direction set by directors. Challenging targets and a carefully planned approach to controlled growth supports the strategic direction. Aspirations are high and management expectations of both staff and learners are well defined and demanding.
- Since the last inspection, directors and managers have made good progress in dealing with the areas for improvement. The arrangements for data collection, analysis and use are now particularly good. Learners benefit from very good use of management information to monitor their progress and keep them on programme. Staff now have a good grasp of their own performance and that of EQT. These improvements have increased significantly outcomes for learners.
- Management of the performance of staff is highly effective. Well written policies and procedures for staff, including capability and disciplinary arrangements, support the clear and detailed handbook for employees, which sets out management expectations. Monthly one-to-one meetings together with annual appraisals effectively identify staff development needs. Managers use these to set clear targets for staff. Managers make good use of information from the observations of teaching, learning and assessment to manage the performance of staff.
- Staff training and development are good. Training records are comprehensive. Staff benefit from a broad range of relevant in-house and external training. Directors are particularly good at coaching, supporting and developing new and junior staff to realise their potential and progress to management positions. Since the last inspection, directors have filled several new management posts in this way as part of the expansion strategy.
- Observations of teaching, learning and assessment are particularly effective. EQT has clear guidelines on the observations of lessons. Observers brief tutors well on these arrangements and plan observations well. Following observation, tutors benefit from good improvement plans and staff development. Observations are mostly accurate in identifying strengths, areas for improvement and grading. However, observations concentrate on the tutor's performance rather than learners and learning.
- Self-assessment has improved since the last inspection. The current report accurately identifies most of EQT's strengths and areas for improvement. Grades are realistic and accurate. The self-assessment report is concise and clear. Planning to improve provision is effective. Directors and managers monitor the effectiveness of planning well. Their use of data to support the judgements in the report is particularly good. However, a few sections of the report are descriptive rather than judgemental. Managers have identified that a minority of quality improvement and management activities will need to be on for more formal basis as EQT expands.

- Learners benefit from a strong working relationship with employers. Close ties with employers and businesses in the area lead to good work placements for all learners providing strong learning and skills development and the solid foundation for progression. Good risk assessment and monitoring of work placements ensures learners work in safe and caring environments and engage in meaningful productive work. Staff prepare learners well for their placements.
- The management of equality and diversity is effective. Learners benefit from a safe and secure environment and work in an atmosphere of courtesy and respect for each other. The promotion of equality and diversity within the organisation is of an appropriate standard. Numerous wall displays, the effective promotion in the classroom and the extent to which its learners are aware of and understand equality and diversity issues indicates directors, managers, staff and learners commitment to this area. However, no formal management group oversees the promotion of equality and diversity, share good practice or set targets to develop and improve the promotion of equality and diversity.
- Safeguarding of learners is particularly good. Comprehensive policies and procedures, reviewed and updated regularly, together with very good training ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and how to deal with safeguarding issues. Links with the local safeguarding board are good. EQT meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

E.Quality Training Limited

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Foundation learning	2

Provider details

E.Quality Training Ltd	
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16-18
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 49
	Part-time: N/A
Principal/CEO	Majella Cocks and Rob Cocks (joint principals)
Date of previous inspection	July 2010
Website address	www.equality-training.co.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)								
Full-time	49	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+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ N/A 							

Additional socio-economic information

EQT has two sites in the Stoke-on-Trent area, one in Newcastle-under-Lyme and one in Hanley. Unemployment in the area is high with 9.9% of the population aged 16 to 64 population unemployed compared to 8.9% in the West Midlands and 8.1% nationally. The number aged 16 to 18 not in education or employment or training (NEET) remains above the regional and national rates. Stoke-on-Trent is the sixteenth most deprived local authority area in England. More than 30% of the city's population live in areas classified in the 10% most deprived in England. Some 19.4% of Stoke-on-Trent's population aged 16 to 64 do not have qualifications compared to 13.6% in the West Midlands and 9.7% nationally. Most learners are of white British origin and female. The number of males on the programmes is low at 2%.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

John Dunn

Three additional inspectors, assisted by the joint managing director 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, assessments and progress reviews. 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 area 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>

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