

Housing 21

Not for profit organisation

Inspection dates		16-20 September 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
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:

- Too many learners leave early without completing all aspects of their apprenticeship.
- Too little teaching and learning are good or better. Planning of teaching and learning sessions is too variable and does not always meet the needs of individual learners, resulting in some learners not reaching their full potential.
- Staff do not make sufficient use of the results of initial and diagnostic assessment to ensure that individual support is provided quickly enough for learners that need it.
- Functional skills are not taught early enough in apprenticeships to support learners in the development and application of English and mathematical skills. Learning managers do not systematically improve learners' English skills by correcting spelling, grammar and punctuation errors on assessed work.
- Written feedback to learners does not provide sufficient guidance to help them to improve.
- The restructure of the training department, which is now beginning to improve provision and ensure that learners achieve all aspects of their qualifications, is not yet fully complete.

This provider has the following strengths:

- Learners develop good vocational and employability skills complemented by a wide range of additional technical qualifications.
- Recent changes within the organisation ensure that staff are well supported in undertaking continuing professional development to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders and managers have clear vision and strategy which have led to decisive and successful actions in improving the quality of provision. This has begun to have a positive impact on the number of learners completing all aspects of their qualifications.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of learners successfully completing their apprenticeship by setting specific and measurable targets for learners, ensuring that these are carefully tracked and recorded by learning managers and monitored by senior leaders.
- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching and learning by:
 - improving planning of teaching and learning sessions to meet more effectively the needs of all learners
 - making better use of the results of initial and diagnostic assessments to provide specific and targeted support for individual learners
 - ensuring that written feedback to learners includes the correction of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, and provides the detail required to support them to improve their work.
- Introduce functional skills early in the apprenticeship programme. Ensure that good quality functional skills training and support throughout the programme enable learners to develop and apply English and mathematics skills in addition to passing the functional skills examination. Ensure that there are sufficient staff to coach and support learners through their functional skills qualification.
- Complete the restructure of the training department to ensure all aspects of provision are improved and learners successfully complete their programmes.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Although success rates are improving, too few learners complete all aspects of their apprenticeship. Only a small minority of learners completed their qualifications in 2011/12. The provider's own data for 2012/13 show a significant improvement in achievement, with an increase in success rates of more than 50% compared to 2011/12 data for both intermediate and advanced programmes. The proportion of learners that achieved their qualifications within the planned timescale in 2011/12 was extremely low but improved by more than 30% in 2012/13. ▪ The vast majority of learners achieve most aspects of their apprenticeship but leave before completing functional skills qualifications in mathematics and English. The recent recruitment of a team of specialist functional skills trainers to teach and coach learners has resulted in a significant improvement in the achievement of functional skills qualifications and, consequently, apprenticeships. However, a minority of learners have yet to receive coaching from functional skills trainers to enable them to complete the final component of their apprenticeship. A small minority of learners have English and mathematical skills that are below the level at which they are being studied. ▪ In order to increase success rates and improve learners' English and mathematical skills further, plans are in place to introduce functional skills at the beginning of apprenticeships rather than at the end, but these are yet to be implemented. ▪ Achievement rates for different groups of learners show no discernible differences. The majority of learners are females; however, the proportion of males on apprenticeship programmes is representative of the number of males employed in Housing 21 centres. ▪ Outcomes for different groups of learners are analysed at a basic level to identify trends, for example learners with identified disabilities or learning difficulties failing to complete their qualification. However, monitoring of actions resulting from this analysis is not frequent or thorough enough. 	

- Learners now make at least satisfactory, and often good, progress in developing skills essential for the workplace. Standards of learners' work, although adequate, are variable and work is insufficiently challenging in developing skills and understanding of the small minority of more able learners.
- Personal and social skills are well developed. Learners are confident, articulate and, since changes to assessment practice following the company restructure, now enjoy their learning. They complete a wide range of additional and technical qualifications such as re-ablement, peg feeding, administering medication and dementia awareness to extend their learning and apply to their professional practice.
- Programmes meet the current needs and future aspirations of most learners. However, a very small minority of learners with low starting points are on programmes that are too difficult for them.
- Many learners achieving apprenticeships at intermediate level gain promotion to senior carer positions within the organisation, or progress to higher-level apprenticeships. Others gain additional responsibility, for example as champions for end-of-life care. However, leaders and managers rely on informal feedback from staff to track learners' destinations and do not formally collect data on progression to higher-level courses or promotion within the health and social care sector.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, which is reflected in the provider's success rates and the quality of the learners' experience.
- The new organisational structure within Housing 21 now supports and challenges learners appropriately to complete their apprenticeships. Before the restructure, too many learners became disillusioned with the apprenticeship programme due to infrequent visits and poor standards of assessment, resulting in them leaving without achieving the full award. Because they now benefit from regular visits, appropriate assessment techniques and high levels of support from learning managers and functional skills trainers, significantly more learners now complete their programmes. However, too many learners still lack a thorough understanding of the requirements and expectations of completing an apprenticeship, particularly in relation to functional skills.
- Learners benefit from a wide range of additional qualifications, such as end-of-life care and dementia awareness, to complement their apprenticeship and enhance employability. Learners are able to apply their new skills in the workplace, gain in self-confidence and strengthen their ability to reflect upon and improve personal and professional practice.
- Staff are well qualified and have good vocational experience to enable them to deliver health and social care and functional skills qualifications. They use their knowledge and experience well to support and extend learning. For example, during a session on dementia awareness, the learning manager successfully illustrated deterioration of the brain's functions using an onion to demonstrate the process.
- Planning for learning is inconsistent which results in learners making variable progress in sessions. In better sessions, such as functional skills, lesson plans are individualised for each learner. Because of this, they gain confidence, competently apply skills and knowledge and make satisfactory and often good progress towards their qualifications. In the best lessons, learners draw on their experiences in the workplace and clearly relate them to their learning. Learning managers question and extend learning effectively, for example in the correct use of technical terms in relation to health and social care practice.
- In less effective sessions, all learners complete the same level of work. More able learners lack sufficient challenge to extend their learning, and learners identified as having an additional learning needs receive insufficient support. In these sessions, learning managers do not always ensure that all learners gain a thorough understanding of topics, direct them too much and

provide answers to questions without allowing learners sufficient time to reflect on their learning.

- Initial assessment, although adequately planned to determine learners' ability in English and mathematics, is inconsistently utilised and does not fully consider learners' prior experience or learning. Learning managers and functional skills trainers do not routinely identify learners' additional support needs or provide specific and targeted support quickly enough. Documentation lacks sufficient detail to provide effective and individualised support, resulting in a significant minority of learners making slow progress.
- The quality of feedback to learners requires improvement. Verbal feedback is effective and enables learners to complete set tasks successfully in the vocational element of the apprenticeship framework. However, written feedback lacks sufficient detail for learners to improve their work or to reflect upon and further develop their professional practice. The checking of learners' work to correct spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors is not sufficiently thorough and learners repeatedly make common errors in their work.
- Teaching and the promotion of English, mathematics and functional skills, although improving, is still too variable. Prior to the restructure, the lack of functional skills trainers resulted in the vast majority of learners not achieving functional skills by the planned end of their programme. The recent introduction of a dedicated team of functional skills specialists who coach individuals and groups of learners is beginning to have a significant impact on functional skills achievement. However, learning managers do not integrate mathematics and English into the programme or use the opportunity to relate them to professional practice, for example in administering medication.
- Information, advice and guidance are adequate. Although informal discussions provide valuable opportunities for learners to explore potential career opportunities, these are under utilised and not formally recorded in individual learning plans. Opportunities during monthly progress reviews to discuss aspirations for personal and career development lack sufficient exploration and are not routinely recorded on progress review documentation.
- Learners' understanding of equality and diversity and safeguarding is sufficient to meet the required standard for the completion of their programme. Promotion of equality and diversity during induction is effective and learners develop a good understanding of person-centred care. However, learning managers do not adequately reinforce learners' understanding of equality and diversity and the implications for professional practice. During training sessions and discussions, learning managers do not take advantage of naturally occurring opportunities to link topics, such as gaining a better understanding of the needs of a culturally diverse client group, to extend learners' understanding. Learners have a good understanding of safe working practices and are able to demonstrate these in the workplace.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The leadership and management of Housing 21 require improvement. Leaders and managers now have a clear and coherent strategy to improve the quality of provision for apprenticeships. The board of directors and new senior leadership team have taken prompt action to address key failings within the learning and development department. The implementation of a detailed action plan addressing key areas for improvement has brought about rapid organisational change, but it is too early to measure the full impact.
- A number of actions to improve the quality of apprenticeship training since January 2013 are starting to have an impact on success rates and the quality of provision; for example, the reduction in the number of learners assigned to learning managers; the appointment of four additional functional skill tutors and additional staff with responsibility for quality improvement.
- In May 2013, Housing 21 made the decision not to recruit new learners on to programmes due to low success rates and learners' poor experience of apprenticeships. Leaders and managers have thoroughly reviewed the delivery of apprenticeships and are currently developing a new

programme, which includes the introduction of functional skills during the early stages of the programme, to provide learners with a better chance of successfully completing their apprenticeship.

- Strong performance management has resulted in a reduction in the number of underperforming staff. Those that remain are reinvigorated and feel very positive for the future of the apprenticeship programme. They feel their views are valued and their roles and responsibilities are now much clearer.
- Housing 21 use rigorous processes to assess the skills of existing trainers and assessors to determine if they have the necessary skills to move into the new role of learning manager which has responsibility for both training and assessment. Selection processes for external applicants are similarly robust. However, although success rates are improving and teaching and learning sessions are becoming more consistent, they are still too variable.
- A new detailed process for the observation of teaching and learning has recently been introduced but has not yet been fully implemented. All members of staff have a clear personal development plan and appropriate key performance indicators. The board of directors very effectively monitors performance and robustly challenges senior managers where appropriate.
- Well planned and effective continuous professional development is successfully supporting staff to increase their skills and knowledge. A thorough and detailed skills analysis has effectively focused professional development on relevant topics. For example, all staff are involved in training with the Alzheimer's Society for specialised training in the care of people with dementia. New salary structures now recognise additional knowledge and skills and actively promote progression within the company.
- As a large, not-for-profit organisation, Housing 21 has a good approach to its corporate social responsibility. It develops partnerships very effectively to promote careers in the health and social care sector and to help smaller organisations introduce apprenticeships. It also works closely with schools and colleges to ensure that health and social care courses delivered in these settings reflect the reality of work in the sector.
- The process for self-assessment is robust, inclusive and accurately identifies many areas for improvement found by inspectors; however, the self-assessment report is overly descriptive. Arrangements for the monitoring of the performance of the learning and development team against specific targets are rigorous. Monthly team meetings are effective in identifying and reviewing areas for improvement, with resulting actions rigorously tracked to ensure satisfactory completion.
- Housing 21 has recently introduced a new management information system to record learners' progress and produce a range of data to enable managers to monitor the programme more effectively. However, use of this is currently at a very basic level and requires further improvement.
- Although Housing 21 has an appropriate equality and diversity policy and action plan, they are insufficiently monitored. Housing 21 staff and learners have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of relevant equality and diversity issues. However, learning managers make insufficient use of naturally occurring opportunities to further develop learners' knowledge and understanding during formal teaching and learning sessions or visits to the workplace.
- Housing 21 meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. Senior managers keep a detailed central record for all staff. Staff training in safeguarding is good and is up to date. Induction for staff and learners is effective and thoroughly covers a range of topics such as bullying and harassment, e-safety and complaints and safeguarding. Health and safety arrangements in training centres and the workplace are robust.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Housing 21

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	Apprenticeships
Overall effectiveness	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
Health and Social Care	3

Type of provider	Not for profit organisation								
Age range of learners	16+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 0								
	Part-time: 137								
Principal/CEO	Mr Nick Allsopp								
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected								
Website address	www.housing21.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		
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 traineeships	16-19		19+		Total				
	0		0		0				
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+			
	4	280	0	40	0	0			
Number of learners aged 14-16									
Full-time	N/A								
Part-time	N/A								
Number of community learners	N/A								
Number of employability learners	N/A								
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)								
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 								

Contextual information

Housing 21 is a large multi-site employer, social enterprise and voluntary third sector provider with more than 7,500 employees. The organisation promotes choice and independence for older people through a range of care, health and housing solutions. The learning and development department provides apprenticeship programmes in health and social care solely for employees of Housing 21. The apprenticeship provision is delivered nationally with the largest proportion of learners in the north of England. The large majority of learners are adults. Currently 89% are female and 16% are from a minority ethnic background.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Anita Pyrkotsch-Jones HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the National Learning Manager as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last two 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 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>

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