

## Nottingham Hairdressing Training Agency Limited

### Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		<b>11–14 February 2014</b>
<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		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider requires improvement because:

- Too few apprentices achieve their intended qualifications.
- Tutors' written feedback to apprentices following practical observations is not clear or sufficiently detailed to tell them how to improve their skills further.
- Short-term targets are not challenging enough for a minority of apprentices, resulting in their slow progress in completing basic units such as shampooing and conditioning.
- Targets set for staff and those in the quality improvement plan are not specific or demanding enough.
- Plans to promote equality and diversity further and recruit more males and apprentices from minority ethnic groups are not sufficiently well developed.

#### This provider has the following strengths:

- Apprentices develop good vocational skills.
- Apprentices improve their English and mathematics skills well.
- Good quality salons provide very effective learning environments, and salon staff promote a high standard of creative work.
- In most practical sessions, tutors monitor apprentices' work well and provide good individual demonstration and tuition.
- Self-assessment is self-critical and accurate. The process takes account of the views of apprentices, staff and employers.

## Full report

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

- Increase the proportion of apprentices who complete their programmes by continuing to monitor closely those at risk of leaving early and providing appropriate support to enable them to continue in learning.
- Improve the feedback to learners following practical assessments and progress reviews by careful monitoring of tutors' written records and sharing good practice. Ensure that all documents written by tutors for their apprentices are free from errors and use good English.
- Improve apprentices' short-term targets by ensuring that tutors take appropriate account of their previous experience and set challenging completion dates for the basic shampooing and conditioning parts of the programme.
- Develop and implement a clear plan to promote further equality and diversity, including the recruitment of more males and apprentices from minority ethnic groups. Obtain data on the local community and use it to set meaningful and realistic targets for recruiting a more diverse range of apprentices.
- Revise staff targets and those in the quality improvement plan to ensure that they are challenging and realistic. Set individual targets for staff, based upon their current performance and the abilities of their apprentices.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Requires improvement
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- Action taken by managers to reduce the proportion of learners who leave their programmes early without completing their apprenticeships has been effective. Provider data for the first half of the current year indicate that the retention of apprentices has improved and success rates are high. However, overall success rates for both intermediate and advanced apprenticeships for the last two years since the previous inspection are low and considerably below the national average.
- Apprentices' achievement of functional skills is good. A high proportion of apprentices who enter functional skills examinations pass first time. They develop good communication skills and talk with clients very effectively to put them at ease and gain their confidence. They use their English and mathematics skills confidently at work in tasks such as booking appointments and preparing colouring products. Apprentices are aware of the importance of developing their English and mathematics skills further and around a third of intermediate apprentices go on to study these subjects at a higher level than the apprenticeship framework requires.
- No discernible achievement gaps exist between different groups of learners. Those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve at a similar rate as those who do not. The number of males and learners from minority ethnic groups is too low to allow for a meaningful comparison of achievement data.
- Apprentices develop good technical knowledge and vocational skills and the standard of their work is high. Employers value the increasing contribution that apprentices make at work. For example, a minority of apprentices have well-developed skills in colouring and are able to work independently in their salons. Apprentices are enthusiastic and enjoy their training. They attend well and mostly punctual. Apprentices make good progress; around a third with schedules to finish their programmes later this year have already completed early.

- A high proportion of apprentices who successfully complete at an intermediate level go on to progress to the advanced programme. Data for the last three years indicate that a high proportion of leavers remain in employment, become self-employed or undertake further training.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, which reflects the recent improvement in the quality of provision and the increase in retention and success rates in the current year.
- Apprentices benefit from employment in good quality salons with staff that have high standards of creative skills. Salon staff are inspirational and motivational hairdressing role models. Employers train apprentices well, and their training coordinates closely with that provided by Nottingham Hairdressing Training Agency Limited (NHTA). A few employers provide apprentices with additional learning opportunities including presentations by product manufacturers and attendance at external training events.
- Tutors have high expectations of their apprentices and plan lessons well to provide good challenge. They use questions very effectively to develop and reinforce apprentices' knowledge. Tutors set a demanding pace in the majority of practical sessions that keeps apprentices focused well on their learning. However, in a minority of practical sessions, apprentices do not pay appropriate attention to keeping salons clean and tidy, and the standard of their conduct does not meet professional standards.
- A high ratio of tutors to apprentices in most practical sessions enables tutors to monitor apprentices closely and provide them with good individual demonstrations and tuition to improve their skills. Tutors have a good understanding of individual apprentices' abilities and learning needs. They develop apprentices' independence by encouraging them to set their own learning targets for sessions and evaluate their progress accurately at the end of the session. Tutors successfully develop apprentices' personal learning and thinking skills.
- Tutors assess apprentices' starting points and additional support needs effectively at the beginning of their programme. Tutors carefully consider issues such as health conditions and personal situations carefully when planning learning programmes. Support for those who have dyslexia is appropriate.
- Assessment is fair and consistent; assessors plan well and focus assessments appropriately on unit completion. Learners gain from frequent assessment visits and assessments requested at short notice in the workplace. For a minority of apprentices short-term target setting is weak. Tutors do not always take into account apprentices' previous experience. Target dates set for completing basic assessments such as shampooing and conditioning are not challenging enough, resulting in slow progress in the initial stages of the programme. Tutors' written feedback to apprentices following practical observations is not sufficiently clear or detailed and is not always helpful in telling them how to improve their skills further.
- Tutors reviews apprentices' progress well. Apprentices benefit from good professional discussion on their progress in the salon and in the training centre. Employers are involved in the reviews and agree the targets set for apprentices. However, tutors do not always record these productive discussions adequately and in too many instances, records of reviews are unclear.
- Tutors develop apprentices' English and mathematics skills well through activities including project work. One interesting project involved apprentices measuring and drawing the layout of their salon. Intermediate apprentices are encouraged to develop their English through writing a formal essay to include in a portfolio that they present at their interview to progress to an advanced apprenticeship. Learners gain from tutors' skills in developing their English and mathematics skills within a vocational context such as the use of ratios when mixing colouring products and the benefit of bar charts to illustrate information on product sales.

- Information, advice and guidance are good. The initial interviews and induction programme are comprehensive and enable apprentices to become familiar with the programme and to ensure it suits their needs. Staff are approachable and supportive and rapidly build a good rapport with new apprentices.
- Tutors promote apprentices' understanding of equality and diversity well during training sessions and progress review meetings. They discuss particularly effectively with apprentices a wide range of promotional leaflets on topical issues such as challenging gender stereotyping in hairdressing, dyslexia awareness and celebrating religious and cultural festivals from around the world. Most apprentices are confident in what they would say and do to welcome clients who have particular health or cultural circumstances and to meet their needs.

## The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Senior managers are implementing effective strategies to resolve the poor retention of learners. However, they did not identify and remedy the problem early enough, resulting in low success rates in the two years since the previous inspection. The senior management team, reconfigured following staff changes, has introduced a range of improvements to the programme in the last six months, but as the self-assessment report acknowledges it is too soon to see the impact of some of these actions.
- Managers monitor apprentices' progress and attendance closely through an effective 'cause for concern' register that they use to record those learners at risk of leaving early. Staff attend frequent meetings to review the register and ensure that they take appropriate action to improve apprentices' chances of remaining on the programme.
- Managers provide appropriate training for staff to update them on areas such as safeguarding and equality. Tutors have achieved functional skills qualifications to enable them to provide these skills confidently alongside the hairdressing training. Despite this development, a minority of tutors' writing on documents that they present to their apprentices contain spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors.
- Management of staff performance is effective. Managers use staff appraisals appropriately to set objectives for staff and to challenge underperformance. Objectives for staff include the performance of their apprentices, reinforcing the importance of apprentices' outcomes. However, staff targets on apprentices' retention, attendance and progress are the same for all tutors and groups and do not take account of the performance and needs of individual apprentices.
- Managers have improved the observing of teaching and learning to focus more clearly on areas for improvement identified through self-assessment. Observers evaluate tutors' promotion of equality and diversity, safeguarding and functional skills during observations, raising their awareness of the importance of these topics. Observations have enabled managers to identify accurately staff whose teaching requires improvement and who need further support. Managers have introduced team teaching recently to ensure that all apprentices benefit from the good teaching which the most effective tutors provide and that less experienced tutors can learn from their more experienced colleagues. However, development plans for tutors, devised following observations to improve their practice, require improvement.
- While managers focus appropriately on monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, they do not on practical assessment both in the training centre and in salons where fourteen work-based assessors operate. In the last year, only one internal verification of a practical assessment took place.
- Self-assessment is detailed and inclusive; it takes into account the views of employers, apprentices and staff. The self-assessment report is self-critical and includes clear evidence, including data, to support judgements. Inspectors agreed with many judgements in the report.

- The quality improvement plan sets out intentions to resolve areas for development, but fails to provide enough detail on how managers will make these improvements. In addition, the plan includes a few inappropriate targets. For example, it includes a target of 80% of lesson observations graded good or better despite the fact that the plan also reports, separately, that 87% of lessons already meet this target.
- Planning for programmes of learning is effective and flexible in meeting the needs of apprentices and their employers. Apprentices value that they can request an assessment visit at short notice when the opportunity for assessment arises. Apprentices and their employers appreciate the choice of having the programme taking place wholly in the workplace or the apprentice attending the training academy for training one day every two weeks. Programmes develop apprentices' English and mathematics skills well, preparing them effectively for the requirements of the hairdressing industry.
- Managers and staff have undertaken a variety of successful initiatives to promote equality and diversity to apprentices and their employers after the self-assessment identified this area requires improvement. The initiatives have improved apprentices' understanding of equality and diversity.
- Managers have not produced a clear action plan on how to recruit successfully male apprentices and those from minority ethnic groups, an area for improvement accurately identified through self-assessment. While managers have taken some action, such as introducing the barbering apprenticeship to attract more males, they have not used information on the local community or the hairdressing industry to set targets to improve this area.
- NHTA meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. Staff with responsibility for safeguarding support well vulnerable apprentices to complete their programmes. Managers undertake appropriate staff checks for all staff who come into contact with learners.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### NHTA Limited

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

<b>Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Hairdressing</b>	<b>2</b>

## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Independent learning provider							
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16+							
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	Full-time: N/A							
	Part-time: 115							
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Charlotte Moreland							
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	November 2011							
<b>Website address</b>	www.nhta.org.uk							
<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>								
<b>Main course or learning programme level</b>	<b>Level 1 or below</b>		<b>Level 2</b>		<b>Level 3</b>		<b>Level 4 and above</b>	
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Part-time</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	62	3	28	9	N/A	N/A		
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	N/A							
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Part-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ N/A.</li> </ul>							

## Contextual information

NHTA has its head office in the Sherwood district of Nottingham. It offers hairdressing and barbering apprenticeships in the Greater Nottingham area. NHTA has its own training salon and academy in central Nottingham that most apprentices attend for training and assessment every two weeks. NHTA works with around 90 employers and their apprentices, and provides the option of having the programme taking place entirely in the workplace through visits from tutors. Over half of apprentices have declared that they have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and therefore require additional support. Unemployment in Nottingham is higher than the national average.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Patricia Hornsby AI

Four additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's administration, data and human resources 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, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last two years since the previous inspection 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 relevant 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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