

Nacro

Not for profit organisation

Inspection dates		28 April–2 May 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate-4
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
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:

- Learners gain greater confidence and self-esteem while they study at Nacro. They improve their personal and social skills very effectively and increase their chances of getting a job or continuing in education.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Tutors provide interesting and stimulating learning activities which lead to learners developing good vocational skills.
- Learners receive very good support and care. They enable many who face significant barriers to learning to participate effectively and make good progress.
- Tutors expertly manage learners' challenging behaviour. This contributes to a strong culture of respect and inclusion in which learners thrive.
- Promotion of equality and diversity is good throughout the organisation. Tutors help learners overcome their preconceptions and prejudices effectively.
- Expert senior leaders, supported well by Nacro's trustees, provide strong leadership. They successfully drive rapid improvement towards ambitious targets.
- Performance management of staff is highly effective. It has led to a swift rise in standards of classroom teaching and learning.
- Significant, well planned and targeted investment is providing learners with good, well-equipped classrooms and workshops.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Not enough learners complete their qualifications successfully and progress to further education, employment or training.
- Too few learners go on external work placements as part of their study programme.
- Not enough teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding.
- Recently implemented quality improvement arrangements have yet to have sufficient impact. Quality and performance across the training centres vary too greatly.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Fully implement the new attendance strategy so that more learners attend regularly, successfully complete their programmes and progress to their next steps.
- Secure sufficient high quality external work placements to meet the needs of learners, especially those on 16 to 19 study programmes, through new and existing partnerships with employers.
- Raise standards of teaching further by extending the successful tutor development programme to all tutors. Continue the robust use of performance management arrangements.
- Ensure that quality improvement arrangements have strong impact through:
 - firmly establishing quality improvement reviews and new self-assessment processes
 - applying the observation of teaching and learning scheme to all key activities involving learners, such as induction and work experience
 - close scrutiny of the work of subcontractors.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Over the first few months of the 16 to 19 study programmes, the rate at which learners progress into employment, education and training is broadly satisfactory. This continues a steady trend of improvement in progression for this age group over a three year period. A good proportion of these learners go on to study at further education colleges. ▪ At the previous inspection, success rates for qualifications had declined and were below those nationally. Nacro has begun to reverse that trend. In the last few months its data show that a higher proportion of new learners aged 16 to 19 remain on their programmes than in previous years. Improvement in the retention of learners over 19 is strong. Nacro's data suggest improvements in learners' achievement are likely to bring overall qualification success rates closer to those nationally. ▪ Learners make good progress from low starting points and, in particular, gain in confidence and self-esteem. Many learners face significant barriers to learning, including a history or risk of offending. Their behaviour in learning sessions improves and enables them to participate effectively alongside others. ▪ The standard of learners' work on vocational courses is good. Learners studying motor mechanics at foundation level change tyres swiftly and efficiently. They explain clearly what they are doing and why. ▪ Learners in employability classes make useful gains in their ability to prepare curriculum vitae and complete job applications. In personal development classes, learners demonstrate a good understanding of current issues, such as the penalties for drug offences. ▪ Learners on study programmes who participate in work placements develop the skills essential to sustaining employment well, such as good timekeeping and regular attendance. For some, this experience of work plays a critical role in deciding whether to follow a particular occupation. Because the proportion of learners with a work placement is too low across Nacro's centres, not enough learners reap the benefits. ▪ Learners of all ages routinely improve aspects of their English and mathematics while studying in vocational classes and workshops. Many apply them effectively in practical or other contexts that have relevance to them personally. Some learners progress from entry levels to level 1 or 2 in their mathematics and English studies. However Nacro's data suggest that any improvement 	

in outcomes on functional skills qualifications in these subjects is likely to be modest and success rates will remain below those nationally in the current year.

- Few gaps exist between the achievements of groups of learners. Where data show differences at a local level, centres act effectively to remedy the position. Recent analysis of national data has identified that ex-offenders achieve less well than non-offenders. Nacro has suitably prioritised action to reduce this difference.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
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- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is reflected in the good progress most learners make during classroom sessions and in vocational workshops. Learners develop useful skills for employment. However, improvements in teaching have not yet had time to improve success in qualifications, and have so far led to only a modest rise in the proportion of learners aged 16 to 19 who progress into further education, employment or training.
- Tutors have high expectations of their learners. They plan sessions well to meet differing individual needs, routinely setting additional tasks which stretch the most able. In vocational training sessions they use their workplace expertise effectively to ensure learners aim for, and meet, exacting industry standards. For example, catering learners in a centre canteen prepare food and serve customers under time pressures found in commercial settings. Motor vehicle learners adjust brakes to fine tolerances.
- Well-conceived activities capture learners' interest effectively and encourage learners to learn. During a childcare course, learners attempted to dress lifelike models of babies while wearing glasses with lenses that mimicked the disorientating visual effects of drunkenness. Their struggles provided them with a highly memorable insight into the negative effects of alcohol.
- A minority of sessions are less effective. In these, learners carry out tasks that seem to mean little to them personally, such as completing worksheets or making lists. Learners often appear bored, and have difficulty in replying when tutors ask them questions on what they are studying.
- Tutors expertly manage challenging behaviour. They clearly establish with learners what is unacceptable, such as swearing or using phones for calls and texting. They intervene swiftly and effectively when learners breach these expectations. Disruption to learning is minimal.
- Learners receive good personal support. Tutors respond well to the immediate needs of learners, many of whom have previously been excluded from school or dropped out of college. They give them much appreciated individual attention and advice. Learners receive appropriate referral to external agencies for specialist help with, for example, sexual health or housing problems. Many learners, particularly those living independently, benefit greatly from food parcels and free meals that Nacro's partners provide.
- External work placements are of high quality. They meet the needs of the learners who have them well. Arrangements to support and review learners' progress in these placements are effective. However, currently, not enough work placements are available, particularly for learners on study programmes.
- Assessment when learners start their programmes is very thorough. It provides tutors with a very good understanding of learners' abilities and needs which they use effectively when planning teaching. However, targets in most individual learning plans are too broad. They do not allow tutors to monitor, review and record learners' progress effectively. As a result, learners do not always know what they need to do to improve.
- Assessment of learning is adequate. Tutors use questions effectively to check learning in the classroom. They also monitor closely how well learners complete practical tasks in vocational sessions. While marking of learners' written work is accurate and timely, it rarely includes enough written feedback on ways to improve.
- The integration of English and mathematics into vocational and employability learning is extensive and mainly effective. Tutors often find imaginative and appropriate ways to develop

learners' skills. In a hairdressing class, learners carried out basic financial calculations during the process of scheduling appointments for clients. A sports and leisure class developed learners' speaking and listening well through a study of how news media presented the criminal trial of an international sporting figure. In childcare sessions, tutors focused closely on the correct spelling of specialist vocabulary. Functional skills classes in English and mathematics are generally taught well.

- Information, advice and guidance to help learners with their next steps are good. Learners in many centres benefit from Nacro's well-established relationships with a wide range of agencies, such as the National Careers Service, local authorities and youth offending teams. Good careers advice from suitably qualified staff at Nacro's centres is routinely available.
- The promotion of equality and diversity in the curriculum is good. Staff act as good role models and foster mutually respectful and inclusive relationships. They lead discussions effectively to ensure learners recognise and challenge stereotypes and discrimination.

The effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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- Leadership and management are very much improved. Senior leaders, trustees and managers have responded rapidly and very effectively to the findings from the previous inspection. The current senior team, including the Principal and heads of education, has excellent expertise and provides strong leadership. Actions taken since the previous inspection have had a very positive impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and have improved outcomes for learners.
- Nacro has managed a major reduction in the number of its training centres and staff particularly well, with little negative impact on learners. It is making significant investment in the remaining centres to ensure all learning takes place in good, well-equipped learning environments.
- The appointment of a trustee with specialist knowledge in further education and skills has significantly strengthened governance arrangements. Trustees receive accurate, timely and useful information and provide suitable support and challenge. They are strongly committed to current and planned investment in Nacro's education provision.
- Strong performance management has ensured rapid improvement in the quality of teaching over the last year. Observations of sessions lead to effective improvement plans for tutors. Tutors whose sessions are graded inadequate or requiring improvement receive good individual training and support. Those unwilling or unable to improve leave the organisation. Arrangements for observation are thorough and effective. Observers' judgements are generally sound. However, Nacro has yet to extend the observation process to improve the consistency of other key activities that involve learners such as induction and work placements.
- Investment in staff recruitment, training and development is significant and well targeted. An effective training course has ensured all tutors are starting to integrate English and mathematics into vocational and employability sessions. Nacro has successfully piloted a broader teaching development programme, but so far this has only been available to its less effective tutors.
- Self-assessment has improved since the previous inspection and now is suitably critical. Post-inspection action planning has been thorough. Its implementation has been closely monitored and highly effective. The update to its self-assessment report that Nacro provided for this inspection was detailed and accurate.
- A well-structured quality improvement cycle is starting to have impact. Training centres now regularly and effectively review their activity and performance. Reviews lead to detailed action plans for improvement, and contribute effectively to local and national self-assessment.
- The understanding, analysis and use of data and management information are now good. All staff are aware of Nacro's key performance indicators and targets. Centre managers closely monitor their programmes' performance, and compare it to those of other centres. They act swiftly when this indicates performance is poor or inconsistent.

- Centre managers carefully record learners' attendance locally. However, the current methodology does not allow senior managers to analyse the data in sufficient detail. The impact of Nacro's recently-launched strategy to improve attendance is not yet clear.
- Nacro has managed the introduction of the 16 to 19 study programmes well. Planning is thorough and soundly based. It has sensibly reduced the large number of units and qualifications it offered as part of the Foundation Learning programme. A careful review by each training centre of local progression opportunities, employers, and local labour market information has ensured the majority of centres offer two or three suitable vocational pathways. All centres make appropriate provision for functional skills learning in English and mathematics up to level 2. Arrangements for GCSEs in these subjects are under development.
- Nacro is acting effectively to increase the number of work placements it offers. It is successfully extending its links with local and national employers. In the last year, the proportion of learners spending time in external work placements has tripled, from a very low base. Currently, however, not enough learners have placements, and availability across centres is too varied.
- Management of subcontractors has improved. Recently-revised arrangements to ensure they are suitable and effective are in place. Nacro now works with just one subcontractor from last year, and has recently recruited five more.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Staff and learners are well protected from bullying, harassment and discrimination. Recruitment of learners from groups traditionally under represented in learning, such as Travellers and ex-offenders, is high. Staff work very effectively to enable learners to overcome the specific cultural or social barriers to learning that many of them face. The use of data to understand differences in achievement between groups of learners is effective.
- Nacro meets its statutory requirements for the safeguarding of learners. All education staff have received appropriate training, updated recently. Staff and well-trained designated safeguarding officers handle incidents or concerns effectively. Links with local safeguarding boards and other agencies are good.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Nacro

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	2	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-
Outcomes for learners	3	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-

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

Provider details

Type of provider	Not for profit organisation							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	2876							
CEO	Jacob Tas							
Date of previous inspection	February 2013							
Website address	www.nacro.org.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+
	531	106	250	76	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	27	12	-	-	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
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	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pentagon ■ Eglantine Catering Ltd ■ Stuk ■ Sunbeam Community Enterprises Limited 							

Contextual information

Nacro is a national crime reduction charity which provides education, housing, offender management and substance misuse treatment services across England and Wales. Its education and training provision is aimed at young people and adults from hard-to-reach groups, including ex-offenders and those at risk of offending. Around three quarters of those it recruited in 2012/13 were aged between 16 and 18, studying at or below foundation level. Nacro runs 16 to 19 study programmes and provision for adults from 25 centres across England.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Alastair Pearson HMI

Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the Principal as nominee, carried out the re-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 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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