

CANTO LIMITED

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		08 – 10 July 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-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:

- Learners make good progress, and achieve high success rates on most qualifications, including functional skills.
- Most teaching and learning are good or better.
- Learners develop confidence and good employability skills through work experience and community activities.
- Learners receive good information, advice, guidance and coaching that matches their individual interests and abilities.
- Staff and external agencies provide high levels of consistent support that contributes markedly to learners' good progress.
- Good partnerships benefit learners by providing support, work placements and progression opportunities.
- Self-assessment is accurate, makes good use of evidence and it has maintained improvements to the provision.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- The more able learners do not always receive sufficient challenge to achieve their full potential.
- Written assessment is too brief and not focused enough on how learners can improve.
- The observation of teaching and learning does not give sufficient priority to learning, how well learners make progress and are challenged in each lesson.
- Tutors make insufficient use of opportunities that occur in lessons to develop learners' functional skills and understanding of equality and diversity.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Support all staff to challenge learners to achieve their full potential in lessons and in external activities by further training in setting targets which stretch learners and by focusing the observation of teaching and learning on how tutors' challenge and develop every learner in sessions and the progress they make.
- Ensure all learners have detailed written advice on how to improve their work further, and that the communication of the targets that come from this, both to other staff and parents or carers, involves them all in helping learners achieve these improvements.
- Continue to help staff plan how to introduce aspects of functional skills, especially mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) and equality and diversity into lessons when the occasion occurs, in order to reinforce learners' understanding further.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Learners make good progress. The majority start their training with no previous qualifications or have been disengaged from education. In 2012/13, the success rate for functional skills was high and around half the learners who took functional skills in mathematics and ICT improved their grade by at least one level, and a third of those taking functional skills in English improved the level at which they achieved.
- Learners' success rates on other employability programmes and vocational programmes are also at least acceptable, and in most instances, high. For example, all learners who took the certificate in employment, creative craft using cookery and performance skills at level 1 passed them in 2012/13. In the current year, out of 75 qualification aims, learners have completed 57 and have almost completed another 12.
- Since the previous inspection, managers have developed a wide range of good work experience opportunities that have improved learners' employability skills. These include useful placements in large and small retail businesses and a nursery. The vast majority of learners now help at a recycling centre where they develop good team working and cooperative skills, as well as appropriate working behaviour. They also benefit from learning about the environmental advantages of reuse and recycling.
- Managers maintain good partnerships with other educational establishments and organisations that help people with disabilities gain employment. Since the previous inspection, this has increased significantly the number of learners progressing to education, training or employment. In the current year, retention rates are high. Of 25 leavers, only two have left without a place to move on to, and one has left due to ill health. The others are progressing to a second year at CANTO LIMITED (CANTO). Most learners attend well and are punctual.
- Learners gain confidence in social situations and help people in the community through a wide range of planned activities including work in an animal refuge, churchyards, parks and charity shops. They learn to value their own strengths by supporting each other well, using their skills and sensitively to help each other to complete tasks.
- Managers monitor data to identify the performance of different groups. Numbers are too small to be statistically significant, but no gaps are apparent.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, which matches the good progress learners make and the improving learners' outcomes since the previous inspection. Learners develop good levels of personal, social and employability skills through high quality community volunteering and work experience placements.
- Most teaching and learning are good. Tutors have high expectations of their learners and prompt them to reflect, solve problems and draw conclusions. They plan lively sessions in which learners participate enthusiastically and use examples that learners recognise to make learning more relevant. Tutors design interesting activities to provide learners with real life experiences. For example, learners use the internet to prepare for volunteering at a community event and visit the venue so that they understand their role clearly.
- Caring staff give good, consistent support to learners, many of whom have complex and high levels of need. Tutors know their learners well and understand clearly how to help them make progress and continue with their programmes. Learners have support from a wide range of specialist agencies, such as community nurses and behaviour management teams. However, tutors do not provide enough direction to support workers to help them assist learners to make the most of their learning.
- Tutors assess thoroughly through good coaching and questioning to check learners' knowledge and understanding effectively. They give frequent verbal feedback as learners work through activities and explain clearly how they can improve. Learners welcome this and it motivates them well to make good progress. Tutors' written assessments are often too brief to help learners and their parents or carers know what learners have to do to improve.
- Learners develop their social and independent skills well by working towards a range of practical and personal targets. Tutors remind learners frequently of their targets and this helps them understand how to achieve. A few tutors take insufficient account of all learners' abilities and targets when planning external activities, so that a small minority of learners do not receive sufficient challenge through engaging in appropriately demanding tasks.
- Assessment of learners' needs at the start of their programmes of study is thorough and particularly effective in identifying English and ICT support needs. Assessment of learners' mathematical skills is adequate but less precise. Staff create individual support plans with clear priorities and useful strategies for each learner's programme of study and personal needs. This ensures that all staff are clear about learners' overall aims and how they can improve.
- Learners develop particularly good functional skills. Most tutors make good use of situations in practical sessions to develop further these skills. For example, in one session, learners practised reading and comprehension skills as they read text from handouts and developed ICT skills as they explored social media and relevant web sites. However, tutors do not always use situations that arise in sessions sufficiently to develop functional skills, so that a few learners miss opportunities to apply the skills in a range of contexts.
- Learners benefit from good work placements with local businesses and organisations that are very committed to improving learners' employability prospects. These, where possible, match closely to learners' areas of interest, such as hospitality, retail, motor vehicle and horticulture, and this helps them to understand more about how their chosen sector works and the wider role of a volunteer.
- Resources are adequate overall. Managers have invested in new learning resources including interactive technologies that help learners to improve their functional skills. A few tutors use technology particularly well to engage learners in sessions and share this good practice at regular staff meetings. However, too few tutors use technology regularly in sessions to extend learners' interests.

- Learners receive good advice and guidance. Specialist staff meet very frequently with learners to monitor their progress in developing employability and volunteering skills through accredited courses, work experience and community projects. Advice and guidance is realistic and matches learners' interests and abilities. As a result, learners' progression rates are high.
- Tutors make health and safety a priority. They provide regular reinforcement of how to avoid likely hazards and how learners can keep safe, particularly on work placements or taking part in community activities. For example, learners working as volunteers in a community kitchen receive constant reminders about hygiene when cleaning surfaces and risks when using equipment.
- Tutors promote equality and diversity well within sessions. Learners and tutors show great respect for each other and peer support is strong. Learners are very keen to help each other. For example, a more able learner readily helped a fellow learner struggling with reading and comprehension through helping her to develop her reading skills until she was confident to read independently. Not all tutors develop learners' broader understanding of equality and diversity when opportunities arise.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers have high expectations of learners' ability to behave appropriately and work diligently in work places. This benefits learners who respond well to the challenge and fulfil the expectations of staff. Managers communicate regularly with employers to monitor learners' progress in placements against simple but meaningful targets, such as asking for help and working on their own initiative. Employers value the contribution that learners make to their businesses, and learners achieve their targets.
- Staff ensure that learners develop skills well in realistic environments wherever possible and they regularly review teaching methods to increase the relevance of learning activities. However, although managers set ambitious targets for outcomes, which tutors usually meet, they are not always sufficiently ambitious in helping the more able learners to achieve to their full potential.
- Managers monitor the performance of staff regularly. The director carries out annual appraisals and then promptly arranges appropriate support or training to meet any needs that arise from the appraisals.
- Staff benefit greatly from a wide range of relevant development opportunities that cover teaching qualifications, functional skills, teaching outstanding lessons, visits to other providers and awarding body and local authority training. Tutors also improve their practice by working with more experienced colleagues who become their mentors and coaches.
- Observations of teaching and learning are thorough and mostly accurate. It includes ungraded developmental observations, peer observations and "learning walks" as well as graded observations. Observers check that identified actions have improved by the next observation. However, the reports on observations do not focus enough on learners and learning, nor on how well learners make progress and are stretched and challenged to achieve as well as they can in each lesson. Senior managers meet monthly to identify areas for improvement and good practice to share at staff meetings.
- Self-assessment is inclusive of the views of all staff, employers and learners. The self-assessment report is evaluative, broadly accurate and makes good use of evidence. Staff regularly update the ways in which they have made improvements required by the development plan. They also summarise the strengths and improvement areas for their specialism and the organisation as a whole, including leadership and management, and these views inform the judgements in the report.
- The current updated development plan highlights marked improvements in the areas identified in the self-assessment for 2012/13. It also shows the willingness of all staff to reflect on all activities and outcomes, in order to improve learners' experiences.

- Quality improvement measures are effective. Since the previous inspection, staff have developed all of the areas identified as needing improvement, including giving a greater vocational focus to the curriculum. The vast majority of learners now have work experience in real work places and use this experience successfully to complete their employability qualifications. Most staff are now either trained to teach, or are on teacher training programmes, and they share good practice regularly. Information, advice and guidance are now good.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is adequate and supported through a regular programme of staff training. Managers carry out impact assessments on key activities, such as the work placements at the recycling centre, and ensure that the discussion of equality and diversity priorities takes place at staff meetings. Staff training in how to counter discriminatory language is very effective. However, managers do not give employers any information or training in how to manage and communicate with learners in a way that is best suited to their learning disability and/or difficulty.
- CANTO meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. In addition, managers carry out thorough risk assessments on all learners when they enter the programme, so that all staff are aware of potential difficulties such as absconding or poor road crossing ability. Staff receive regular training on safeguarding and one of the two designated safeguarding officers are always available to learners.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

CANTO LIMITED

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-19 study programmes	19+ learning programmes
Overall effectiveness	2	2	2
Outcomes for learners	2	2	2
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
Independent living and leisure skills	2

Type of provider	Independent learning provider								
Age range of learners	16–18 and 19+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	46								
Principal/CEO	Mrs Charlotte Dear								
Date of previous inspection	February 2013								
Website address	www.cantolearning.com								
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+	
	12	15	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			
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total				
	N/A		N/A		N/A				
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A								
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 (EFA)								
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A. 								

Contextual information

CANTO LIMITED is located on an industrial estate on the edge of Northampton. It provides study programmes for learners aged 16 to 18 years and learning programmes at entry level and level 1 to learners aged 19 years and over with a range of learning disabilities and/or difficulties, many of whom have no previous qualifications. It has other provision not in scope for this inspection funded through social care and health, and some link programmes. A managing director, along with two other directors manage the provision along with four managers, six tutors and four additional support staff.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Pauline Hawkesford AI

Two additional inspectors, assisted by the 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 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 areas listed in the report.

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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