

Inter Training Services Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		14–18 July 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
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:

- Outcomes for learners, including apprentices' hairdressing and employability skills, are improving, and current apprentices are making good progress.
- Apprentices' progression into advanced apprenticeships and positions within the hairdressing profession is high.
- Exceptional in-salon training and assessment opportunities provided by good-quality salons lead to rapid development of apprentices' practical hairdressing skills.
- Apprentices develop good English and mathematics skills within their vocational training.
- Well-managed and well-communicated support meets the needs of apprentices and their employers.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Apprenticeship success rates are not yet high enough, particularly at intermediate level.
- Learning sessions that are used to link theory to practice are not yet consistently good.
- The detailed verbal feedback and targets shared with apprentices are not sufficiently recorded for apprentices to reflect upon them.
- The professional development of trainers does not yet fully focus on improving apprentices' learning, especially during theory sessions.
- Trainers' use of naturally-occurring equality and diversity themes within everyday training sessions requires further development.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Further improve success rates, particularly at intermediate level, by continued close monitoring, support and effective target setting for achievement.
- Improve the learning experience of apprentices by using a greater variety of training strategies, to enable apprentices to extend their knowledge and understanding in theory sessions.
- Improve the promotion of equality and diversity through better use of naturally-occurring themes within the workplace.
- Further improve training for apprentices by better recording of the specific targets developed from assessment feedback, so that apprentices are able to reflect upon them.
- Increase the focus on learning in lesson observations so that trainers may further improve teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outcomes for learners at Inter Training Services Ltd. (ITS) are good. Since the last inspection, the overall success rates of intermediate apprenticeships dropped slightly in 2012/13 to just under national rates. Advanced apprentices' achievements remained at national rates. In-year data for 2013/14 show overall success rates have improved and a large majority of apprentices continue to complete within the planned time. The progression rates from intermediate into advanced apprenticeships are high, and growing. ▪ Retention is very high for the present apprentice cohort, with the large majority achieving challenging targets and, in a few cases, exceeding their learning goals in hairdressing, mathematics and English. The rates of progress for all apprentices on programme are much improved and are now good. ▪ Many apprentices rapidly attain professional standards. This has resulted in employers entrusting their apprentices with enhanced responsibilities early in their programmes. Apprentices are highly motivated to learn, and progress well in developing their practical hairdressing skills, as well as their mathematics and English. ▪ Apprentices benefit from teamwork and problem-solving tasks which enhance their learning and employability skills. Competition entry and the regular celebration of achievements build their confidence to work and to communicate with their colleagues, peers and clients. They acquire a good knowledge of health and safety at work and develop a good understanding of the professional standards expected. ▪ There are now no significant gaps in the achievement of apprentices from different backgrounds. ITS has improved the experience of apprentices requiring learning support and has successfully closed the achievement gap it had identified. 	
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, and this is reflected in the outcomes for apprentices. High levels of expectation and good support have built a culture of achievement that enables a large majority of apprentices to make good progress from their starting points.
- Apprentices work enthusiastically, demonstrating a range of practical hairdressing skills. For example, they can carry out a range of services, such as cutting, colouring and blow drying, to a professional standard. Competent intermediate apprentices demonstrate their good client care

skills and often progress to building and running a 'column' of clients before they are fully qualified. They work well with salon staff and each other.

- Advanced apprentices use their knowledge effectively to select services, products, colours and cutting techniques to meet different clients' needs. Apprentices calculate percentages when colouring hair, considering cutting angles that create different hair effects. They handle tools and equipment with good levels of dexterity. They receive good one-to-one support from the in-salon assessors to further develop advanced hairdressing skills.
- Well-qualified in-salon assessors and ITS staff deliver training to a high standard and are particularly effective in the development of apprentices' hairdressing, English and mathematics skills. Teaching strategies, including detailed questioning, are effective in enabling apprentices to pass theory assessments. However, the small number of supplementary theory sessions do not yet provide sufficiently effective learning to ensure apprentices are able to link theory to practice.
- Assessment is good. All training and assessment are done in the apprentices' workplaces. This provides exceptional opportunities for assessment and helps apprentices to develop strong commercial awareness in the workplace. Efficient tracking systems monitor apprentices' progress effectively and set challenging targets for achievement. However, the good verbal feedback and subsequent target setting for apprentices' skills development are not systematically recorded. Consequently, apprentices are unable to reflect on how to improve.
- Electronic portfolios are accurate, up to date, fully accessible, and used extensively. All staff, including in-salon assessors, track learners' progress closely and carry out reviews thoroughly and effectively. They use individual progress grades to motivate apprentices, who enjoy seeing their 'percentage score' increase as they pass more assessments.
- English and mathematics learning are good, and apprentices are making good progress towards their attainment of these qualifications. Intermediate apprentices, who are exempt from foundation-level mathematics and English because of their prior attainment, further develop their English and mathematics to prepare them for progression to a higher level. Apprentices apply good mathematics skills in their salons, for example when discussing profits and sales revenues of hairdressing products.
- Initial assessment is comprehensive and effective. There is a strong focus on ensuring apprentices are put on the right level of English and mathematics and in identifying and providing support for those requiring it. Apprentices' previous attainment of English and mathematics fully informs the planning of each individual programme. Apprentices who are experiencing personal difficulties that may affect their studies are provided with a life coach.
- Apprentices with identified learning needs are given extra individual support sessions by staff who know them well. This builds their confidence and creates a climate in which they can learn. This focused support enables them to make progress in line with their peers. Employers value highly the support they receive and benefit from very good relationships with ITS and their trainer-assessors.
- Information, advice and guidance are good. Care is taken to place apprentices on courses and in salons that suit them and meet their individual needs. Good induction processes ensure that apprentices have a clear understanding of course content structure, assessment and planning. Apprentices develop well their knowledge of employment, rights and responsibilities.
- Apprentices' understanding of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Equality and diversity are promoted through induction, lesson planning and the annual hairdressing competition. Apprentices enjoy the competition and produce very good quality work on themes such as 'Countries of the Commonwealth'. However, the development of their wider understanding of equality and diversity aspects is not sufficiently promoted through their everyday salon experience.

- Leadership and management are good. Leaders and managers have implemented their vision to provide hairdressing apprenticeships which are conducted entirely within the workplace. This innovative strategy to manage apprentice placements through a large network of voluntary, salon-based assessors is effective in providing bespoke training and excellent progression to employment.
- Employers share ITS's high expectations to provide good-quality hairdressing training. This results in a high number of apprentices progressing to advanced-level apprenticeships. Quality assurance support for employers is strong, helping them to uphold performance standards. This ensures that an increasing number of employed apprentices succeed within planned timescales.
- Managers have clear expectations for improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Decisive management action, relating to previous staff underperformance, has significantly contributed to quality improvements. Identified improvement areas are built into staff development plans. These support the continuous professional development of staff. ITS has a good understanding of the quality of vocational training delivered by each of its assessors. However, the lesson observation process does not yet sufficiently report on apprentices' learning activities, including their learning of English and mathematics in the salon.
- All training and assessment staff are experienced and are very well qualified. ITS offers good mentoring and support to staff undertaking their training qualifications to ensure they benefit from them quickly. Most trainers are qualified to support apprentices in their development of English and mathematics.
- The self-assessment report is broadly accurate. The systematic process of completing the report takes into account the views from apprentices, assessors and employers to formulate relevant data. Managers have an awareness of what is working and what needs to be improved. The quality improvement plan allocates actions that are reviewed regularly to monitor improvements. Quality improvement is checked and monitored by ITS staff. However, managers accept that the quality of evaluation would be improved by using data gathered from a greater variety of sources.
- Very detailed and thoroughly analysed data on apprentices' performance enable managers and training staff to support apprentices and close any identified gaps in performance. Progress tracking, monitoring, effective action planning and employer liaison are good. Most electronic systems, such as e-portfolios and individual learner tracking, are exceptional. These enable managers to obtain a quick and accurate view of the progress apprentices are making at any given time. This enables ITS to deal with problems and close gaps in its historical success rates.
- The good planning of the apprenticeships' programmes meets the needs of both apprentices and employers. Exceptional communications exist between administrators, trainer assessors and in-salon assessors. This enables ITS to provide flexible training or assessment which fits around the demands of busy salons. Staff work hard to procure excellent salon placements for their apprentices. Employers and apprentices rate their experiences with ITS extremely highly.
- ITS has focused on ensuring that apprentices develop valuable employability skills. It has increased its emphasis on the achievement of English and mathematics qualifications. However, managers recognise the need for improved training methods that link theory sessions more naturally with salon practice.
- Managers promote equality and diversity satisfactorily. For example, advertising, literature and marketing materials highlight diverse role models within the hairdressing industry. ITS ensures that learning environments are free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. Induction tasks, progress reviews and assessment logs confirm apprentices are broadly aware of equality and diversity.
- ITS meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. Good apprentice support arrangements, the application of strong and effective health and safety policies, and thorough risks assessments ensure apprentices are safe in their workplace. Managers have good links with local support and referral agencies to support apprentices with complex problems.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)**Inter Training Services Limited**

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	-	-
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
Hairdressing	2

Type of provider	Inter Training Services Limited								
Age range of learners	16–18, 19+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	137								
Principal/CEO	Mrs Lesley Ellis								
Date of previous inspection	September/2011								
Website address	http://www.its-ltd.net/								
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+	
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18		19+		
	39	10	8	23	N/A		N/A		
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	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)								
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A								

Contextual information

Inter Training Services Limited (ITS) is based in Horndean, near Portsmouth, and specialises in delivering intermediate and advanced apprenticeship programmes in hairdressing for businesses in Surrey, Berkshire and Hampshire. Government-funded training forms the vast majority of its work. All training and assessment take place on employers' premises. ITS staff provide most of the theoretical training. In-salon assessment staff supplement the practical training and are supported in addition by ITS's own staff.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Rob Purchase
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One lead inspector and 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 apprentices' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used 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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