

The Academy Hair and Beauty Ltd

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		9–11 December 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Outstanding-1
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding-1
Outcomes for learners		Outstanding-1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding-1
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Outstanding-1

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is outstanding because:

- apprentices' success rates have been consistently very high for the past three years and the number of apprentices completing their programmes within the planned time is also very high
- teaching and learning are often outstanding and consistently good. The most effective lessons are those where learners are fully engaged through active learning
- individual coaching and learning support are outstanding. Class sizes are small and tutors have a very good knowledge of their learners
- learners' progress is rigorously monitored and where learners are falling behind early intervention and additional support ensure their progress is accelerated and they meet their targets as planned
- learners develop outstanding skills in hairdressing and beauty therapy and an excellent range of employability skills. Learners' theoretical and practical work is of a very high standard
- teachers promote and integrate English and mathematics very successfully in vocational lessons
- the promotion of equality and diversity is excellent and safeguarding is outstanding
- learners' progression is outstanding. Almost all of them either progress to higher-level training or into employment. Tutors have exceptionally high expectations of learners
- the senior management team's business planning process is rigorous and very effective
- since the previous inspection in 2008, the director, managers and tutors have worked very hard and have succeeded in maintaining the quality of provision at an outstanding level
- through a rigorous monitoring process, underperformance is clearly identified and very effective action is taken to eliminate it
- centre management is excellent. The Academy has a very good training centre in Norton and an excellent centre in Scarborough. Each centre is equipped to a very high standard
- partnerships with employers are outstanding and very good with other educational providers
- programme management is outstanding. Programmes are designed and delivered to meet the needs and interests of learners, employers and the local community.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Move the remaining good provision to outstanding through more rigorous observation of teaching, learning and assessment, extending the use of direct questioning in practical hairdressing and beauty-therapy sessions to assess learners' theoretical knowledge when they are working practically, and always correcting learners' spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in their written work.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
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- The Academy provides apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships in hairdressing, barbering and beauty therapy. In addition, it offers beauty therapy and nails services qualifications at levels 2 and 3, barbering at level 2, and the principal learning diploma course to school pupils in Years 10 and 11. It also offers industry-related short courses, for example trendy nail wraps, ear piercing, eye lash extensions, perming, and cutting and colouring.
- Apprentices' success rates for the past three years have been consistently very high and considerably higher than the national rate. Similarly, the number of apprentices who complete their programmes within the planned time is very high and far above the national rate. Functional skills success rates are also very high.
- Learners' progress is rigorously monitored. The 'journey to success' display boards are an excellent way of showing the progress of every learner. Where learners are not meeting their targets, early intervention and additional support ensure their progress is accelerated and they meet their targets as planned. There are no significant achievement gaps.
- Learners' attendance is now excellent. The attendance reward scheme, which was started over a year ago, has had a considerable impact on further improving attendance and punctuality. Lessons start and finish on time. All learners with full attendance are entered into a prize draw, with the chance to win equipment or vouchers for use in their salons, and this has had a significant motivating influence on them.
- Learners develop outstanding skills in hairdressing and beauty therapy. For example, level 3 hairdressing learners complete excellent re-styles when cutting and styling short straight one-length bob hairstyles. In beauty-therapy theory classes, learners demonstrate how they use their excellent interpersonal skills when dealing with clients.
- Learners develop an excellent range of employability skills related to hairdressing and beauty therapy. Their oral communication skills improve and they become increasingly adept at communicating with clients, team working and solving problems. They become more self-confident, self-assured, personally effective and occupationally efficient as their training progresses. These developments are commented upon, and valued, by employers as well as by the learners. Additionally, learners have very good experience of reception duties, stock control and salon management. They also have outstanding experience of running a profitable salon in a retirement-housing complex.
- Learners' theoretical and practical work is of a very high standard. It clearly meets, and frequently exceeds, the requirements of the awarding organisations. Tutors are fully acquainted with current industrial practices in hairdressing and beauty therapy and are excellent role models for learners.
- Many learners have previously attended The Academy on school or sixth-form college link hairdressing and beauty-therapy courses and have a very good understanding of the hair and beauty industries when they begin their apprenticeships. They are very enthusiastic about, and highly motivated by, their theoretical and practical training.

- Practical sessions, which are delivered in high-quality hairdressing and beauty-therapy salons in the training centres in Norton and Scarborough, provide learners with excellent opportunities to develop their vocational skills. The Academy ensures that all learners gain as much practical experience as soon as they can so they are assets to their employers and can contribute to the financial effectiveness of employers' businesses as quickly as possible.
- Learners thoroughly enjoy taking part in The Academy's citizenship programme which encourages them to get involved in raising money for charitable purposes. For example, a beauty-therapy learner held a very popular hand-massage session at a coffee morning in a local church and raised a significant amount of money. Hairdressing and beauty-therapy learners have been busily engaged in collecting items and filling shoe boxes for the national 'shoe-box appeal'.
- Learners also have excellent opportunities to enter hairdressing and beauty-therapy competitions each year. This instils a considerable amount of good-natured rivalry between learners who are keen to succeed and go forward from the local competition to the regional and national events.
- Learners' progression is outstanding. Almost all of them either progress to higher-level training or into employment. Many of them aspire to progressing within the hair and beauty industries and to becoming salon owners.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
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- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding and this has had a significant impact on apprenticeship outcomes, which are also outstanding.
- Tutors' lesson planning is excellent and it makes a strong contribution to the outstanding teaching and learning in hairdressing and beauty therapy. The most effective lessons are those where learners are fully engaged through active learning. Learners work on very challenging tasks and tutors encourage stimulating discussions that further develop their understanding.
- Tutors are very highly motivated and skilled at engaging learners and making an outstanding contribution to their developing knowledge, skills and understanding. Most of the tutors are also hairdressing and beauty-therapy practitioners and they have excellent ongoing experience and up-to-date product knowledge, which they share with their learners. Tutors have exceptionally high expectations of learners.
- Class sizes are small and tutors have excellent knowledge of the learners and their abilities. One-to-one coaching is outstanding. For example, tutors give individual learners step-by-step guidance on cutting angles and on techniques to produce short-graduated haircuts using electric clippers and scissors on men's hair.
- Tutors' questioning techniques in theory lessons are highly effective. Tutors visually check learning when learners are working on practical tasks and they give good oral feedback on how they are progressing. However, in a small minority of practical lessons tutors do not question enough to check learners' theoretical knowledge. For example, when colouring hair they do not question learners sufficiently on how hair colour molecules affect the hair structure.
- Tutors promote and embed English and mathematics very successfully in vocational lessons. They use planned and spontaneous opportunities for extending learners' English and mathematical competencies related, as far as possible, to hairdressing and beauty therapy. Learners adopt very good healthy and safe working practices. They interact particularly effectively with their tutors and build up strong professional relationships with them.
- Additional activities that enhance learning are highly effective. These include attending trade exhibitions and participating in local, regional and national competitions. Learners enthusiastically participate in very good fundraising activities for the local community and their own educational trips.
- Training salons and teaching rooms are very good in the Norton training centre and outstanding in the Scarborough training centre. Learners with limited mobility are easily able to access the

upper floors as each centre has a lift. Learning resources are very good. They are reviewed annually to ensure they meet or exceed industry standards and promote highly effective learning. The laptop computers have been thoroughly overhauled and further investment in learning technology is planned.

- Learners value the excellent information, advice and guidance they receive. Hairdressing and beauty-therapy courses meet, and in many cases exceed, their expectations. Apprentices work in high-quality hairdressing and beauty-therapy salons and receive particularly effective additional training from their employers. The Academy's support for employers is excellent. Training at The Academy and in salons is flexible and responsive to meet learners' and employers' needs.
- Learning support is outstanding. Learners' support needs are promptly assessed and appropriate support is provided to ensure they make good progress from the beginning. Parents speak highly of the outstanding support given by The Academy.
- Vocational assessment is highly effective. Assessors ensure learners have a good understanding of the criteria being used. They give very clear oral and written feedback and ensure learners know what they have to do to improve and progress. However, when assessing written work tutors do not always correct learners' spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is excellent. Equality and diversity display boards contain a range of interesting information and are regularly updated. For example, key dates and events, holy days and the Chinese New Year are displayed to raise learners' awareness of British culture and other cultures. Learners have a very good understanding of how diversity can affect people in the workplace. Their knowledge and understanding of how they might have to adapt their techniques for dealing with different hair types and clients' diverse needs is very detailed.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The director and managers have high expectations of what hairdressing and beauty-therapy learners can achieve and set demanding standards for them to attain. As hairdressing and beauty-therapy practitioners, they are fully aware of the latest developments within the industries and have excellent knowledge of the skills and qualities employers seek when recruiting new staff.
- The business planning process is rigorous. The director's and managers' vision is specifically focused on meeting demanding economic and competitive challenges, including the need to increase the number of apprentices, being responsive to the high expectations of employers and learners, and ensuring The Academy is selected as the preferred provider.
- Class sizes are small and the director, managers and tutors have an excellent knowledge of learners and their capacity for learning. Since the previous inspection in 2008, they have worked very hard and have succeeded in maintaining the quality of provision at an outstanding level.
- Performance management is excellent. Underperformance is clearly identified and tutors are required to eliminate it as soon as possible with, if needed, appropriate mentoring and support. Staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. The staff appraisal process is strongly focused on reconciling the continuing professional training needs of managers and tutors with the Academy's developmental priorities. Managers and staff take full opportunities of the training available to them, including teacher-training courses and product-manufacturers' promotional events. The process for observing teaching, learning and assessment is established but it is not rigorous enough to move the remaining good teaching to outstanding.
- Centre management is excellent. In addition to the very good purpose-built training centre in Norton, an excellent training centre in Scarborough was opened in 2011. Each is equipped to very high standards, with hairdressing and beauty-therapy salons and training rooms for theory sessions.
- Communication within the company is excellent and team working is extremely effective. Partnership working with employers is outstanding and very good with other educational

establishments. In addition to its own four hairdressing salons, the Academy has developed excellent relationships with the owners of hair and beauty salons and is highly successful in working with them to ensure apprentices have the highest possible quality of experience. The Academy has also developed strong working relationships with two schools, three colleges and an adult education provider on whose behalf it provides hairdressing, barbering and beauty-therapy training. Best practice is identified on- and off-the-job and put to very good use by the tutors.

- The self-assessment process, led by the director, is very inclusive. Very good use is made of learners' and employers' feedback questionnaires. The self-assessment report is extremely detailed, judgemental and closely aligned with the 2012 Common Inspection Framework. Although ambitious and realistic targets in the action plan show how the provision will be further developed for learners, too many actions do not have end dates. The self-assessment report and the action plan are closely monitored by the senior management team at its monthly meetings.
- Programme management is outstanding. Programmes are designed and delivered to meet the needs and interests of learners, employers and the local community. Off-the-job training and on-the-job learning and experience are successfully coordinated. English and mathematics are fully embedded in the NVQ diplomas. The standard of written English of a minority of staff at all levels contains spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors and requires improvement.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Learners have a very good understanding of equality and diversity. They demonstrate an excellent level of mutual respect for each other in addition to respecting the tutors and clients with whom they work. Currently, seven learners are men and The Academy is actively seeking ways to increase the number of male learners and to challenge gender stereotyping in the hairdressing and beauty industries.
- Safeguarding of learners is outstanding. Safeguarding arrangements are regularly reviewed and a high priority is placed on the importance of protecting learners and staff from harm. When learners travel to local, regional and national competitions, promotional events and exhibitions, extensive risk assessments are carried out and, where appropriate, parental consent is obtained. Learners have an outstanding knowledge of safeguarding and are fully aware of the risks associated with online grooming, abuse and fraud. Healthy and safe practices are instilled into learners when they are working in the training salons and on employers' premises. All staff have appropriate background checks and vetting prior to appointment. Learners say they feel very safe in the training centres and in their workplaces.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

The Academy Hair and Beauty Ltd

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	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	N/A
Outcomes for learners	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	N/A
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	N/A
The effectiveness of leadership and management	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	N/A

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	1

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	14+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	196							
Principal/CEO	Mrs Lindsay Burr MBE							
Date of previous inspection	January 2008							
Website address	www.academyhairandbeauty.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+
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	21	7	9	11	N/A	N/A		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16	32							
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	32							
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"> ■ None 							

Contextual information

The Academy Hair and Beauty Ltd (The Academy) was opened in 1999. It is a private limited company offering a range of programmes in hairdressing and beauty therapy, including apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships. The Academy has purpose-built training premises in Norton and Scarborough. The director of the company is the owner of The Academy and is responsible for business planning and quality assurance. The deputy director manages the Norton centre and the contracts manager is responsible for the Scarborough Centre. The teaching team consists of 10 part-time tutors, including three tutors responsible for internal quality assurance, and a trainee assessor. Some learners are employed in the four salons of the parent company, Goodys. Other learners are employed in salons in Withensea, Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale. The Academy also offers privately funded training in hairdressing and beauty therapy and programmes for school pupils at the higher level. Currently 32 school pupils are studying with The Academy.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Ken Fisher

Two additional inspectors, assisted by the company 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 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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