

# DV8 Training Limited (DV8)

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		9–13 March 2015
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider requires improvement because:

- the proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications and successfully complete their courses is too low, as is learners' attendance on the majority of programmes
- quality improvement arrangements are not yet ensuring sufficient, or consistently good, improvements to teaching, learning and assessment
- the development of learners' English and mathematics skills, outside specific English and mathematics lessons, does not routinely and systematically address what learners need to do to achieve their main goals and career aims
- too few learners have access to external work experience sharply focused on their individual needs
- data are insufficiently used and analysed critically in order to monitor performance and drive improvement
- staff are insufficiently trained to understand their role and responsibilities in safeguarding learners from radicalisation.

#### This provider has the following strengths:

- industry-experienced staff develop learners' practical and creative skills to a high standard and support learners in developing their confidence in a safe and welcoming environment which learners value greatly
- learners, frequently from low starting points, make good progress in overcoming barriers to learning and achieve good progression to higher level learning and apprenticeships
- managers have made significant investment in high-quality media resources that enable learners to develop their skills to industry standards
- the provider has built a broad range of very productive partnerships with industry practitioners which informs and enriches training to meet local business needs better.

## Full report

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

- Develop all tutors' teaching skills with a sharper focus on learning and on the identification and assessment of learners' individual targets so that much higher attainment and attendance are achieved.
- Develop effective quality assurance arrangements, which accurately identify areas for improvement and lead to a quality improvement process that brings about rapid change.
- Develop vocational tutors' competence in teaching English and mathematics so that learners appreciate how improving these skills will benefit them in their careers.
- Rapidly increase the number of suitable external work experience opportunities available to learners on the study programme so that all learners have the opportunity for significant external work experience tailored to their individual needs.
- Increase the detailed analysis of data at management level in order to identify accurately areas for improvement.
- Ensure all staff receive appropriate training on the Prevent agenda, so that staff are able to recognise the signs of potential radicalisation and are aware of what action to take.

### Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DV8 Training Limited (DV8) provides 16 to 19 study programmes. The subject areas reported on and graded include the most significant provision in performing arts, media and communication, foundation English and mathematics. The very large majority of provision is for the 16 to 19 study programmes in arts, digital media and publishing for learners up to level 2, in which a very small number of 19+ learners are included.</li> <li>▪ The proportion of learners who achieve their main qualifications has declined over the last two years, and in 2013/14 was low. For those learners who stayed until the end of their programme, not all achieved their qualifications and too many left their programmes early. The retention of learners on mathematics and English qualifications is good and above that of other providers nationally, resulting in good success rates; however, achievement in these qualifications requires improvement.</li> <li>▪ Learners who complete their course are developing good industry skills, which they need in order to achieve their qualification and be able to operate effectively within the creative industry. For example, learners are able to apply their skills to realistic projects designed around event management and musical events. The development of theory and technical skills and knowledge is less developed. For example, learners' ability to define, analyse and describe key terms and functions in music production is underdeveloped.</li> <li>▪ Learners' progress relative to their starting points is good, with many learners joining having had poor education experiences in the past. Recruitment of learners is from some of the most deprived boroughs in London and average GCSE scores are well below those of learners who attend other local institutions. Learners have commented that the experience they have received has been life changing, and staff recognise learners' potential and support their artistic growth.</li> <li>▪ The achievement of learners from different groups requires improvement. Male learners succeed less well than their female counterparts do; for learners who declare a disability, success is lower than for those who do not. For learners from different ethnic backgrounds there are significant differences in success. Managers have recognised these differences and have focused on increasing the retention of learners from these groups. In-year retention data indicate that these gaps are closing and are now equal for learners declaring a disability.</li> </ul>	

- Learners develop good personal skills during their time at DV8. Staff have been effective in improving learners' confidence and social skills through classroom based learning, projects and assignments. As a result, learners develop a positive attitude towards their learning, their behaviour is good and they value greatly the experience they receive at DV8. However, learners' development of key employability skills including time keeping, attendance and critical thinking skills is less well developed and requires improvement.
- Learner progression into further education and employment is good and has increased steadily over the last three years, resulting in the large majority of learners moving into higher-level qualifications and apprenticeships. During the inspection, the majority of learners interviewed expressed the view that they had become re-engaged with learning and now have a clear ambition to continue their studies once their courses have finished.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement as they have had insufficient impact on improving learners' outcomes. Retention has declined, as has overall achievement, although recent support initiatives have improved current attendance.
- The large majority of lessons require improvement. Tutors' written feedback in sessions is too variable. In the best examples, marked assessment work clearly identifies what learners need to do to achieve a higher mark. However, feedback comments in most learners' work are simply motivational and insufficiently identified what learners needed to do to improve.
- Learning does not focus enough on each individual learner's development. As a result, staff expect all learners to achieve the same outcomes irrespective of their specific learning needs, resulting in a slow pace of learning. In too many cases, tutors direct questions at the whole group rather than confirming understanding through, for example, individually-focused questions.
- Tutors are highly skilled, creative-industry professionals. As a result, learners respect their tutors' knowledge, remain attentive during lessons and have the opportunity to work with tutors' external contacts on projects such as event management and video production. These projects develop learners' industry-related knowledge and skills. In a session on developing vocal techniques, learners explored different vocal styles and lyrics to see which best suited their individual voices. In another lesson, learners studying dance collaborated effectively to rehearse and perform their own contemporary choreography.
- There is insufficient recognition of the wider employability skills that learners should develop. Learners have, for example, the opportunity to develop customer awareness; social and oral confidence when meeting strangers; teamwork; and problem solving; but these potential learning opportunities are insufficiently planned for to address individual needs, and the positive learning outcomes are insufficiently recorded.
- Arrangements for work experience and for wider employer engagement are under developed. The few external work experience opportunities there are are limited mainly to the creative industries. This has an adverse impact on the development of skills and attitudes, which would benefit learners in their future careers. At present, only a few learners benefit from working in a variety of environments through which they can learn to appreciate commercial expectations and respond to commercial pressures.
- Care and support for learners are strong with practical help given with, for example, travel arrangements and bursaries. Recent support interventions now focus more on learners' motivational and emotional needs to maintain their engagement in learning. However, attendance remains too low in many lessons. In-class support is mainly effective. The very large majority of sessions has a support tutor identified for their industry experience in the relevant subject. As a result, learners benefit from deeper discussion when specific topics arise, and from immediate support when needed in tasks such as internet research or use of recording equipment.

- There are clear procedures for the recruitment and initial assessment of learners. Staff use a comprehensive set of documents to capture learners' details and these details are transferred to recently-introduced e-portfolios. However, the use of these e-portfolios is still being developed. The identification of learners' strengths and of their personal, social and employment-related areas for development are not recorded clearly. As a result, staff do not monitor sufficiently well learners' progress in these areas.
- Staff do not routinely reinforce English skills needed for learners to achieve their main learning goals. Learners at DV8 aim to work in creative careers, which require oral and written presentational skills, but not all tutors give enough opportunities for learners to develop these skills in lessons.
- Tutors are insufficiently skilled in developing the mathematical competences that learners will need in their careers. Media production and composition require calculations of timings, divisions of beats, and matching and layering sequences; but the mathematics activities learners undertake do not sufficiently relate to the learners' interests in, for example, making music and event management.
- All learners are clear on their progression opportunities as a result of carefully planned, sensitive individual information, advice and guidance sessions from appropriately qualified and experienced staff. A recent careers fair involving 12 employers was highly successful in alerting learners to employment opportunities.
- Learners demonstrate appropriate understanding of equality and diversity. Each programme includes specific sessions on equality and diversity and learners' knowledge is deepened at reviews by staff asking learners to consider and respond to scenarios on, for example, sexuality and disability. However, tutors miss obvious opportunities to deepen learners' awareness, for example in exploring such issues as the use of sex in advertising.

## Performing arts and media

### 16-19 study programmes

Requires improvement

#### **Teaching, learning and assessment in performing arts and media require improvement because:**

- the proportion of learners on long qualifications at level 1 that successfully complete their qualifications is low in media, music technology and performing arts
- learners make slow progress completing assignment projects and tutors do not have high enough expectations for completing sufficient work to good standards
- too few tutors design tasks that are demanding for all learners, and learning goals set by tutors are not meaningful or challenging enough to promote good progress towards vocational work goals
- too many learners develop only superficial knowledge and are unsure what they need to do to improve; targets and subsequent action points set by tutors in vocational programmes do not provide timely, accurate or frequent enough guidance on how to make better progress
- too many learners do not work independently and their wider study skills in noting, sustaining attention to tasks, organisational skills and time management require improvement; tutors do not focus enough on strategies to develop and sustain these skills
- tutors' teaching methods in classroom sessions do not consistently develop learners' analytical skills or reflective thinking to help reinforce sufficient technical understanding
- tutors' marking of, and feedback on, learners' work do not always clearly identify how to improve tasks in making films, garments or songs; monitoring of learners' progress is ineffective and learners do not have a clear picture of work they still need to do

- the quality of the dance space requires improvement and the lack of a dedicated performance stage or fully-soundproofed practice rooms limits learners' opportunity for more rehearsal and performance activity
- teachers are not consistently developing learners' mathematics skills so that learners use calculations to develop their media and music projects or understand how mathematics applies to the work demands of creative artists.

**In performing arts and media the provider has the following strengths:**

- tutors motivate learners by planning activities where learners can acquire, rehearse and apply practical skills in choreography, composition and performance to good standards and learners subsequently grow in confidence as emerging artists and producers
- a high proportion of level 2 learners complete their courses successfully and progress well into employment, further education and apprenticeships
- tutors make good use of learning technology which enlivens tasks and contributes to learners' skills in creating media, music and performance
- good support and encouragement, including verbal feedback, from experienced tutors with credible industry experience help learners to recognise their potential, focus learners to pursue their strengths and guide their progression to further training
- tutors arrange visits to organisations in the performing arts and media industry and, along with well-designed projects and assignments, learners practise relevant event management roles, gain insights into industry roles and learn about commercial settings.

## Foundation English and mathematics

Requires improvement

### 16-19 study programmes

**Teaching, learning and assessment in Foundation English and mathematics require improvement because:**

- learners' outcomes in functional skills mathematics require improvement. Although the very large majority of learners stay on the programme, only half achieve their functional skills mathematics qualifications
- the continuity of learning and achievement in English and mathematics is affected by the low attendance and punctuality in these lessons
- learners' opportunities to develop their English and mathematics skills in vocational contexts are not fully supported by all tutors, especially in ensuring accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar
- a majority of individual targets in English and mathematics tend to be focused on completion of English and mathematics examinations, with few examples of appropriate individual, specific English and mathematics learning targets
- most tutors do not use the results of the initial assessment to place learners on the right level of qualifications; for example, on a small number of occasions, learners are placed on a lower level of qualification than their assessed level or prior attainment
- the results of the diagnostic assessments are not sufficiently used to inform learning activities that are focused specifically on each learner's identified learning need at an appropriate level
- tutors' written feedback is motivational but does not always provide learners with enough details to understand what they have to do to improve their work.

**In Foundation English and mathematics the provider has the following strengths:**

- learners' retention rate is good on all functional skills English and mathematics programmes of study

- in the large majority of lessons, learners develop very good ICT skills by searching the internet for job opportunities, assessing their skills to achieve their dream jobs, learning personal finance management and working out complex tax and national insurance calculations, and developing a bank of useful vocabulary
- students feel safe, enjoy their English and mathematics and behave very well in lessons
- tutors are very good at establishing a respectful and supportive working environment for learning; learners develop high levels of self-confidence to challenge each other positively, present their points of view publicly and to seek support when needed
- teachers use interactive learning technologies, such as video clips, literacy games, recording sound system and interactive mathematics learning tools, well to stimulate learning and maintain learners' interest
- pastoral care for learners is good. Support staff provide effective care and guidance for learners who face significant challenges in their everyday lives to maintain their motivation in learning.

### The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. The good standards found at the previous inspection have not been maintained. Although progression rates have improved, the qualification success rates for learners on vocational courses have declined. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is no longer consistently good. Leaders and managers recognised these concerns towards the end of the last study year and implemented measures that have improved the quality of provision during the current study year.
- Leaders and managers had an insufficient understanding of the impact of the implementation of study programmes on their learners, which led to a decline in learners' success. Managers have now undertaken effective actions to address these concerns. Learners' welfare support has increased significantly during the current year. Support is now extensive, including a mentoring service for looked after children and specialist counselling provision for all learners. This support has reduced the number of learners who leave their course before it finishes. Effective procedures for identifying 'at risk' learners and providing effective support are now established.
- Performance management requires improvement. The process for observing teaching, learning and assessment does not focus on learning and learners' progress sufficiently, which has led to inaccurate assessments of the quality of lessons. Consequently, managers have underestimated the extent of professional development required to raise the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Professional development for tutors does not give sufficient emphasis on the craft of teaching. However, a successful and well-resourced 'buddying' initiative pairs tutors to share good practice and develop specific skills.
- The process of self-assessment requires improvement. The self-assessment report overstates the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Insufficient attention is paid to low attendance and poor punctuality. As a result, managers do not devise effective action plans or realistic targets for improvement.
- The majority of course managers now use data effectively to gain a realistic in-year assessment of performance at course and individual level. Managers make timely interventions to address under-performance, often by arranging for additional learner support. Within functional skills, the process for course review and improvement planning is less effective. However, senior managers are restricted in the effective monitoring of performance by too many inconsistencies in data presentation.
- Managers are making steady progress in implementing study programmes, which meet the needs, interests and aspirations of the majority of learners and provide good progression routes to higher-level study or work-based learning. Strong links with industry ensure that provision is relevant to the local need for basic production assistants and event staffing. The skills being developed prepare learners well to support their aspirations to become independent artists. Industry 'Ambassadors' for DV8 advise managers in the planning and development of relevant

courses. Managers place a strong emphasis on the development of the English and mathematics skills of learners. However, the planning and establishing of external work experience are underdeveloped.

- Leaders and managers have established very effective partnerships with businesses that are used well to enrich the curriculum through the involvement of highly skilled industry practitioners as regular assistant tutors. These partnerships also support progression into apprenticeships and eventual employment. Collaborative arrangements with the academy, with which accommodation is shared, provide good progression routes to higher-level study within a familiar environment. This collaboration also enables the effective use of resources through the sharing of central support staff and teaching and learning facilities.
- Leaders and managers promote equality and diversity very well, resulting in a culture of mutual respect and equality. The extensive induction programme raises learners' awareness of a wide range of equality and diversity matters. Data are used effectively to measure and monitor performance against a broad range of diversity criteria. Managers have made good progress towards the closing of achievement gaps between different groups.
- Safeguarding requires improvement. Managers provide comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures and monitor their effectiveness through analysis of all incidents. Staff receive regular, well planned training. Learner absences from lessons are routinely and promptly followed up. Safer recruitment procedures are rigorously applied. Risk assessments are particularly thorough. Learners feel safe. However, managers have not taken adequate measures to safeguard learners against radicalisation. Although training is now planned, no training or awareness raising has yet taken place to enable staff to recognise the signs of potential radicalisation and how they should respond.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### DV8 Training Limited

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

<b>Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Performing arts</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Media and communication</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Foundation English and mathematics</b>	<b>3</b>



## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Independent learning provider							
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16–18							
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	183							
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Mr Alexis Michaelides							
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	January 2008							
<b>Website address</b>	www.DV8training.com							
<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+
	58	6	115	5	-	-	-	-
<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+	16-18	19+
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>								
<b>Full-time</b>	-							
<b>Part-time</b>	-							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	-							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	-							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	None							

## Contextual information

DV8 Training Limited runs classroom based learning programmes in the creative industries and specialises in five key vocational areas, music, digital media, performing arts, fashion and events management. Learners come from 14 boroughs in North and East London and the surrounding areas. The main campus is based in Walthamstow, with a satellite centre in East Barnet. Current provision includes full time study programmes, apprenticeships through subcontracting arrangements and projects funded by the local authority and commercial partners. DV8 has considerable experience in working with young people who have not previously enjoyed their education experience, and many of the learners come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Shane Langthorne HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four 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 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:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012)

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