

HIT Training Ltd

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		22–26 June 2015
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:

- apprentices make good progress and the majority achieve their qualifications within the planned time
- learners on all programmes enjoy their training; most apprentices have jobs with highly supportive employers and develop their vocational skills and knowledge quickly
- apprentices' contributions to their workplaces often exceed employers' expectations; apprentices make good progress in their careers by gaining promotions or continuing with higher level training
- learners on traineeships and employability programmes make rapid gains in confidence and develop good personal skills
- managers have instilled a strong culture of celebrating success and use competitions and professional master classes well to raise apprentices' skills and aspirations
- apprentices make excellent use of information and learning technology (ILT), both during reviews and to develop their understanding through independent study
- senior managers work very effectively with employers and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) nationally to develop the curriculum to meet the needs of the hospitality, catering and care sectors.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- staff do not take sufficient account of the starting points of learners on employability programmes; too many are on courses that are not challenging enough, and too few achieve qualifications in English and mathematics
- staff do not always have the confidence or skills to train apprentices to understand the relevance of equality, diversity and safeguarding within their job roles
- assessors do not always take account of the skills gained by apprentices with their employers to plan the next stage of learning, resulting in slow progress for a small minority of apprentices
- staff provide insufficient guidance to apprentices to help them improve their written English.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - making better use of the knowledge and skills apprentices gain through on-the-job training to plan learning that builds on this and challenges apprentices to research topics in greater depth to extend their learning
 - improving learners' skills in written English further by providing more consistent feedback on their work and ensuring learners are able to use appropriate strategies to identify and correct errors in their own work
 - ensuring all staff have the skills and confidence to discuss equality and diversity with learners in order to raise learners' awareness of equality and diversity and their importance in the workplace.
- Ensure that managers are better able to measure the impact of staff training on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by using information on staff training plans when reviewing their performance and sharing best practice across all parts of the organisation.
- On employability programmes, improve the use of information gained about learners at the start of the programme in order to ensure that they complete qualifications that are challenging for them and build on their prior attainment.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
------------------------------	------

- HIT Training Ltd (HIT) offers intermediate and advanced apprenticeships in hospitality and catering, health and social care, administration and business management, with the majority in hospitality and catering. A small number of adults are taking higher apprenticeships, mostly in hospitality management and team leading. HIT has over 9,000 apprentices and of these the large majority are adults. Subcontractors train a very small, and decreasing, proportion of apprentices. HIT has approximately 270 learners on traineeships and just over 400 employability learners. The subject areas selected for this inspection cover the programmes for the large majority of learners.
- Learners on all programmes enjoy their training, which often takes place in high quality workplaces that enable them to develop their skills quickly. Consequently, apprentices gain confidence in their job roles and many make contributions to their workplaces which exceed their employers' expectations. For example, intermediate food and beverage apprentices competently provide information to customers when promoting 'guest' beers.
- Historically, the proportion of apprentices who achieve their qualifications has been high, as has the proportion of those who achieve within the planned time. This dropped slightly in 2013/14 and managers were quick to identify the causes, mainly related to the performance of subcontractors and weak teaching of functional skills. Actions taken by managers to correct this have been successful and, in the current year, apprentices across the vast majority of programmes and at all levels of learning make good progress. A high proportion of learners on employability programmes successfully achieve their qualifications, for example in customer service, introduction to social care and preparation for work.
- Most apprentices develop good skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Staff have successfully implemented actions to increase the proportion of apprentices who achieve their functional skills examinations in these subjects at the first attempt. They now teach functional skills early in apprentices' programmes, which

enables learners to apply their skills better to their vocational learning. For example, team leading apprentices accurately calculate potential costs and savings when planning staffing rotas.

- Most apprentices apply their mathematical skills well within their job roles and gain good verbal communication skills. A minority of learners do not develop their written skills well enough and are unable to identify and correct errors in their work. Learners on employability programmes and traineeships do not develop their English or mathematical skills well enough and too many fail to complete their functional skills qualifications.
- Managers have instilled a strong culture of celebrating apprentices' success by holding frequent regional graduation events which raise apprentices' aspirations. Staff use competitions well to motivate apprentices to improve the standard of their work, such as in the HIT Academy knife skills competition and through participation in national apprenticeship awards.
- Managers monitor effectively the performance of different groups of learners; no discernible differences exist in outcomes for learners from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The majority of apprentices aged 16 to 18, most of whom are on hospitality or catering programmes, perform less well than adult apprentices. Managers' actions to improve the achievements of male learners, which are not as good as those of female learners, are not yet successful.
- A high proportion of intermediate apprentices who complete their programmes move on to higher levels of training. The majority of apprentices on all programmes make good progress in advancing their careers by gaining promotions or taking on additional responsibilities. Where trainees have work placements with high quality employers their progression into employment or apprenticeships is good, although a minority of trainees do not find work or further training. Progression into work for learners on employability programmes is good.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, which is reflected in the good progress made by the majority of apprentices, their continuation to higher levels of learning, and their progression into secure employment.
- Assessors use their occupational experience to good effect to develop learners' competence and skills to work effectively in their job roles. They liaise effectively with employers who support apprentices' training well, and ensure that apprentices continue to learn between reviews and assessments. For example, employers agree personal development targets with apprentices to work towards whilst in training. Learners on all programmes are motivated well and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Learners develop good personal and social skills which increase their effectiveness at work; for example, health and social care apprentices show increased confidence in handling clients with diverse needs in care settings. Many apprentices take on extra responsibilities during training; for example, managerial responsibilities for front-of-house facilities.
- On apprenticeships and traineeships, staff use technology very well to maintain learners' interest during training sessions, to deepen their understanding of topics taught and to develop learners' independent learning and communication skills. For example, assessors make good use of recorded professional discussions to collect evidence of apprentices' skills in tasks such as supporting the coordination of an event or leading and managing meetings effectively. Learners make good use of online resources to research topics such as changes in legislation and the Human Rights Act.
- On apprenticeships, assessors ensure that learning is highly personalised to meet individual apprentices' needs. In the vast majority of cases, where apprentices need extra help to achieve, they receive good support. On employability programmes trainers do not always identify the support needs of learners, and a small minority of learners do not receive sufficient extra help in lessons.

- Assessors use a wide range of assessment methods, such as testimonies and assessors' observations, to ensure learners are able to demonstrate the required knowledge and competence to complete their qualifications successfully. Assessors make very flexible arrangements for training and assessment, responding well to learners' work patterns. Most assessors provide good and encouraging verbal feedback, but on a small minority of programmes written feedback is not detailed enough to help learners make improvements.
- Assessors use effective strategies to improve learners' spoken English skills. For example, learners are confident in discussing and explaining their food preparation and customer service skills during discussions with trainers. Too often trainers and assessors do not correct errors in learners' written work, or teach learners how to identify and improve their writing skills. Most assessors teach apprentices to use mathematics competently; for example, in calculating the correct value of weights, measures and quantities when cooking.
- In a small minority of cases, assessors and trainers on all programmes do not set tasks that are challenging enough, especially for more able learners. Staff do not do enough to ensure these learners explore topics in greater depth and extend their knowledge beyond the qualification requirements.
- Apprentices receive good guidance to place them on programmes that are suited to their needs and interests. They have a good understanding of the expectations and requirements of the apprenticeship and receive good information to help them with their next steps on completion of their programme. Learners on employability programmes do not receive sufficiently comprehensive guidance, and a minority are unclear about job or study options.
- Learners on all programmes have a high level of health and safety awareness. For example, they are able to conduct risk assessments about working in a kitchen, office or care environment, and health and social care apprentices understand and meet the dietary and hydration requirements of clients well.
- On employability programmes and traineeships, staff successfully raise learners' awareness of themes related to equality and diversity. The majority of assessors promote equality and the understanding of diversity well on apprenticeships, for example by ensuring apprentices take account of customers' dietary requirements and cultural differences in diets when creating menus. A minority of staff do not provide sufficient guidance to apprentices to ensure they understand how aspects of equality and diversity relate to their workplaces or job roles.

Hospitality and catering

Good

Apprenticeships

Teaching, learning and assessment in hospitality and catering are good because:

- the good training, coaching and assessment help the majority of apprentices complete their qualifications successfully; apprentices' good attitudes to learning and employment ensure the majority make good progress
- assessors use their good industry knowledge well to plan learning using a wide range of methods including games, quizzes and videos; for example, apprentices gain a very detailed understanding of how the brain and taste buds interact, to improve their ability to combine ingredients and balance flavours better when planning dishes
- apprentices' work is of a good standard, and assessors challenge them to develop complex skills and take additional responsibilities in the workplace; assessors use competitions well to motivate apprentices who produce high quality dishes using imaginative choices of ingredients and presentation skills
- assessors take good account of the individual needs of apprentices who develop effective personal, social and employability skills; apprentices build their confidence in interacting with customers when on reception, and are able to provide detailed descriptions of ingredients used in complex taster menus, or successfully coax children to try new dishes

- assessors carry out comprehensive assessments of apprentices’ work and use a wide range of methods to assess their skills and knowledge and help apprentices reflect on their practice; assessors make very effective use of technology to record assessment decisions, provide feedback and set targets for apprentices to help them improve their work
- the majority of assessors provide effective coaching to help apprentices improve their use of English and mathematics and apply these within their job roles; assessors frequently monitor apprentices’ progress towards the achievement of functional skills qualifications and the proportion who passes these examinations is high
- assessors provide highly effective advice and guidance which help apprentices choose an appropriate programme to meet their needs and interests; assessors also provide timely and detailed information so that apprentices can plan the next stage of their learning or progression within employment.

Teaching, learning and assessment in hospitality and catering are not yet outstanding because:

- a minority of assessors do not provide more complex tasks for the most able learners, or challenge them to consider in greater depth the topics taught in order to extend their learning beyond the qualification requirements
- in a small minority of cases, assessors do not take sufficient account of the training apprentices receive from their employers, resulting in apprentices repeating work they have already completed
- a small minority of assessors lack the confidence or skill in their own English and mathematics abilities to support apprentices effectively and, in a few cases, learners make errors which remain uncorrected
- a minority of assessors do not have the skill to discuss with confidence the importance of equality in the workplace and do not raise apprentices’ awareness sufficiently of issues that are pertinent to the industry; this limits apprentices’ understanding, in particular for those with line-management responsibilities.

Preparation for work	Requires improvement
Employability	
Traineeships	

Teaching, learning and assessment in preparation for work require improvement because:

- too few learners make sufficient progress relative to their prior attainment; the proportion of learners who successfully complete qualifications in English and mathematics is low, and not enough trainees gain jobs or apprenticeships
- teachers do not take sufficient account of individual learners’ needs and, in too many lessons, learners complete the same tasks regardless of their ability; teachers focus too much on learners completing assessment tasks and do not ensure that learners have the underpinning skills necessary for their future employment
- staff do not have high enough expectations of learners on employability programmes, and do not take sufficient account of their prior attainment when placing them on qualifications; too many learners are enrolled on qualifications that are too easy for them, and thereby limit their job options
- not enough teachers have the skills necessary to support learners with the development of their use of mathematics and written English, and errors often remain uncorrected; learners are not able to adjust their written style adequately to meet different needs, such as when writing letters and emails

- teachers do not inform learners well enough about the content of their programme, or set targets for learners well enough to help them plan their next stage of learning or employment; learners are often unclear what is expected of them and do not always know what options they have on completing their programme
- while teachers provide positive and encouraging verbal feedback to learners on their work, their written feedback is too often confined to praise for work completed and does not provide learners with sufficient information to help them improve their work.

In preparation for work the provider has the following strengths:

- teachers provide good support to learners, who often have a negative previous experience of education; they foster good relations with learners, build their confidence in work and social situations and, consequently, most learners enjoy their programmes, so that all those who stay to the end achieve their qualifications
- learners on a traineeship with a major retailer make very good progress due to the close working of teachers and the employer; the majority of these trainees gain jobs or apprenticeships
- learners quickly gain confidence in expressing themselves verbally and participate well in discussions and mock job interviews; learners understand well the implications of non-verbal communication in customer service and gain a good knowledge of technical language related to the catering industry
- teachers skilfully improve learners' understanding of equality and diversity in the workplace; for example, learners are able to explain the importance of anti-discrimination policies, gender equality and equal pay, as well as topics such as an employee's right to pray.

Administration and business management

Good

Apprenticeships

Teaching, learning and assessment in administration and business management are good because:

- as a result of managers' and assessors' strong focus on continuous improvement, the majority of apprentices on customer service, business administration and management programmes make good progress, with a high proportion achieving their qualifications in the planned time
- employers have a strong commitment to apprentices achieving success and contribute very effectively to their training; apprentices are quickly promoted to positions of responsibility, such as operational management roles
- many apprentices extend their learning by completing additional courses in management, team leading and front-of-house roles to extend their knowledge and expand their career options
- apprentices learn in prestigious corporate organisations and develop excellent work-related skills and industry practices, through which they make valued contributions to their employers; in one example, learners set up and trained staff in an internal coffee house, and in another developed a creative marketing strategy, selecting wines to complement meats to increase sales
- assessors have high expectations of apprentices and use their industry expertise to model good practice in the skills required for employment, including time management, communication and the use of information technology
- assessors use ILT very effectively to support apprentices to understand business concepts and to enable them to continue learning independently; apprentices use an online interactive learning programme to understand how companies use feedback on their services, and industry benchmarks to improve their performance
- staff provide effective guidance, in collaboration with employers who host open events, in order to help apprentices select the programme that best meets their needs and interests

- assessors evaluate apprentices' skills in English and mathematics well in order to plan their learning in these subjects; improved teaching in the current year has resulted in an increase in the proportion of learners successfully completing functional skills examinations.

In administration and business management the provider is not yet outstanding because:

- assessors do not always take into account the skills and knowledge apprentices have gained from their employers when planning training sessions and, as a result, in a minority of sessions the tasks are not sufficiently challenging to enable all learners to make good progress
- assessors do not always provide sufficiently detailed feedback on apprentices' work to help apprentices improve, and they do not routinely provide guidance to help apprentices improve their writing skills; a minority of assessors do not reinforce communication skills required for business, such as those required for making formal presentations to meet corporate business standards
- assessors do not guide apprentices well enough to apply mathematical skills within work situations, such as calculating cost efficiencies in conference bookings, and cost savings through sustainability measures
- a minority of assessors lack the skills to reinforce apprentices' understanding of aspects of equality and diversity and their importance in the workplace and, on a few occasions, apprentices receive inaccurate information.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders and managers provide a strong strategic direction for the organisation, inculcating a positive ethos with demanding targets for staff and high ambitions for learners. They work assiduously with a wide range of agencies and networks to promote the advantages of training to employers and ensure the provision meets their requirements. Senior managers' collaboration with the LEPs is very good and ensures the needs of learners and employers are met. Staff have good links with employers and in the large majority of cases these are used to ensure a productive working relationship for learners.
- Managers make effective use of a range of performance data to hold staff to account for the quality of their programmes, to identify their support needs and to improve outcomes for learners. Managers communicate well with staff through an effective regional structure of management, an annual conference and regular newsletters. Staff feel valued and understand well their accountability for learners' success and their wider contribution to the organisation. However, sharing of good practice across the three company brands at assessor level requires improvement, and a small minority of assessors lack the skills needed to enable them to provide a consistently good learning experience.
- Since the previous inspection, senior managers have improved the quality assurance and improvement processes which are now good and lead to improved progress by learners. Managers were swift to identify and remedy slow progress and achievements for learners on health and social care apprenticeships, functional skills qualifications and within subcontracted provision, resulting in improved outcomes for learners. Managers' evaluation of their programmes is thorough and accurate. Managers have identified well the key strengths and areas for improvement on most qualifications and they use quality improvement plans effectively to raise standards. Managers oversee the performance of subcontractors well and provide them with appropriate support and training.
- Managers have an effective process for evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. In the majority of cases during observations, they evaluate and record accurately the key strengths and areas for development in assessors' skills, and provide suitable training to support staff to improve their practice, although not all observers do this consistently well. Managers do not make sufficient use of action plans arising from observations when evaluating

the performance of staff through appraisals. They do not assess well enough the impact of staff training in order to further improve teaching, learning and assessment.

- Managers have improved the technology available to both staff and learners. They have facilitated improved communication across the company and provided resources to staff to enable them to develop stimulating learning resources. Staff and learners have excellent access to a well-developed intranet, and make effective use of electronic portfolios and systems for monitoring learners' progress which is improving their outcomes.
- Managers analyse closely the performance of different groups of learners and few performance gaps exist. Learners are treated fairly by their employers and the attention given by assessors to personalising their learning ensures all have an equal opportunity to succeed. Staff receive training on equality and diversity but, during training sessions and reviews, assessors do not always help learners to understand how these apply in the workplace.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are good. Safeguarding is managed well and meets statutory requirements. The large majority of staff and learners have a clear understanding of safeguarding and the processes to follow should concerns arise, and staff pay close attention to ensuring that learners are fully aware of e-safety. Staff reinforce health and safety in the workplace well and ensure learners are placed in safe working environments. All staff have completed appropriate safeguarding training and managers are providing training to highlight the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism to meet the requirements of the new Counter-Terrorism and Security Act.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

HIT Training 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	2	-	-	-	2	-	2	3	-
Outcomes for learners	2	-	-	-	3	-	2	3	-
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	-	-	-	2	-	2	3	-
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	-	-	-	2	-	2	3	-

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Hospitality and catering	2
Employability training	3
Administration	2
Business management	2

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	25186							
Principal/CEO	Mrs Jill Whittaker							
Date of previous inspection	January 2012							
Website address	www.hittraining.co.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+
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	628	6276	38	2134	-	278		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	77		196		273			
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	-							
Part-time	-							
Number of community learners	-							
Number of employability learners	425							
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"> ■ Anne Clarke Associates Ltd ■ Baltic Training Ltd ■ Blue Apple Training Ltd ■ Campus Training Ltd ■ Circa 2007 Ltd ■ QTS Global Ltd ■ R&D Care Training Centre Ltd ■ The College of Social Care Ltd ■ Training Futures (UK) Ltd 							

Contextual information

HIT was founded in May 2006 to provide training for the hospitality and service sector. The company has expanded to include programmes in health and social care and preparation for work which are delivered under its two additional brands, Connect2Care and Work Ready People, respectively. HIT offers apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships in health and social care, hospitality and catering, and business-related subjects. It offers higher apprenticeships in hospitality, business management and adult health and social care, and provides training in a range of subjects to prepare people for employment, including through traineeships. HIT offers its training programmes to learners across the whole of England.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Rieks Drijver HMI
-----------------------	-------------------

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and eight additional inspectors, assisted by the quality and development 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

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk



Employer View is a new website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too.

To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and provider inspection reports, please visit <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/user>.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store Street](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

