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Mrs Johanna Rudd
Hull Business Training Centre
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Dear Mrs Rudd

Short inspection of Hull Business Training Centre Ltd

Following the short inspection on 6–7 October 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since Hull Business Training Centre Ltd (HBTC) was judged to be good in January 2010.

This provider continues to be good.

Since the last inspection in 2010, HBTC has consistently maintained a good standard of provision for its learners. Success rates for learners in the smaller areas with fewer learners have improved and success rates in business administration, the area with the largest number of learners, have been maintained to at least a good level.

The trainers and assessors at HBTC are well qualified and very knowledgeable; they provide learners with good support and regular and frequent contact, and ensure that employers play an active part in all aspects of the learners' programme.

Learners attend off-the-job training sessions at HBTC's premises where trainers deliver enjoyable and interesting training to develop learners' knowledge and the understanding they need to function effectively in their workplace. They also ensure that learners are introduced to British values, anti-radicalisation, safeguarding and equality and diversity issues.

At the last inspection HBTC was tasked with improving success rates for information and communication technology (ICT) learners; reviewing and updating quality assurance processes and self-assessment; increasing the variety of teaching styles used; increasing the use of technology to improve the efficiency of assessment and ensuring more employer involvement in the planning of training and the review of learners' progress.

You and your management team and your staff have successfully achieved all of these requirements.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding at HBTC is at the forefront of everything that takes place. Safeguarding issues are fully incorporated into all aspects of learning and are linked very effectively with equality and diversity issues. HBTC planned for early training to meet the national 'Prevent' agenda and have developed very good links with external agencies to support them in the training for this aspect. Their 'action plan' is in place and is working successfully. The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements for learners, staff and visitors are fit for purpose.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and managers have taken good actions to address the under-performance in ICT provision identified at the last inspection. Staffing in the area has undergone significant change. Managers adopted a 100% sampling strategy of all work and assessments prior to submission to awarding bodies and this has been successful in improving overall success rates for learners. The quality of this provision is now good.
- Outcomes for learners have been sustained at an overall good level since the last inspection. In the largest cohort of learners, in business administration, the success rate declined slightly last year but remains well above the national rate. English and mathematics success rates also declined slightly but remain well above the national rates.
- The number of learners achieving a positive destination by progressing into further education or employment is very high.
- Quality assurance is rigorous, comprehensive and well planned. Since the last inspection, HBTC has developed a quality matrix that brings together all aspects of quality improvement and drives improvements effectively. Self-assessment is accurate with staff, learners and employers feeding into the process systematically.
- Teachers plan lessons well and a process of self-reflection enables them to review the quality of teaching, learning and assessment weekly.
- Staff are well qualified and possess high levels of knowledge of specific vocations and industries. However, a minority of staff have yet to complete an intermediate-level qualification in English and/or mathematics. Teachers use anecdotal accounts of their own job experience very effectively to bring the learning 'to life'.
- Teachers use a good range of teaching styles and this has resulted in a shift from the last inspection in which a few teachers relied too heavily on only one approach. Now teachers use group work and peer assessment and have a vast range of tactile resources which engage learners and provide exciting and enjoyable sessions. However, at times they do not fully check on learners' understanding.

- The good assessment planning identified at the last inspection has been maintained. The systems used to identify learners' starting points are robust and comprehensive. Learners are placed on the right course and staff provide appropriate additional support where necessary. Assessors plan assessment clearly and learners know what is required of them. Assessment is valid and reliable, and meets the framework requirements.
- Assessors' feedback to learners following assessment is good and helps them improve their work. HBTC uses technology well to motivate learners, to support an efficient assessment process and to help staff manage their workloads.
- Learners enjoy their training sessions at HBTC. High levels of respect between learners and learners and staff are evident due to the very good support, advice and guidance that learners receive from trainers and support staff.
- Feedback is very effective at enabling learners to understand fully what they have done well, what they need to further improve and where they are in relation to completing their learning programmes. Target setting is good; learners and assessors make very good use of the online assessment tool both in submission of evidence for assessment and in relation to tracking progress.
- However, in a small number of cases tutors have not responded quickly enough to remedy a learner's area for improvement. Learners are not systematically signposted to resources to help them improve; tutors tend to refer learners to workshops that may be taking place some time later.
- Staff identify specific support needs quickly and arrangements to provide the support needed are very effective and of a good standard.
- HBTC has a robust and rigorous compliance and audit strategy and process in place which satisfies the funding organisations' requirements in relation to the tracking of guided learning hours for off-the-job training. This process allows HBTC to track learners' progress effectively and put in place timely action plans if they identify a learner not getting the required off-the-job learning time.
- The provider fully understands its duty in relation to local and regional priorities and as a result engages with a large number of forums and consortiums which provide useful intelligence on how to develop its curriculum offer.
- Learners benefit from good support for English, mathematics and ICT functional skills. They develop good skills directly related to their job role through effective planning by tutors with employers and learners. Trainers monitor learners' progress well and where learners may be falling behind tutors put support in place to help learners to catch up.
- HBTC has suitably qualified subject specialists for mathematics and ICT; however, it does not currently have a suitably qualified subject specialist for English. Although success rates for English and mathematics in 2014/15 remain above the national rate, they have declined from 2013/14.
- Staff promote equality and diversity well to learners. Learners enjoy the segments of lessons and progress reviews focused on the equality and diversity 'topic of the month', and develop a very good awareness of key issues.
- Staff training in equality and diversity issues is outstanding. Staff develop and share knowledge and good practice exceptionally well. Managers use data well to identify participation and achievement gaps. They respond appropriately with

extra marketing, or additional learning support for at-risk groups, to reduce identified gaps successfully.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and managers should ensure that:

- the slight decline in English, mathematics and business administration success rates is halted and they return to their previous high levels as quickly as possible
- all trainers achieve at least intermediate-level qualifications in English and mathematics
- they further develop systems and processes to ensure that tutors respond quickly when a learner is given an area for improvement so that they can be signposted to resources and other workshops in a more timely way
- training is provided to all staff on the use of questioning to check recall, understanding and learning that allows all learners to demonstrate fully their prior knowledge and learning.

Yours sincerely

Tim Gardner
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Ofsted inspectors assisted by the managing director as nominee carried out the inspection. Inspectors met with managers, staff and learners and looked at past and current work. Inspectors observed training and assessment activities at the provider and in the workplace. They reviewed examples of a wide range of documentary evidence as well as meeting with and talking to employers.