

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



11 April 2016

Mr Bob Harknett
Managing Director
Aurelia Training Ltd
The Butts
Coventry
CV1 3GE

Dear Mr Harknett

Short inspection of Aurelia Training Ltd

Following the short inspection on 22 and 23 March 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since the provider was judged to be good in July 2012.

This provider continues to be good.

You and your managers have responded well to changes in funding and government priorities since the previous inspection. You have managed well the transition from offering predominantly workplace learning programmes to offering mostly apprenticeship provision. You are open to responding to local enterprise partnership priorities and have consolidated your work in the care sector. Your offer of teaching assistant apprenticeships is in its early stages and is an initiative you intend to grow.

You pride yourself in offering a professional service to your employers and being highly responsive to their needs. It is clear that you have good and frequent communications with them and that as a result apprentices succeed well. It is also clear that you promote a culture of tolerance and inclusivity which is reflected in the priority you give to safeguarding and to equality and diversity. Most apprentices enjoy their learning, and value the support and professionalism of your staff.

You have taken seriously the need to improve the quality of your provision since the previous inspection. You have addressed all of the recommendations for improvement with varying degrees of success.

You have put greater resources into supporting the use of information and communication technology, with all assessors using laptops for reviews, and by using online testing where possible, providing internet access to learners in their work environment, and by offering support and guidance to learners by email.

The assessments you carry out when learners start their programme is thorough, but assessors and tutors still need to take better account of it in planning and target-setting for learners.

You have changed your process for the observation of teaching and learning but it requires further development to improve its reliability and actions from observations need to be more closely monitored. Nevertheless, inspectors found that teaching and learning were effective in enabling learners to make good progress.

You have improved your use of information to track learners' progress more closely and to offer timely support to learners at risk of not achieving. Your regular monthly meetings are effective in identifying and responding to underperformance.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and managers ensure that safeguarding arrangements continue to be effective in keeping young learners and vulnerable adults safe. Managers fulfil all their statutory requirements regarding the single central register and Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Managers not only record all safeguarding incidents but also monitor closely learners who are vulnerable and at risk. They track the support and its impact on learners until they can be safely removed from the register.

Managers update safeguarding policies regularly and ensure that all staff receive annual safeguarding training. All staff have received training in online safety. Although the most recent safeguarding training included reference to the Prevent duty, managers are in the early stages of implementing the strategy for the Prevent duty. They have carried out a Prevent duty risk assessment and have made contact, but not yet had a meeting with, the local Prevent duty coordinator.

Learners feel safe at work and pay very good attention to safe working practices. They know how to keep themselves and each other safe. However, learners' understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism is more limited.

Inspection findings

- The proportion of apprentices who successfully complete their programme has remained at the same high level for the past three years. The large majority of apprentices also complete within the planned timescale. The proportion of learners who successfully complete their functional skills qualifications is also very high.
- Managers have improved the tracking of learners' progress since the previous inspection. Managers and assessors closely monitor apprentices' attendance and completion of units and intervene swiftly to limit underperformance. Recently, managers closely analysed the reasons for an increase in withdrawals in order to ensure that learners had appropriate support in place to be retained and complete their programme. Current learners are making good progress in achieving both their vocational qualification and their functional skills qualifications.
- Managers have strengthened the arrangements for observing teaching, learning and assessment. The scope of observation has broadened to include induction, initial assessment and progress reviews. Peer observations have recently been introduced, which encourages tutors to share their ideas and good practice, but it is too early to evaluate the impact of this process on raising standards of teaching and learning across the organisation.
- The quality manager carries out a formal, graded observation of tutors once a year. Observation reports contain clear judgements about strengths and areas for improvement. However, too much emphasis is placed on evaluating the process of teaching without judging whether learning and progress are taking place. As a result, observation grades are overly generous and improvement plans do not focus sufficiently on what individual assessors and tutors need to do to improve.
- Assessment practice is good and learners have a clear understanding of what they need to do to achieve their qualifications successfully. Assessors provide good, detailed feedback which helps learners to understand the level of progress they are making and what they need to do to improve their work. Most learners have clear, short-term targets, which helps them to focus on what they need to do in preparation for the next visit from their assessor. However, long-term targets focus too much on the completion of units and not enough on individual development needs and interests.
- Staff plan sessions effectively to ensure that all learners make a good rate of progress. Assessors use technologies effectively to support learning and successfully encourage learners to make good use of computers to prepare written work, submit assignments and to communicate about visits and appointments. Assessors use a good range of evidence to establish learners' individual progress, including professional discussions, workbooks and completed assignments.
- Assessors provide learners with good information, advice and guidance throughout their apprenticeship. Thorough induction arrangements include a good introduction to the apprenticeship framework so that learners understand the demands of the programme. In progress reviews, assessors provide learners with good advice about careers, promotion and taking on increased responsibility. Apprentice teaching assistants receive very useful advice about where to apply for higher level qualifications in preparation for progression to further training.

- Although initial assessment is thorough, tutors and assessors do not use the information well enough to set specific, individual targets to enable learners to know exactly what skills they need to develop.
- The provision for English and mathematics at Aurelia is good. Tutors are very encouraging and offer a welcoming learning environment, and learners improve their self-confidence and self-belief well. Teaching is flexible to meet learners' individual needs and takes place either in the workplace or at the training centre. Tutors' oral feedback to learners in English and mathematics classes is good and extends their understanding well. The tracking of learners' progress through elements of the curriculum is comprehensive; however, the tracking of individual skills development is less successful.
- Managers have a good focus on developing tutors' functional skills and require all new members of staff to undertake a functional skills qualification. Learners are encouraged to extend their skills in English and mathematics; those on vocational qualifications at level 1 with the ability to study a functional skill at level 2 do so.
- Those learners who require additional support benefit from one-to-one sessions. Staff refer learners with very specific support needs to other providers; for example, those who may need an assessment for dyslexia and learners who speak English as an additional language.
- Managers have worked hard since the previous inspection to ensure that tutors and assessors promote equality and diversity well. Staff receive regular updated training in equality and diversity. Assessors promote equality of opportunity and diversity particularly effectively through interesting and lively discussions about current topics, such as the role of women in sport, mass migration and benefits for people who have ill-health or disability. This ensures that learners have a good awareness of diversity, including British values, and are being well prepared to work in modern Britain.
- A small minority of employers are not sufficiently involved in the planning and reviewing of learning because they do not attend learners' progress reviews. This results in learners not receiving sufficient support and encouragement to make even better progress.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the new observation system is developed further to ensure that the impact of teaching is measured accurately and follow-up actions are rigorously monitored to improve standards of teaching and learning
- staff utilise the results of assessments of learners' starting points to set clear, individual targets and that they use these targets as a basis for detailed feedback that enables learners to understand what they have to do to improve
- assessors strengthen the links with employers to ensure that they understand and fully support learners' development of skills, including functional skills to support learners' progress
- ensure that learners develop a thorough understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism so they can keep themselves and each other safe.

I am copying this letter to the Skills Funding Agency and the Education Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

William Baidoe-Ansah
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The managing director, as nominee, assisted a team comprising Her Majesty's Inspector and two Ofsted inspectors. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the letter. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.