

Lookfantastic Training Limited

Independent Learning Provider

Inspection dates

15–18 November 2016

Overall effectiveness		Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	Apprenticeships Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good	
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good	
Outcomes for learners	Good	
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Leaders and managers have made good progress in dealing successfully with the weaknesses identified through self-assessment and at the previous inspection.
- Apprenticeship programmes are well planned to meet employers' and learners' needs. Employers are closely involved in the design and implementation of programmes.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good.
- Managers have successfully improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in hairdressing, including more extensive good-quality workplace assessment.
- Engineering apprentices benefit from extensive good-quality on-the-job training which enables them to improve rapidly the skills and knowledge they need to meet the demands of their employment.
- The large majority of current learners are making good progress.
- Apprentices do not receive sufficient support to improve their English skills.
- Managers do not measure well enough the progress made towards achieving quality-improvement targets.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Since the last inspection, Lookfantastic Training Limited (LFT) has changed ownership from the Hut Group to the shareholders of Rewards Training Recruitment Consultancy Limited. There has been a reduction in the number of subcontractors, with SIGTA Limited being the single subcontractor at this inspection.
- In the relatively short period of new ownership, the new leadership has focused on ensuring that LFT has both the capability and capacity to make the required improvements identified at the previous inspection.
- The very large majority of learners are apprentices, with a very small number of work-based adult learners and a variable number of adult learners undertaking short courses to help them gain employment. The number of adult employability courses has reduced following the reduction in the number of subcontractors.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all tutors are skilled in developing challenging targets that help learners focus on the things they need to do to excel, to support their broader personal development and to improve their employment-related skills, including English and mathematics.
- Ensure that all teaching staff can confidently support learners to improve their English skills.
- Share good practice between the different apprenticeship programmes to improve further the quality of the provision.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers have made significant improvements since the previous inspection. They have improved teaching, learning and assessment, monitored learners' attendance more carefully and evaluated and analysed data more incisively. This has resulted in improvements in attendance and achievement rates for learners, which are now good.
- Managers ensure that the provision is responsive to local needs and local enterprise partnerships' priorities. Partnership arrangements are successful in ensuring that the apprenticeship programmes are meeting the needs of employers, who play an active role in that programme. Directors play an active role in contributing to the development of the local skills strategy.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the provider is very inclusive. Trainers embrace diversity and promote equality of opportunity well through induction within an environment of mutual respect. Leaders and managers monitor the progress of different groups of apprentices so that none are disadvantaged.
- Managers review the progression and destinations of their apprentices well in terms of sustained employment and further training, but are less clear about how well apprentices gain promotion. Most apprentices successfully progress into permanent full-time positions.
- Leaders and managers have improved the contract management arrangements and the quality-assurance procedures for the subcontractor since the previous inspection. They now audit the subcontractor more thoroughly and place a greater focus on assessing the quality of training. However, they do not know how well the subcontractor's cohorts of learners are progressing in-year, and therefore are not in a position to intervene to support any not doing well enough.
- The self-assessment report is thorough and accurate. The quality-improvement plans focus well on tackling areas requiring improvement. Managers carefully monitor and rate the progress made, but the targets set do not always include outcomes against which they can measure progress. For example, one target is to increase the number of workplace assessments, but there is no indication of by how many they should be increased and, as such, it is difficult to establish if the target has been met.
- Managers have successfully improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in hairdressing. Managers' monitoring and observations of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment provide trainers with detailed, accurate feedback and encouragement to reflect on their own practice. As a result, trainers understand and take ownership of the improvements they need to make. Managers use the results of observations to inform the annual appraisal process and the content of training programmes. Leaders and managers do not, however, ensure sufficient sharing of good practice across the subject areas to overcome the variations in performance and to improve teaching and learning further.

The governance of the provider

- The governance arrangements are effective. The directors know their business well and are fully involved in the self-assessment process. Directors provide sound financial management to ensure financial stability.

Directors provide good support and challenge to the senior LFT manager. The mentoring that directors offer is particularly effective in improving the management and use of data.

Safeguarding

- Safeguarding is effective. Managers conduct thorough recruitment checks to ensure the suitability of all staff.
- Managers follow up all safeguarding and students' welfare issues appropriately to resolution. Students feel and are safe. Trainers place a strong focus on supporting apprentices to focus on health and safety in the workplace and, as a result, apprentices can demonstrate and articulate safe working practices.
- Leaders and managers ensure that all staff are trained to meet the requirements of the 'Prevent' duty. They ensure that, during induction, trainers increase learners' understanding of British values and awareness of the dangers of radicalisation. However, trainers do not continue to reinforce learners' understanding of British values sufficiently after induction.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Apprenticeship programmes are well planned. Training managers at LFT and SIGTA prepare schemes for training and assessment that are tailored to meet employers' needs and the work that apprentices are doing. Apprentices know clearly what they have achieved and what they need to do to make progress and complete their awards. Employers value the increasing contribution that apprentices make to their businesses as their skills and knowledge develop during their training. Apprentices describe clearly the way they apply their learning at work. For example, an advanced engineering apprentice described how his training had enabled him to follow work processes closely to ensure that computer-aided designs were accurate and met customers' requirements.
- Managers, trainers and assessors monitor apprentices' progress closely. They know their apprentices and their needs and circumstances well, and intervene swiftly and beneficially if an apprentice is falling behind or finding an aspect of their training difficult. In one example, a hairdressing apprentice was given additional coaching and support to improve her confidence in carrying out different cuts. Interventions and support for engineering apprentices who were falling behind in their learning and at risk of leaving were successful in securing their commitment and motivation to complete.
- Initial assessment and information, advice and guidance are thorough and effective in identifying apprentices' learning and support needs. They are successful in ensuring that apprentices are placed on a programme, and with an employer, that will best meet their training and development needs. Trainers and assessors provide good support and adaptations to programmes to help apprentices make progress and succeed. Trainers

make good use of apprentices' experience of work or learning to plan learning that builds on this attainment. They give apprentices further useful advice and guidance on the range of employment opportunities or further learning available to them.

- In off-the-job training sessions in hairdressing, trainers are skilled and make good use of demonstrations and individual coaching to develop apprentices' competence and confidence in, for example, different cutting techniques. In workshop sessions, trainers make good use of the differing experience and skills of group members, helping to develop apprentices' skills in working in a team or giving constructive feedback, as well as their hairdressing skills.
- Managers at SIGTA are successful in adapting programmes to meet employers' and apprentices' needs and circumstances. They offer flexible arrangements for off-the-job training in engineering, selecting the most appropriate approaches to meet apprentices' and employers' needs. For example, training in performing engineering operations may be offered in the workplace or at a local college, according to need and circumstance. SIGTA offers remote learning options for the information communications technology component of the course, and apprentices enjoy the flexibility this gives them in their studies. Other off-the-job training is provided by colleges that are local to apprentices or their employers and are well chosen to meet the needs of both.
- In hairdressing, trainers are particularly effective in encouraging apprentices to reflect on their work and self-assess their progress and the standard of their work. It is successful in developing apprentices' confidence and identifying areas for their further development. In one workshop session, apprentices reported on their work very thoughtfully, identifying clearly where they had done well and where they needed further practice. Trainers made skilled use of questions and feedback to help them recognise their achievements and progress.
- Trainers and assessors review apprentices' progress regularly and frequently. They are careful to involve employers in the process and gather useful information from them on the progress that apprentices are making. Trainers and assessors make good use of these reviews to give apprentices feedback on their progress and to agree the work they need to do and to ensure that they are treated fairly at work and that they have good opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills. Assessors provide engineering apprentices with good coaching and guidance during reviews which help them make swift progress.
- Assessments are well planned and carried out regularly. Trainers and assessors visit apprentices in the workplace to carry out observations and make good use of a range of assignments to assess apprentices' knowledge and understanding. They give apprentices good feedback on their achievement and progress. However, engineering assessors do not routinely encourage apprentices to reflect on the standard of their practical and written assessments to help identify what they did well or where they need to improve.
- Assessors give engineering apprentices helpful feedback to improve their English and the presentation of their work. They check apprentices' understanding and use of technical terminology well. The standard of written work in apprentices' portfolios is high.
- Trainers and assessors develop apprentices' mathematics successfully. They prioritise mathematics as a key component of engineering apprentices' training. This successfully ensures that apprentices use mathematics confidently at work. In hairdressing, trainers reinforce apprentices' good use of mathematics in, for example, calculations of treatment

costs, cutting angles and the preparation of hair colours.

- The induction provided by trainers and assessors is thorough and pays careful attention to equality and diversity, safeguarding, British values and health and safety. They use assignments and displays to help develop apprentices' understanding. However, trainers and assessors do not always reinforce apprentices' understanding of these topics effectively during their subsequent training and reviews. Too many apprentices' knowledge and understanding of, for example, equality and diversity are superficial. Engineering apprentices sometimes wait too long for a full induction to their programmes.
- Trainers and assessors provide insufficient guidance to develop hairdressing apprentices' written English. Their written work includes spelling or grammatical errors that are not identified; apprentices are given insufficient guidance on how to improve. A few learning resources contain typographical, spelling or grammatical errors.
- Trainers and assessors provide insufficient feedback to help apprentices improve their work. Their notes and feedback on training and review records do not always give sufficient information on how well apprentices have completed their work. The targets that trainers and assessors set for apprentices focus on assessment and completion of units rather than how apprentices will develop their skills and knowledge for, and beyond, assessment. They do not always set targets for the development of apprentices' employability skills when this would be appropriate. For example, one learner, deemed 'average' for reliability and timekeeping, was not set targets to help him become good at these. On engineering apprenticeships, assessors do not make sufficient use of questions that probe apprentices' knowledge and understanding to develop them further. They do not always allow sufficient time for apprentices to consider and answer the question asked.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Apprentices enjoy their learning during extensive off-the-job training and during reviews and assessment in their workplace. They display good learning behaviours, have mutual respect and respect for their training staff.
- Apprentices and adult learners work hard, take pride in their work and learning and rapidly improve their employment-related skills. This includes good development of their information and communications technology (ICT) and mathematical skills. The majority of apprentices do not, however, receive sufficient support from their trainers to improve their English skills, and this requires improvement. Apprentices and adult learners improve their self-confidence, social and teamworking skills.
- Recruitment and teaching staff provide good initial information, advice and guidance. This ensures that apprentices and adult learners make well-informed choices about their programmes. Good ongoing career and industry advice, guidance and support from trainers enable learners to realise their ambitions and broaden their career opportunities.
- Learners feel safe and practise safe techniques during learning sessions. LTF and SIGTA staff also ensure that the employers they work with have a strong focus on the health and safety arrangements in their workplaces.
- Attendance at off-the-job training has improved and is now good. Adult learners also attend well during their short employability courses, arriving on time and ready to learn.

- Learners know how to keep themselves safe online and have a sufficient awareness of how to protect themselves from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. Although learners gain a basic awareness of British values and the dangers of extremism and radicalisation during induction, trainers do not broaden and deepen learners' awareness and understanding sufficiently well.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Overall achievement rates for apprentices and adult learners are higher than those achieved nationally, and the provider's own data shows that this has been sustained. However, apprentices who left the programme because a former subcontractor transferred them to a different lead provider during the change to ownership have negatively affected achievement rates for engineering apprentices. This was beyond the provider's control and will affect achievement rates in 2015/16 and 2016/17. Achievement of apprenticeship frameworks within planned timescales is good overall, but weaker in a small minority of subject areas.
- Current learners are making good progress from their carefully identified starting points. Apprentices develop good practical skills. Employers value highly these practical skills and the theoretical knowledge that apprentices rapidly gain. As a result, many apprentices improve their performance at work; their employers recognise this and many give their apprentices additional responsibilities. Managers' tracking of learners' progress is not fully accurate in evaluating all learners' achievement.
- Engineering apprentices produce particularly good written work. This is achieved because their trainers provide good developmental feedback.
- Adult learners gain good employment-related skills and benefit from an additional course in forklift-truck operation, which has helped many secure employment.
- A good proportion of apprentices and adult learners achieve functional skills qualifications in English, mathematics and ICT. This includes a good and improving proportion who pass their examinations at their first attempt.
- Hairdressing apprentices benefit from extensive off-the-job training, during which trainers challenge them to improve the skills that they find most difficult. For example, a trainer provided excellent coaching and support to an apprentice who lacked confidence in her graduated hair-cutting skills. As a result, the apprentice rapidly improved her skills and confidence. Employers value this approach and apprentices develop good technical skills.
- There are no significant achievement gaps between different groups of learners.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53697
Type of provider	Independent Learning Provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	663
Principal/CEO	Marion Ward
Telephone number	01273 778 631
Website	www.rewardstraining.co.uk/lookfantastic

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)		1		6		3		
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	36	46	42	79	1	3		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16								
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding								
Funding received from:	Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	SIGTA Limited							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by a director, as nominee. 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 report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

Mark Shackleton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Penelope Horner	Ofsted Inspector
Daisy Walsh	Ofsted Inspector
Lynda Pickering	Ofsted Inspector

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