

# Mobile Care Qualifications Limited

Independent learning provider

## Inspection dates

11–13 September 2018

Overall effectiveness		Inadequate	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>	Adult learning programmes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Traineeships	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Outcomes for learners	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Good	

## Summary of key findings

### This is an inadequate provider

- Senior leaders and managers do not use data and information well enough to monitor the progress that learners make or to evaluate the quality of the provision accurately.
- Governance and oversight of the provision are weak. Those responsible for governance do not provide sufficient challenge or support to senior leaders or managers.
- Senior leaders and managers have not taken sufficient action to stem the decline in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the previous inspection.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are not consistently good, and do not challenge learners sufficiently.
- Adult learners and trainees do not develop their English and mathematics skills well enough, and the proportion who achieve their English and mathematics qualifications is too low.
- Too many adult learners make slow progress towards the achievement of their qualifications.
- Information, advice and guidance provided to trainees towards the end of their programmes do not enable a high enough proportion to gain employment or further training.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Learners demonstrate a mutual respect for their peers and staff. Attendance is good.
- Trainees benefit from effective one-to-one support that helps them to enter their work placements with confidence and make valuable contributions that are appreciated by employers.
- Almost all learners have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe, and they understand how the risks of radicalisation, and from extremist groups, relate to their everyday lives.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Mobile Care Qualifications Limited (MCQ) is a small independent training provider formed in 1994. Following a very recent reorganisation, it currently employs around 20 staff, and delivers traineeships and adult learning programmes from its training centre and head office in Newcastle upon Tyne, and from a smaller training centre in Middlesbrough. Learners undertake training in health and social care and child development, with a few trainees intending to gain employment in the retail sector.
- At the time of the inspection, 22 learners were participating in a traineeship programme, and 84 adult learners were working towards either level 2, 3 or 5 diplomas in health and social care or child development.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - using information from the observations of teaching, learning and assessment to identify key areas for improvement
  - ensuring that tutors and assessors use information about learners' starting points to plan and provide learning that meets individual needs
  - making sure that feedback and subsequent targets set for learners are meaningful and that they concentrate on skills and knowledge development as well as the completion of tasks and assignments
  - ensuring that tutors and assessors monitor more closely the progress that learners make in class and throughout the duration of their programmes.
- Improve the rate at which learners improve their English and mathematics skills, and increase the proportion who achieve relevant English and mathematics qualifications.
- Monitor the progress that learners make more effectively.
- Ensure that trainees have access to comprehensive and useful impartial careers advice and guidance, particularly towards the end of their programmes, to ensure that they make informed decisions about their future careers and life choices.
- Rapidly improve governance and oversight of the provision in providing challenge and support for senior leaders and in monitoring staff performance.
- Accurately evaluate the quality of the provision and implement rapid actions to make improvements where needed. Consider clearly the strengths and weaknesses when evaluating the provision, and use data and supporting information to support the judgements made.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Inadequate**

- Senior leaders and managers, while focusing on a major restructure of the company, have been too slow to recognise, and have failed to arrest, the declining quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the previous inspection. They have taken little action to improve the quality of provision and the progress that learners make. The few actions that they have taken have had too little impact. A very recently introduced business recovery strategy is now in place. However, it is too early to judge any positive impact that this may have on the progress and achievement of learners and the quality of provision.
- Leaders and managers have been too slow in improving the quality of English and mathematics delivery and outcomes for learners in these subjects. The implementation of a functional skills strategy has had no impact on increasing the proportion of learners who improve their English and mathematics skills or gain qualifications in these subjects.
- Performance management is weak. Managers do not take sufficient action to improve the performance of tutors and assessors. A recent and significant reduction in staff and high staff turnover have had a negative impact on the pace of improvement. For example, too many adult learners have not had sufficient contact with their assessors for long periods of time.
- The current self-assessment report does not make it clear where the main strengths and weaknesses lie within the provision. Leaders and managers do not use or have sufficient access to data when assessing the effectiveness of the provision. Quality improvement actions lack measurable targets and do not provide an accurate focus from which to judge progress or improvements.
- Managers carry out regular lesson observations to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. However, comments recorded by observers are too descriptive and lack evaluation of the impact of teaching and assessment on learners and learning. Leaders and managers do not routinely ensure that improvement actions for tutors and assessors inform professional development activities.

### The governance of the provider

- The arrangements for governance are weak. Apart from undocumented management meetings and informal communication via telephone or email, there are no dedicated activities that could be defined as governance or the performance management of senior staff. Those responsible for governance have been too slow to recognise and challenge the declining performance in teaching, learning and assessment.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, managers and staff have a good focus on ensuring that learners are safe, that they know how to keep themselves safe, and that they understand to whom they should report any concerns. Leaders ensure that all staff are suitably vetted prior to employment and keep detailed and comprehensive records of training and any updating that staff undertake.
- Tutors and assessors promote safeguarding effectively. They raise learners' awareness of the risks from extremist groups and radicalisation well. Consequently, most learners demonstrate a good level of awareness.
- Safeguarding referrals are dealt with effectively and are seen through to a successful resolution for the learner.
- The designated safeguarding officer has forged effective links with external professionals and bodies, such as the regional 'Prevent' coordinator. This ensures that staff are kept up to date with new information, specifically in the health and social care and child development sectors.
- Leaders have an appropriate 'Prevent' risk assessment and strategy in place, which relates specifically to regional contexts and issues.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Senior leaders and managers recognise the decline in the standard of teaching, learning and assessment since the previous inspection. However, due to their relentless focus on restructuring the business, they have been unable to implement the necessary improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. Staff changes have resulted in too many adult learners not having been coached or assessed for long periods of time. Consequently, too many adult learners do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Tutors and assessors do not use information about learners' starting points and prior knowledge routinely to plan and provide learning activities that develop the skills and knowledge that learners need to be successful, particularly in the development of English and mathematics skills. The very small number of learners with an additional learning need do not benefit from sufficiently effective support to aid their progress and learning.
- Tutors' use of learning resources does not consistently engage and enthuse learners or provide opportunities for learners to work independently. Handouts are often of poor quality and presentations are too complex. Assessors hold effective professional discussions with adult learners to enable them, for example, to understand how to ensure that children are safe when attending after-school clubs and nurseries.
- Tutors and assessors do not routinely provide learners with constructive feedback. As a result, in many instances learners do not know how to improve the standard of their work. The targets that tutors and assessors set with, and for, learners focus heavily on the completion of assignments, tasks or qualification units rather than the development of specific learning or job-related skills. In the instances where feedback is more

developmental, learners gain the confidence to make more rapid progress as they see how the standard of their work has improved.

- The teaching of English and mathematics on traineeship programmes is weak. Tutors do not have the expertise to enable learners to make sufficient progress in improving their English and mathematics skills. Learners make repeated mistakes in their written work, which too often goes uncorrected. Consequently, they do not develop their skills in these subjects to a higher level. A minority of adult learners improve their written English skills as a result of completing assignments.
- Tutors and assessors have a good level of vocational qualifications and have very good occupational subject knowledge. They are committed to ensuring that learners gain a good understanding of working in health and social care and childcare settings. For example, learners successfully develop their skills in how to interact with children with autism, and how to use lifting and handling aids with elderly clients correctly and with dignity. Adult learners value their work placements and job roles, become valued and effective members of staff, and a minority benefit from gaining additional qualifications that enhance their knowledge and understanding.
- Tutors and assessors help trainees and adult learners to prepare for their work placements well. They provide effective personal support, guidance and encouragement through one-to-one discussion, which helps trainees to enter their work placements with confidence, and to make valuable contributions in the caring for the elderly or working with young children. Employers are appreciative of the communication and flexibility of trainees and adult learners and the benefit that they bring to their organisations.
- Tutors and assessors are very effective in promoting equality, and they raise learners' awareness of working with people, clients and children from diverse backgrounds. Consequently, learners gain a good understanding of how to tackle discrimination, harassment and bullying in their work placements and job roles.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

- Impartial careers advice and guidance is not effective enough in enabling a high proportion of trainees to progress into employment, further training or to be reassured about their next steps in their intended careers or life. As a result, too few trainees gain suitable employment or access further training on completion of their programmes. Trainees benefit from appropriate and effective careers advice and guidance provided by an external organisation at the start of their programme.
- Tutors and assessors have a strong focus on the promotion of positive behaviours during effective one-to-one discussions with learners. Learners establish mutual respect for staff and each other. They attend their classes and work placements regularly and behave well. However, a minority of learners do not arrive on time for their lessons, and lessons often finish early.
- Almost all trainees benefit from meaningful work experience placements. They are well prepared and aware of the protocols and skills required to make effective contributions in the workplace.
- Tutors and assessors are approachable and, subsequently, learners enjoy their learning and feel safe. Staff have a good understanding of the barriers to learning that a number

of trainees have, through an in-depth assessment process at the start of their programmes. However, staff do not routinely ensure that resources and any specialist support are focused on helping learners who have additional learning needs.

## Outcomes for learners

## Requires improvement

- Too many learners make slow progress, and a significant proportion of adult learners do not make the progress of which they are capable. Targets do not routinely challenge learners to make more rapid progress or develop specific job-related skills and knowledge.
- The progress that learners make in improving their English and mathematics skills is not good enough. For example, tutors and assessors do not routinely help learners to use the correct spellings or specialist terminology in their work. Consequently, the proportion of learners who opt to attend and who achieve their intended qualification outcomes in English and mathematics is extremely low.
- The proportion of trainees who gain employment or access further training on completion of their programmes is not high enough. Over a third of trainees remain unemployed or unaccounted for when they leave MCQ. Information provided by leaders at the time of the inspection indicates that a high proportion of adult learners remain in employment on completion of their programme.
- There are no significant achievement gaps between different groups of learners.
- There is an improving trend in the proportion of adult learners who achieve their level 3 diploma in health and social care and child development. Learners gain relevant job-related skills as a consequence of their training, and they become confident, well appreciated and valued by employers.

## Types of provision

### Adult learning programmes

### Requires improvement

- At the time of the inspection, MCQ had 84 students on adult learning programmes, primarily on courses in health and social care and childcare. A few adult learners had gained a work placement and had taken out an adult loan, and the remainder were employed.
- Too many learners do not make the progress of which they are capable, considering the stage that they are at in their programmes. Too often, visits from assessors are delayed and sporadic. Learners do not routinely receive timely feedback on work that they have submitted to enable them to make rapid improvements to their progress.
- The information gathered at the start of a learner's programme is not used well enough to plan and deliver learning or to set targets for the development of new skills and knowledge. Targets set by assessors focus too much on assignment or qualification unit achievement.
- Through good relationships with employers, and when assessors have sufficient contact with learners, learners benefit from effective help to expand their skills and knowledge appropriately in their job roles. Assessors in these instances use their experience well to

prepare learners for their intended job roles.

- Leaders and managers have, through their effective relationships with employers in the health and social care and childcare sectors, ensured that the curriculum meets the needs of employers and adult learners across the region.
- A high proportion of adult learners remain in employment on completion of their programmes.

## Traineeships

## Requires improvement

- At the time of the inspection, there were 22 learners undertaking a traineeship with MCQ. For the vast majority of trainees, their intended progression is into employment in health and social care or childcare sectors settings.
- The range of teaching methods that tutors use fail to interest and motivate trainees or encourage and enable them to gain valuable independent learning skills. Tutors rely too much on handouts, presentations and worksheets.
- Trainees do not improve their English or mathematics skills sufficiently as an integral part of their programme. The teaching of English and mathematics is weak. Too few trainees improve their skills or gain a qualification in these subjects as a consequence of their traineeship.
- Tutors do not provide meaningful and developmental feedback on the work that trainees submit. Too often, tutors do not mark trainees work or give any feedback on trainees' performance or on how they can improve the standard of their work.
- Staff work well with employers to provide effective and relevant work placements for trainees. Employers contribute well to helping trainees appreciate and gain the skills needed in their future job roles. Almost all trainees have access to relevant work placements, which are accessed, when appropriate, in their individual programmes.
- Just under two thirds of trainees have a positive destination on completion of their programme. However, a third do not either complete their programme or progress into employment or further training.
- Leaders and managers have planned an effective traineeship provision that incorporates the principles and requirements of a successful programme to the benefit of trainees and employers.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	53407
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	72
Principal/CEO	Mr Andrew Lister
Telephone number	0191 265 3003
Website	<a href="http://www.mcq.co.uk">www.mcq.co.uk</a>

## 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)	-	-	-	64	-	15	-	5
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	20		2		22			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	N/A							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	N/A							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							



## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the company secretary, 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, and 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

Steve Hunsley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lynne Paxton	Ofsted Inspector
Pat Hornsby	Ofsted Inspector

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