

# Kingston upon Hull City Council

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

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**Unique reference number:** 52403

**Name of lead inspector:** Rachel Angus HMI

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**Type of provider:** Local authority

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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Hull Training and Adult Education is part of Kingston upon Hull City Council. It provides community and family learning, vocational and skills training for adult learners, 16 to 19 study programmes and apprenticeships.

Hull Training and Adult Education was inspected in October 2018. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement. The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in addressing the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

### Themes

#### **How effectively do staff monitor the progress of adult learners who are not studying for a qualification?** **Reasonable progress**

Managers have made good progress in improving the way tutors identify learners' starting points, and monitor the progress that learners make on courses that do not lead to qualifications. Most tutors now identify well the vocationally specific skills and knowledge that learners already have at the start of their course. Tutors now set challenging targets based on the more rigorous early assessment. Learners do not successfully complete their course unless they meet these targets.

Managers have introduced a thorough and accurate process for checking the quality of tutors' recording of progress. As a result of this closer scrutiny, managers have identified that the quality of progress monitoring is not yet consistently of the required standard. Managers have allocated most tutors a mentor and provided intensive training to help them implement the revised and enhanced processes.

For courses where managers have not yet implemented the improved arrangements, the identification of starting points to set challenging targets and the monitoring of the progress that learners make remain weak. For example, staff have not yet applied these arrangements to courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and therefore the monitoring of progress on these courses has not yet improved.

#### **How successful have leaders' and managers' actions to tackle the underperformance of tutors been?** **Reasonable progress**

Following the previous inspection, managers organised some useful training for staff to improve their skills in the checking of learning, meeting learners' needs and developing learners' skills. Managers have also provided tutors with specific support to improve the teaching of English and mathematics. Staff rightly identify that the

training received is helpful, but many require further support to identify how they can relate it to their own subject or learners.

Managers have raised their expectations of the standards they expect of their tutors. They have made these expectations clear to tutors by communicating them at regular team meetings. Managers monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through regular observations of their staff. They use a wide range of evidence, such as target setting and progress recording, as well as what happens in the lessons, to inform their judgements. They use their evaluations to set action plans for tutors. However, in a minority of cases managers' evaluations and subsequent action plans are focused on staff compliance with systems. They do not focus sufficiently on the learning taking place in lessons or demonstrated in the progress tracking.

Senior leaders are tackling poor tutor and manager performance effectively using appropriate policies and procedures. Staff receive extensive support to make the required improvements to their work; for some staff this includes moving to alternative job roles that better meets their skills and abilities. If staff do not meet the expected standards, they leave the organisation.

**Have teachers improved their use of information about learners' individual needs when delivering learning activities, so that they now provide learners with helpful feedback that enables them to improve? Reasonable progress**

Most feedback from tutors to learners on study programmes following the assessment of written and practical work is constructive, supportive and helpful. A particular strength is careful follow-up by the tutor of how well the learner has responded to the feedback on their work. This helps learners to improve their work and make progress. In a few instances, tutors' feedback is more cursory and fails to identify or correct inaccuracies. On community learning courses, feedback provided by tutors is not consistently helpful. In ESOL, learners complete significant amounts of written work for which no feedback is provided by tutors.

In most instances on study programmes, tutors assess learners' starting points accurately. This information is used well to set meaningful and challenging targets for learners that help them to make progress on their courses. In a few instances, tutors are less effective in identifying learners' existing knowledge and skills and this results in learners following programmes that are insufficiently challenging.

Managers have very recently implemented improvements to the guidance for learners enrolling onto courses that do not lead to qualifications. Where the more rigorous guidance and assessment of starting points have been applied, staff are more accurately enrolling learners onto courses appropriate to their knowledge, skills and aspirations.

**Do staff take effective action when learners do not attend lessons and has attendance improved as a result?**

**Reasonable progress**

Managers have set challenging targets for rates of attendance for adult learners and learners on study programmes. They have improved their monitoring and reporting of attendance at all levels within the organisation. The clear strategic priority that leaders place on attendance ensures that staff focus their efforts well on continuing to identify and address the reasons for poor attendance.

Staff recognise that their study programme learners face many barriers to learning. They have enhanced their systems for supporting them since the previous inspection. Learners now attend a breakfast club on each day they attend their training. Learners who do not arrive to these informal sessions can be followed up quickly by staff. For example, learners who are staying temporarily at friends' houses and therefore potentially homeless can be identified promptly. Staff can direct these learners for help before these issues impact significantly on attendance.

Managers have appointed a pastoral care officer who is well qualified to support vulnerable learners. Staff liaise with external agencies if learners require additional support. All staff know their learners very well and ensure that they get the help they need to overcome barriers to attendance such as support with dental health and optical care.

Staff reinforce attendance and punctuality as a key employment skill. Managers have recently appointed coaches from non-teaching roles within the service to provide extra opportunities for learners to build their confidence and gain advice about how to be successful in the future. These coaches also encourage regular attendance. Attendance has improved as a result of these interventions, but managers recognise they need to improve it further.

Tutors for adult learners follow up non-attendance after each session. Attendance is high for most vocational courses and in community learning. Managers recognise that they still need to ensure that learners attend English and mathematics classes regularly.

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