

# Focus Fitness UK Limited

Independent learning provider

**Inspection dates**

6–8 August 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>		<b>Good</b>	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>	Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>		
Outcomes for learners	<b>Outstanding</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected	

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good provider

- Senior leaders have a strong purpose and high expectations for their health and fitness training provision. They meet most learners' aspirations.
- Leaders at all levels have productive partnerships with the health and fitness industry. These ensure a high chance of employment for learners.
- Senior leaders develop the skills of staff well to enhance the service provided to learners.
- Staff hold pertinent career days with industry experts and give excellent support and guidance so that learners have a thorough understanding of their options in the health and fitness industry.
- Tutors use their extensive industry experience in their practical teaching. They coach learners well to know how to use industry-standard equipment safely and skilfully.
- Tutors motivate learners and nearly all attend their classes without fail. They engender high professional standards among learners. Learners gain the skills needed to tailor fitness programmes that meet their clients' differing needs.
- Almost all learners achieve their qualifications and most gain employment.
- Senior leaders and board members do not yet have a strong enough oversight of the quality of teaching, and its impact on learning.
- In a few cases, tutors do not give detailed enough feedback on learners' work to reinforce what they need to do to improve.
- A few learners need more time to secure their learning on specific topics; tutors do not plan their learning with them sufficiently at the start of their course.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Focus Fitness UK Limited (Focus Fitness) is based in London. It has four training sites in the north, north west and south west of the city. It was initially set up to help sports professionals to gain qualifications and skills to work in the health and fitness industry.
- Since 2016, the company has had a direct contract to train adults who fund their learning with advanced learner loans. At the time of inspection, there were 12 learners on a level 3 diploma course in sports massage therapy, and a further 43 on a level 3 diploma course in fitness instructing and personal training. The company also provides traineeships as a subcontractor to another independent learning provider and runs its own privately funded courses. These aspects of their work were out of scope for this inspection.

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

- Improve the oversight that managers and board members have of the quality of teaching and learning.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
  - planning better for those learners who need more time to gain knowledge and skills in theory lessons, and making good use of information about learners' starting points
  - giving specific feedback for all learners that helps them to know what they need to improve, and how to do it.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have a strong rationale for why they train adults to work in the health and fitness industry. Their knowledge and skills about the professional world of health and fitness shine through. Leaders have put together a curriculum that gives their learners a high chance of qualifying and enables most of them to gain employment in the industry. A high proportion of learners recommend the courses at Focus Fitness to others.
- Leaders at all levels show a passion and ability for what they are aiming to do as an education and training provider in the health and fitness industry. This desire and enthusiasm to do the best for their learners runs through the entire staff team. They are honest and self-critical about where they are as an organisation. They are not afraid to seek advice and help, to ensure that they are doing the right things. They listen to their learners' feedback and make improvements where necessary.
- The sound commitment and drive from leaders gives their learners a decent chance of reaching their personal goals. They make sure tutors give learners the tools necessary to achieve their aspirations of working in the health and fitness industry. They provide an after-course support service that learners can use for up to a year. The courses take place in high-quality health and fitness gyms and learning environments.
- Leaders engender a strong learning culture throughout the staff team. They manage staff well to improve their skills. The professional development staff receive ensures they have a greater ability to give a better service to their learners. Staff within the organisation gain the confidence to take on more responsibility.
- The company has productive partnerships, which give their learners the potential to become self-employed or work as an employee in the health and fitness industry. Leaders at all levels use these partnerships well to support learners in applying for work. They support learners to find rent-free premises to start up a business. The partnerships enable staff to offer learners independent advice and guidance. Senior leaders are also helping to build community relationships through sporting partnerships.
- Leaders have a clear oversight of how well their learners achieve. They have a sound knowledge of the different groups of learners who attend their courses. Their knowledge and use of management information are growing. They use the information well to analyse the performance and engagement of learners from different ethnic backgrounds, and of male and female learners. They have found gaps in participation on their courses among different groups in the locality. As a result, they are carrying out work to increase enrolments on their courses from under-represented groups.
- Leaders at all levels pay close attention to improving the quality of their training provision. They are swift to act where they find aspects of training that are not at the standards they expect. All staff work hard as a team to improve the provision for learners. However, they do not have a complete set of information to show the impact of their efforts on the full range of their training provision. For example, they do not evaluate the impact of online learning and pre-course workbooks on learners' knowledge and skills.

- Leaders do not focus sufficiently on the impact of teaching on learning. In their self-assessment report, they do not make clear enough judgements about the quality of different aspects of teaching and learning, and what improvements are necessary. They recognise this issue and are developing a quality assurance system that focuses more on the depth of learning. Leaders are adept at checking whether tutors are effective at helping learners meet the competences of the course. This ensures consistency in how learners make progress towards achieving their qualification.

### **The governance of the provider**

- Governance arrangements are in place but embryonic. A recently set-up supervisory board is helping leaders to improve the oversight of quality. Board members are professionals with experience of working in education and the health and fitness industry and are proud to support Focus Fitness. They know what information they will need to assess the quality of education and training provision, and senior leaders are working to put these indicators in place. Leaders will report the performance of the training provision at future board meetings.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff carry out their policies and procedures well. Learners feel safe, and staff are vigilant in caring for their learners. Staff understand the safeguarding issues that have occurred across the health and fitness industry. They impress upon their learners their responsibilities relating to safety when working with their clients.
- Senior leaders are involved in local community sport initiatives in partnership with the police to help reduce knife crime. It is helping to raise awareness on this issue in local communities.
- Managers make appropriate checks and hold records on tutors' suitability to work with learners. Staff receive regular and effective training on aspects of safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty. Safeguarding trainers make sure that they use case studies and quizzes to embed staff's understanding. Consequently, staff recognise when their adult learners display signs of vulnerability. Safeguarding managers are confident in how they assess, record risks and make decisions to refer incidents to senior leaders or external bodies, or to close the case after appropriate action has been taken. As a result, they have supported learners well.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The tutors at Focus Fitness are experienced and knowledgeable about the health and fitness industry. They take full advantage of the high-quality equipment on hand to enhance learning. Learners gain a range of safe and useful techniques for using fitness equipment as a result.
- Tutors are skilful at getting learners to work together in trainer and client roles. For example, after giving instruction about the safe use of exercise bicycles, tutors supervised

learners while they each devised a personal training session for one of their peers. Learners very much enjoyed thinking about how they might best use the equipment for the benefit of the client. They engaged fully in discussion with the tutor in assessing what they had done well and how they might do things better the next time. The task helped them understand good industry practice.

- Tutors devise, manage and teach practical lessons well. They know the right time to introduce general health and fitness concepts during practical tasks. Learners understand what tutors are saying, and most grasp this technical knowledge quickly. For example, learners are able to show what they have understood by giving detailed and correct instructions for client warm-up and cool-down before and after exercise. They used the theory they had previously learned properly.
- On sports massage courses, tutors are adept at helping learners to be confident as independent practitioners. For example, learners are aware of the bone formation known as ossification. They understand contraindications that are harmful to clients' health. It enables them to give the right advice on health and fitness to their clients.
- Learners work well collaboratively with each other during the course. Tutors support this by fostering good working relationships between learners from a variety of backgrounds. As a result, learners trust each other when they carry out practical tasks together.
- Tutors prepare learners effectively for assessments and examinations. They give them unambiguous guidance on the skills and knowledge they need. Learners use the helpful learning materials tutors provide. Tutors guide learners well to reinforce their learning online.
- Learners get all the support they need from tutors to gain their qualifications. They support learners who do not grasp concepts at the first attempt and need extra help when they fall behind with their studies.
- Tutors give effective feedback on learners' practical tasks, enabling them to correct any errors early and hone their practice. They encourage learners during tasks to give their peers constructive feedback. This activity helps learners gain an insight into the effectiveness of their instruction and training.
- In a few cases, feedback from tutors does not inform learners in enough detail how to improve their knowledge or understanding further.
- Tutors do not make sufficient use of the information on learners' starting points to plan individuals' learning in theory lessons. As a result, a few learners need extra time beyond their planned end dates to complete their courses.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

## **Outstanding**

- Tutors set the highest professional standards for their learners. Learners' behaviour is exemplary in and following lessons. They are polite and show respect for each other and their tutors. They listen attentively in lessons during discussions. They wear attire expected for the health and fitness industry. They come ready to study. Learners have positive attitudes for their future and are excited about their next steps. They attend their courses exceptionally well across all the health and fitness training centres.

- Staff give excellent advice and guidance to learners on a range of topics, ensuring that learners gain a comprehensive understanding of the health and fitness industry. For example, they hold events where employers give stimulating talks on working in the industry. Learners gain a keen insight on what employers are looking for.
- Learners significantly improve their ability to communicate with clients. Tutors help them gain confidence in employing these skills to meet clients' differing health and fitness needs. Tutors further develop learners' English and mathematical skills. They explain anatomical and sports science language clearly in lessons. Learners see the improvements in these skills for employment when they review their progress against the goals they set at the start of the course.
- Learners gain skills that enhance their chances of employment through their learning on supplementary programmes such as first aid courses. These courses enable them to work safely in the gym environment and respond to emergencies.
- Learners feel safe and learn in safe training environments. They receive helpful information on good working practices, staying safe online, and who to go to if they have concerns. They are confident that the staff will support them.
- Learners take part in supporting local charitable causes. They develop strong relationships with partner organisations that help them build a client base for when they enter the world of work.
- Most learners are aware of the risks of radicalisation and extremism. They are aware of British values, as tutors embed these concepts into tasks in their lessons. However, a small minority of learners do not recall aspects of British values well, despite helpful prompts, posters and literature displayed in training venues.

## Outcomes for learners

## Outstanding

- Almost all learners achieve their qualifications, and this has been so over the past few years. Learners have confidence that they will achieve the qualifications and skills they need when they sign up for a course at Focus Fitness. Learners from different ethnic backgrounds, and male and female learners, achieve equally well.
- A very high proportion of learners go into employment in the health and fitness industry or into further training. Staff across the organisation make sure during and after the course that they successfully guide learners to employment in sectors of the fitness industry in which they want to work.
- All learners complete their course having built comprehensively on their existing skills, so they are more employable. Learners make significant strides in understanding the importance of high professional standards. They leave with adept practical skills and use the right technical terms. For example, they can recall exercise types, parts of the skeleton and the kind of training needed to achieve certain levels of fitness.
- Learners make rapid progress in what they need to do to excel as fitness or sports massage practitioners. They quickly fill the deficits that are clear in their technical knowledge. They learn to tailor their fitness techniques to provide the best service for clients with different needs.

- Learners produce work that is of an excellent standard, especially their practical work. They produce written work that shows they understand relevant concepts.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	1247982
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	281
CEO	Gavin Heeroo
Telephone number	020 8920 2114
Website	<a href="http://www.focusfitnessuk.com/">www.focusfitnessuk.com/</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)						55		
	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
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								
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:								



## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the operations 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

Steve Stanley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rosy Belton	Ofsted Inspector
Stefan Fusenich	Ofsted Inspector

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