

Inspection of HOB Salons

Inspection dates:

2–5 December 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Education programmes for young people

Requires improvement

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Information about this provider

HOB Salons was founded in 1983. The business is co-managed by three directors. HOB Salons is made up of 25 salons, mainly in London and the home counties, with ten of the salons operated as franchises.

The HOB academy is attached to the Camden salon. There are currently 72 apprentices on level 2 standards apprenticeships in hairdressing, with one following the barbering pathway. Two apprentices study for apprenticeship frameworks at level 3. The provider also offers traineeships to four learners. The majority of apprentices are employed directly by the group, with six employed by an external salon.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Learners appreciate their time at HOB Salons as they become progressively work-ready. They embrace the opportunity to work for a highly reputable hairdressing brand and greatly benefit from the high-quality accommodation and resources used to support learning.

Learners are taught how to be resilient and they develop good knowledge about how to manage their mental health. Teachers place a high priority on learners' personal development, for example entering learners into hairdressing competitions to improve their practical and interpersonal skills.

Most learners demonstrate positive attitudes and industry-standard behaviours towards their work. As a result, they develop good relationships and the high-quality client care skills necessary to thrive within the hairdressing industry.

Most learners are satisfied with the training they receive at the academy, although a small minority are at times frustrated by the quality of teaching in functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have made gradual improvements to the training provided, but have not done enough to ensure that the quality of education is good across all components of the programmes they teach.

Leaders have effectively improved the quality of training in salons, through more regular and effective training, as well as improving communication between academy staff and salon managers.

Leaders have worked well with salon managers to ensure that apprentices are fully supported to cope with the challenge of a full-time apprenticeship programme; however, there has not yet been enough impact on stemming the number of apprentices leaving the apprenticeship programme early.

Leaders have not placed a high enough priority on ensuring that tutors and learners understand the importance of the English and mathematics curriculum. As a result, expectations of staff and apprentices are not high enough in English and mathematics. The quality of teaching requires further improvement to increase apprentices' knowledge and use of these subjects.

Tutors and assessors do not undertake progress reviews frequently enough to ensure that learners are paced appropriately through their apprenticeship programme. This contributes to the proportion of apprentices who achieve their qualifications in the planned time remaining too low.

Leaders very effectively ensure that tutors and assessors are experts in hairdressing

and are trained to an exceptionally high standard. Tutors continuously develop their subject expertise through professional updating. Tutors and assessors undertake good training in teaching and assessment strategies, through the regular sharing of best practice.

Leaders promote apprentices' ambitions by having high expectations of what they can achieve. Apprentices aim for high grades, and although recent graduates did not achieve the grades expected, improvements in the preparation of apprentices for end-point assessments are showing a positive impact.

Trainees benefit from an ambitious technical curriculum. They work alongside apprentices to support their seamless progression onto the apprenticeship programme once they complete their traineeship.

Tutors use their effective teaching skills to sequence the delivery of hairdressing theory and practice. This enables apprentices to build their knowledge and skills as they progress through the programme.

Tutors do not sequence the functional skills mathematics curriculum effectively. The curriculum does not build upon learners' existing knowledge gaps. As a result, learners do not make enough progress.

Tutors use a creative range of resources, such as duct tape to imitate how detergent works, to get apprentices' interest and develop their understanding of how shampoo works on the hair. As a result, learners can explain how the hydrophilic and hydrophobic properties of detergent cleanse the hair of dirt and grease.

Tutors skilfully teach apprentices to develop appropriate hairdressing skills, both in their on- and off-the-job training. Salon managers coordinate apprentices' training during model nights so that it helps them develop further the skills they are using at the academy. Newly recruited apprentices develop sound basic skills such as sectioning hair and handling tools and equipment. Those who have been in training for longer can apply colour neatly and efficiently to the hair and achieve finished looks to professional salon standards.

The impact of assessment varies too much. Tutors' feedback to apprentices on their written work and reflective logs does not pinpoint in sufficient detail the specific skill areas that apprentices need to develop. As a result, apprentices do not have sufficiently precise information from which to develop and improve their knowledge, skills and written work.

Apprentices and trainees receive good support and guidance about career and progression opportunities within the industry. Those apprentices considering alternative careers receive too little information about how they might make best use of their transferable skills, or where to find alternative careers information. The majority of leavers progress to work within the hairdressing industry at the end of their training.

Apprentices develop particularly good verbal communication and interpersonal skills, which they use well with customers. They are confident and engaging with customers in salons. Apprentices are adept at putting clients at ease and promoting the positive relationships that help ensure that clients return.

Leaders' monitoring of attendance and punctuality to academy training sessions is not having sufficient impact. Consequently, attendance and punctuality are not meeting the standards required within the hairdressing industry.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Designated safeguarding leads undergo advanced training in safeguarding and 'Prevent'. They then share this more widely with staff across the academy. As a result, the majority of staff have a comprehensive awareness of how to keep learners safe. Apprentices have a good understanding of how to stay safe online. They know how to avoid unsolicited contact from strangers on social media. Apprentices work safely. They wear personal protective equipment appropriately, for example when carrying out colouring services. Learners understand the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Tutors and assessors should ensure that feedback on work is precise and helpful, so that learners understand the specific steps they can take to improve the standard of their written and practical work.
- Leaders should ensure that learner reviews are undertaken more frequently to improve the pace of learner progress towards obtaining qualifications.
- Leaders should ensure that careers advice and guidance include information about a broader range of progression pathways outside of the hairdressing industry.
- Leaders need to set higher expectations of learners and tutors in English and mathematics.
- Leaders need to improve learner attendance and punctuality to training sessions, so that learners achieve the standards required in the hairdressing industry.

Provider details

Unique reference number	59233
Address	HOB Apprentice Academy Unit 3b 28 Jamestown Road Camden London NW1 7BY
Contact number	0207 485 7272
Website	www.hobsalons.com
Principal/CEO	Paul Simbler
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	31 October–3 November 2017
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the apprenticeship academy manager, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including observing learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Mike Finn, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Penny Fawcus	Her Majesty's Inspector
Peter Nelson	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philip Elliott	Ofsted Inspector

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2019