

Inspection of MI ComputSolutions Incorporated

Inspection dates: 2–5 November 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Information about this provider

MI ComputSolutions Incorporated, established in 2002, is a limited not-for-profit organisation providing education and training to disadvantaged community groups in south and east London and Essex. The vast majority of learners are adults who attend classes in the provider's centres in Brixton and Harlow. At the time of the inspection there were two learners aged under 19 on a traineeship programme. A small group of adult trainees had just completed their programme. There were 10 learners on level 3 hair and beauty courses, three on the level 3 early years educator programme and five on access to higher education nursing and midwifery courses, funded through adult learner loans.

The provider offers a range of other courses including English for speakers of other languages and mathematics qualifications through sub-contracting arrangements. These learners were not in scope for this inspection.

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

Learners and trainees say they really like learning at MIComputolutions. This is because staff care about them and treat them as individuals. Learners' and trainees' attendance is good and they learn in a highly positive and diverse environment.

Learners and trainees feel safe, happy and part of a learning community. Trainees particularly enjoy completing their studies in lessons with more mature learners. This helps them to feel more grown-up.

Learners develop good attitudes to learning. They improve their professional behaviours by training in realistic working environments. For example, learners on level 3 hair and beauty courses provide a professional end-to-end service to clients in the training salon. Trainees gain valuable practical skills during their work placements.

Learners and trainees receive clear careers information and guidance. They understand the opportunities available to them on completion of their courses. The majority of learners achieve their qualifications. Many trainees progress successfully into work or further study. Learners on the access to higher education course develop the academic skills to help them study at university. Many learners told inspectors that they previously never thought they would be able to go to university.

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

Leaders and managers use funding effectively to develop a curriculum that is designed to meet the needs of their communities. They offer a small number of programmes to help learners from disadvantaged backgrounds advance towards entering the job market, develop skills to help them progress in work and move on to university. Learners can access progression routes from the suite of courses, such as in English and mathematics, offered through the sub-contracted provision.

Leaders and teachers have structured the curriculum effectively to meet the individual needs of their learners and trainees. For example, the level 3 hair and beauty courses enable learners to fit in study around their family time. The programme helps learners develop the skills and knowledge to start their own business. Learners on level 3 early years programmes appreciate the opportunity to learn at the weekends so that they do not have to take time off work.

Teachers use their good subject knowledge and experience to teach topics and technical skills that build in difficulty over time. In hairdressing courses, learners gain skills quickly in techniques such as blow drying and styling. They then work at their own pace on individual tasks. For example, learners who are very confident move swiftly on to more complex colouring techniques, while others repeat tasks to gain in confidence. Teachers support trainees effectively to improve their knowledge and use of English. This helps them write better sentences, structure their paragraphs correctly and complete accurate job applications.

Teachers use a variety of effective assessment methods to check learners' and trainees' understanding. In early years, where learners are behind with their work due to the impact of COVID-19, teachers have increased the number of professional discussions to assess learners' knowledge. Teachers have put in place clear and focused plans to help learners catch up. Learners on hair and beauty courses receive constructive and helpful feedback on their work. Teachers use the assessment of learners' prior knowledge to identify gaps in knowledge and give extra help to those who need it.

Leaders, managers and staff help learners and trainees understand topics beyond the subject matter of their qualification. They also gain additional personal skills. Through effective progress reviews and reading promotional materials, learners and trainees learn about equality and diversity and gain an appropriate understanding of fundamental British values. As a result of learning online and the support received to do this, trainees have improved their information technology skills. However, learners and trainees receive limited information on themes such as healthy eating and keeping fit.

Leaders and managers have developed good partnerships with local employers. Employers supporting the traineeship programme appreciate the opportunity this gives them to recruit new staff. Employers say that trainees arrive for their interview and work experience well prepared, confident and with the right attitude. Many employers offer their trainees employment after a short work experience placement.

Leaders, managers and those responsible for governance support teachers and staff very well. Staff particularly appreciate how leaders have considered their work-life balance. Leaders ensure that those staff concerned about COVID-19 risks when using public transport during busy times can vary their start times at the provider. Teachers and staff have access to a range of professional development activities to help them keep up to date and improve their teaching skills.

Governors supporting leaders and managers have a wide range of educational experience. They understand further education and their roles as governors. They have recently introduced more focused reporting on the provider's performance to help them become more effective in their roles. Governors have a clear understanding about the culture and intent of the provision. They offer leaders appropriate challenge on areas for improvement. They recognise the need to use their educational expertise more in those areas that are not performing as well, such as in access to higher education courses.

The very small number of learners on the access to higher education courses do not receive sufficient support with their learning. Teachers do not set clear actions for those that should have completed the course on how to do so swiftly. Learners do not receive detailed feedback on their work to motivate them to complete work on time and improve the quality of their work. As a result, these learners make very slow progress. Leaders have not paid sufficient attention to this area during their quality assurance activities and, therefore, have not identified the need to improve it quickly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, managers and staff pay close attention to the well-being and safety of their learners and trainees. They have put in place a range of suitable monitoring activities to ensure learners and trainees feel safe and know who to report to if they have any concerns. Learners and trainees appreciate that staff frequently check on how they are feeling. They know how to identify specific risks such as the dangers associated with extremism and online safety risks.

Staff have completed appropriate safeguarding training. They have a good understanding of their role in relation to safeguarding learners and trainees. They are quick to identify and resolve potential safeguarding issues. For example, they are vigilant with regard to issues such as sexual harassment, and act accordingly.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that teachers and staff provide effective support to learners on access to higher education courses so that they produce high-quality work and do not fall behind on their studies.
- Ensure that managers provide information to help learners and trainees understand how to stay physically fit and healthy.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58370
Address	47a Bellefields Road London SW9 9UH
Contact number	020 7501 6450
Website	https://micomputsolutions.co.uk/
Principal/CEO	Bola Sobowale
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	30 January–2 February 2018
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality director, 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 visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

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