

Inspection of Philips Hair Salons Limited

Inspection dates: 5 to 7 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Information about this provider

Philips Hair Salons Limited is an independent learning provider. It has a training academy at one of its commercial salons in Wakefield and three other commercial salons in Sandal, Ossett and Morley. As well as training its own apprentices, Philips Hair Salons Limited also trains apprentices who are employed in other hair salons across West Yorkshire. At the time of the inspection, there were 66 apprentices, of whom 42 were enrolled on the level 2 hair professional apprenticeship standard and 24 on the level 3 advanced and creative hair professional standard. Over half of the apprentices were aged 16 to 18.

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

Apprentices enjoy their time in learning. Their confidence improves quickly as a result of the high level of support that they receive from staff who are highly committed to their jobs and to the apprentices they train.

A high proportion of apprentices gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need to become competent hair stylists. However, the curriculum that staff plan and use to teach apprentices focuses too much on achieving units of the qualification within the standard. This results in apprentices not being challenged to practise and gain the full range of knowledge and skills specified in the apprenticeship standards, which slows their progress in developing as stylists.

Apprentices have a good awareness of how to report any concerns that they have about their safety and well-being while training in the academy, at work in their salons and in their personal lives outside of work. They trust the staff and are confident that they will be well supported if they raise any concerns and that their concerns will be dealt with promptly. Apprentices feel safe. However, a few do not follow the provider's own code of conduct for salon wear in the academy, which is designed to ensure that they are protected from risks in the salon.

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

Leaders have not ensured that staff design and teach a sufficiently ambitious and challenging curriculum to meet both apprentices' and employers' needs. As a result, the curriculum does not sufficiently challenge apprentices to quickly gain knowledge and skills relating to the full extent of the apprenticeship standards at level 2 and level 3.

Leaders do not ensure that employers have a good enough understanding of the standards that their apprentices follow. Tutors do not engage with employers sufficiently when choosing optional specialist curriculum content for apprentices. For example, a few apprentices choose hair extensions as a specialist option when this is not a priority for their employer.

Tutors do not take sufficient account of apprentices' prior attainment, experience or starting points when planning their programmes. All apprentices progress through modules of learning at the same pace, regardless of whether they could make more rapid progress. For example, apprentices who have already spent time on hairdressing courses at college before starting as apprentices are placed on the same two-year programme as those with no prior experience.

When apprentices attend the academy for off-the-job training, staff do not reinforce well enough their expectations for apprentices' compliance with the code of conduct regarding salon wear. As a result, too many apprentices do not demonstrate high professional standards. On occasions, apprentices wear ripped jeans, flip-flops or

open toed shoes, which does not represent a professional image and presents safety risks such as cut hair entering their skin.

Tutors do not support apprentices well enough in order to develop their wider personal skills. They provide apprentices with personal development logbooks to record completion of personal development activities and tasks designed to help them to improve their awareness about life in modern Britain and support their wider personal development. However, apprentices often do not complete these, and tutors do not check frequently enough that apprentices are making sufficient progress in completing activities that would support their personal development.

Tutors ensure that apprentices receive clear advice about the structure of the apprenticeship before they start the programme. However, they do not ensure that apprentices receive ongoing advice or guidance about their future career options or how they can plan for these. As a result, apprentices have limited awareness about the broader career opportunities that they could work towards, such as in self-employment or working abroad.

Leaders took decisive and effective action to ensure the long-term viability of the provision following the disruption to learning and business in the salons caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This included closing their academy in Leeds and moving all provision to Wakefield. They reduced staffing levels and reallocated some responsibilities to other staff. However, in taking this action, leaders rightly recognise that there has been a lapse in their previously strong focus on assuring the quality of provision, which has declined as a result.

Leaders ensure that all tutors are vocational specialists, and that they have the occupational and teaching qualifications and experience to carry out their roles. Tutors use their experience and specialist skills well when they are demonstrating and illustrating styling techniques to apprentices. Although the curriculum they plan is narrow, tutors plan and sequence lessons and learning activities effectively so that apprentices develop, build on and apply their knowledge and skills over time.

Tutors plan and provide effective tuition for apprentices who need to achieve functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. As a result, a high proportion of apprentices make good progress and achieve these qualifications. Through their training, apprentices improve and apply their skills in these subjects. For example, they learn how to communicate effectively with customers, and they apply their numeracy skills when dealing with money and when working out ratios for mixing hair colourants.

Tutors use assessment well. They carefully check apprentices' understanding of cuts that they have carried out and provide them with feedback and guidance to help them to make improvements and to correct misunderstandings. For example, when apprentices confused a graduated bob with a short graduation, the tutor skilfully guided them, through careful questioning, to understand how they made the mistake and ensure that they would not repeat it. Tutors provide constructive and helpful feedback on apprentices' written assignments, including on their use of

grammar. As a result of this feedback, apprentices improve the quality of their written work.

Tutors create a positive atmosphere in the academy that apprentices respond to well. Apprentices value the support that they receive from tutors. They behave well and have positive attitudes to their work, to each other and to staff. Tutors have carefully managed the integration of apprentices who previously attended the academy in Leeds for their off-the-job training into the Wakefield academy, minimising disruption to both cohorts of apprentices.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have a clear ambition that despite the recent challenges the provider has experienced, it will continue to provide specialist apprenticeship training in hairdressing. They are focused on the priority of meeting their own workforce development needs and supporting other hairdressing businesses in West Yorkshire to meet theirs. Leaders have taken recent action to increase leadership capacity to implement the range of quality improvement activities that will be necessary to address areas for improvement and strengthen the provision.

Leaders have ensured that despite the challenges to the industry and their capacity to deliver training caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, a high proportion of apprentices have remained on their programmes. They have taken effective steps to enable apprentices to catch up on missed learning and, for those who are ready, to be successful at the end-point assessment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders responsible for overseeing safeguarding have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and are appropriately qualified. They have appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard apprentices, including in relation to the 'Prevent' duty. They ensure that staff understand their responsibilities to safeguard apprentices and raise any concerns that they have. The designated lead for safeguarding maintains up-to-date records of necessary checks on staff and the safeguarding training that they have received.

Apprentices know how to raise any safeguarding concerns that they may have and are confident that staff will deal with them. Leaders ensure that, through the curriculum, apprentices develop their awareness about what constitutes inappropriate sexualised behaviour and harassment.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that the hairdressing curriculum for apprentices both at level 2 and level 3 is broad and ambitious, covers the full range of knowledge, skills and behaviours

set out in the apprenticeship standards, and meets fully the needs of apprentices and their employers.

- Ensure that staff accurately identify apprentices' starting points against the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in the apprenticeship standards and use this to plan learning activities for apprentices that enable them to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Ensure that all apprentices comply with the provider's own code of conduct and always adopt high professional standards at work and when training in the academy.
- Ensure that the curriculum that apprentices follow supports them to effectively develop their wider personal skills.
- Ensure that all apprentices benefit from effective careers advice and guidance throughout their time on the programme.
- Put in place effective procedures to identify aspects of the provision that require improvement and take action to tackle them.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53879
Address	7 Providence Street Wakefield WF1 3BG
Contact number	01924 200940
Website	www.philipshairsalons.co.uk
Principal/CEO	Paul Dickinson
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	1 July 2016
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the lead IQA, 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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