

Hair Academy South West Limited

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

Unique reference number:	52095
Name of lead inspector:	Steve Battersby His Majesty's Inspector
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Address:	Hair Academy Southwest Limited 120 East Reach Taunton TA1 3HL

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Hair Academy South West Limited (HASWL) was inspected in June 2022. 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 resolving the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

HASWL is a training provider based in Somerset. Apprenticeship training takes place in one of three centres based in Taunton, Tilehurst and Bracknell. There are 53 apprentices studying hairdressing at level 2 and 11 at level 3.

Themes

What progress have leaders made in ensuring that all apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours?

Reasonable progress

Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have made many changes to improve the quality of the training provision. They spent significant time analysing the quality of education and the training that apprentices receive. The changes include the appointment of new staff, improved professional development of staff and an increase in engagement with employers.

Leaders and managers have enhanced the hairdressing curriculum. Tutors make sure that apprentices now take part in more challenging practical sessions at the training salon. For example, apprentices learn to perform a range of current hairdressing services, such as the free-hand balayage colouring technique. Apprentices learn relevant knowledge that underpins their hairdressing skills. For example, they understand the importance of using the correct lightening product to prevent seepage and damage to the client's hair and scalp. As a result, apprentices develop the new knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to be competent hairdressers.

Tutors and assessors do not consistently provide apprentices with sufficient constructive feedback on their practical work, for example how to ensure that their cutting, foiling and hair-styling skills are more precise, neat and polished. As a result, apprentices do not continually improve the standard of their practical work and meet the high expectations of employers.

What progress have leaders made in ensuring that the curriculum content and the quality of education meet the needs of all apprentices?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have redesigned the curriculum to include new content. For example, apprentices learn new avant-garde, bridal and barbering hairdressing skills. This has led to an increase in apprentices' motivation to learn. Apprentices increase their knowledge by taking part in practical workshops with guest speakers and visiting national hairdressing exhibitions. As a result, apprentices are learning curriculum content that enables them to pass their end-point assessments and prepares them for a career in hairdressing.

Leaders and managers have improved how tutors teach the curriculum. They provide tutors with training sessions that focus on improving the quality of planning, teaching and assessing apprentices' knowledge. For example, tutors learn how to plan and structure practical training sessions effectively. Consequently, apprentices now conduct hairdressing services on clients that complement the knowledge they learn in theory-based learning sessions. Apprentices continually develop their skills over time and develop a secure understanding of the knowledge that underpins their practical skills. However, apprentices do not always have enough clients during training sessions to expand their skills further and work to the expected commercial timings.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that employers are involved in discussions about the content of the curriculum or take part in its implementation. As a result, apprentices do not benefit from learning more knowledge and skills, such as the advantages and disadvantages of setting up a commercial salon or the importance of client care, from very experienced employers.

What progress have leaders made in ensuring that apprentices receive highly effective information, advice and guidance so that they understand fully the opportunities available to them on the completion of their course?

Insufficient progress

Leaders and managers have not ensured that apprentices receive the careers advice and guidance they need to make well-informed decisions about their next steps. For example, tutors do not teach apprentices about the wide range of career opportunities in the hairdressing industry. They do not provide apprentices studying at level 2 with sufficient information about higher level apprenticeships. Apprentices do not know how the skills they are learning in hairdressing might transfer to other sectors and career routes.

Leaders and managers have introduced new ways to help apprentices understand the options they have when they complete their apprenticeship. For example, they provide apprentices with career-path information posters and access to careers publications. However, leaders and managers have not ensured that this information

is discussed in detail by tutors with apprentices. As a result, apprentices' knowledge is limited.

What progress have leaders made in ensuring that tutors significantly improve their knowledge and skills in English and the quality of their teaching resources so that they can teach and enable apprentices to improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have introduced a new quality assurance process to check the quality of tutors' and assessors' work. For example, leaders and managers review the assignments and teaching resources produced by tutors and assessors. They provide tutors with feedback on content and spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. Most tutors and assessors use the feedback to rectify errors before publication of the resources and to improve the literacy skills of their apprentices.

Leaders and managers have introduced a range of strategies to help tutors and assessors improve their skills in written English so that they can provide apprentices with more effective help and support. For example, tutors and assessors use newly purchased electronic devices in classrooms and training salons to help with the correct use of grammar, and a glossary of terms, which helps with the accuracy of spelling.

Leaders and managers provide functional skills tutors with effective professional development. For example, tutors have recently completed functional skills qualifications at level 2 and have taken part in effective training on how to teach functional skills. As a result, tutors have improved their skills in English and mathematics. However, it is too early to see the impact of these developments on apprentices' skills in written English and mathematics.

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