

Inspection of NHTA Limited

Inspection dates:

18 to 21 July 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

Information about this provider

NHTA Limited (NHTA) is an independent learning provider predominately offering hairdressing apprenticeships and a small number of business and coaching apprenticeship courses. NHTA teaches hairdressing apprenticeships face to face in the workplace and business and coaching apprenticeships through online learning. It works with a range of employers, largely in Nottinghamshire, with others in Leeds, Hull and Sheffield.

At the time of the inspection, there were 65 apprentices. Of these, 32 were on the level 2 hairdressing, 11 on the level 3 advanced and creative hair professionals and six on the level 2 barbering apprenticeships. Of the remainder, six were on the level 4 assessor coach, six on the level 7 senior managers, three on the level 3 team leaders and one on the level 5 operations and departmental managers apprenticeships. The majority of apprentices are adults, and 19 are under 18 years of age.

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

Hairdressing apprentices have recently had their studies disrupted due to staff departures. They now have new tutors, who are well qualified and have strong industry experience. These tutors have rightly established where apprentices are in their studies and have suitable plans in place to enable them to catch up.

Hairdressing apprentices develop their practical skills well. They have many opportunities to practise various cuts, styles and colours while at work and during their training sessions. However, they lack understanding of, and the ability to recall, the underpinning theory.

The vast majority of hairdressing apprentices stay within their current roles. A small minority achieve promotions or progress on to higher-level courses to support future career goals.

Assessor coach apprentices do not benefit from having suitably qualified tutors or appropriate learning resources. As a result, they do not develop their knowledge sufficiently and struggle to recall what they have learned. Most are significantly behind in their studies, and none have completed their final assessment.

Tutors support apprentices to develop confidence in themselves and what they can achieve. Almost all apprentices have a positive attitude towards their learning. They are motivated in lessons and participate well.

Apprentices understand how to keep themselves safe at work and when learning online. Apprentices feel safe and know who to contact if they have any concerns for themselves or a colleague.

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

Leaders and managers have recently refocused their curriculum offer and strategy. They intend to reduce the broad range of apprentices and focus on offering high-quality hairdressing apprenticeships. However, it is too early to see the impact of this.

The activities of leaders and managers to evaluate and improve the quality of teaching and learning are not yet effective. Where external consultants identify areas for improvement, leaders do not respond quickly enough. For example, consultants identified that theory lessons were not sufficient and frequent enough. This continues to be an area that requires improvement.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that tutors are suitably qualified or receive sufficient training to improve their teaching skills. This limits the ability of tutors to prepare appropriate teaching resources and assessment materials. As a result, apprentices do not develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours consistently well.

Managers identify the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices need. Despite this, they do not use this information to plan apprentices' studies effectively. For example, hairdressing apprentices confidently shampoo hair but do not learn the underlying principles at the same time. As a result, apprentices do not develop a timely enough understanding of key theories.

Tutors do not plan sessions well enough. They do not take into account existing knowledge and skills of apprentices. For example, level 4 assessor coach apprentices with experience of teaching study the same course as those without. This means that apprentices do not develop new knowledge and skills as quickly as they could.

Managers and tutors make suitable adjustments to support apprentices with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, tutors use coloured overlays or provide extra one-to-one support where apprentices need it. These adjustments allow them to make progress at least in line with their peers.

The teaching of theory by tutors in hairdressing varies too much. There is an overreliance on note taking. Apprentices have access to useful virtual learning resources, but it is unclear how, and if, they make effective use of these. Too many hairdressing apprentices are unable to recall theory in detail.

Tutors in hairdressing set high standards for professional behaviours during visits and ensure apprentices model these in their workplace settings. They ensure that apprentices communicate clearly with their clients and ask questions sensitively. As a result, apprentices work well together and treat clients and colleagues with respect.

Hairdressing tutors set targets for apprentices on helpful progress cards at each visit, and these are shared with employers. This supports apprentices to focus on their priorities and employers to know what apprentices need to work on between training sessions. The vast majority of apprentices make good progress in their practical skills.

Most hair apprentices produce a good standard of practical work. They work confidently and competently, often to industry standard timings. The majority of hairdressing apprentices successfully achieve their apprenticeship, and a small minority gain distinction grades.

Tutors for level 4 assessor coach do not have appropriate resources to support apprentices with the demands and level of the course. For example, learning materials do not cover higher-level thinking skills, such as critical analysis, research skills and relevant theories. This limits apprentices' ability to work at the required standard or to strive to achieve higher grades.

Managers and tutors set clear expectations around attendance and punctuality. Apprentices understand the requirements to attend work and training sessions. They contact the provider or their employer if they are unable to attend. Almost all apprentices attend well and on time.

Tutors introduce apprentices to 'Prevent' duty and British values during their induction. Apprentices revisit these topics within learning sessions and complete online training sessions to reinforce their understanding of these topics. The vast majority of apprentices understand how this applies to their daily role and the considerations that they might need to make when working with clients.

Tutors use a range of online resources to inform apprentices about physical and mental health and healthy relationships. A small minority of younger apprentices do not have a secure enough understanding of healthy relationships or sexual harm.

Managers do not have a comprehensive approach to providing apprentices with high-quality, impartial careers advice and guidance. Too few are provided with clear information about the full range of opportunities available to them. Consequently, many apprentices are unsure of the wider opportunities for their future progression.

Leaders and managers carefully consider tutors' workload through effective case loading. Tutors have frequent one-to-one meetings with their managers, who offer them a good level of support. They benefit from monthly work-from-home days, birthday leave and access to extra holiday. As a result, staff feel, and are, well supported and valued.

Leaders use well-qualified and very experienced external consultants as governors. They hold formal, bi-annual meetings, which focus on relevant areas for improvement. Governors ensure that detailed actions are followed up appropriately. Their actions have supported the reduction in the number of out-of-funding apprentices and improvement in the achievement rates for functional skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers understand their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding. They set out relevant safeguarding policies and procedures and undertake appropriate pre-employment checks.

The designated safeguarding lead, deputies and staff undertake appropriate training. Leaders make employers aware of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding.

Leaders and managers provide staff with useful guidance on how to report a safeguarding concern. Where safeguarding concerns are raised, actions are timely, detailed notes are taken and appropriate support is put into place.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that areas for improvement that were identified during quality assurance activities are actioned promptly.

- Managers and tutors should plan to teach both theory and practice in a logical order so that apprentices can build their knowledge and skills over time.
- Leaders should use apprentices' starting points to inform the planning and design of training to support apprentices to build on what they already know.
- Managers must ensure that apprentices have access to suitable careers guidance to support them to make informed choices about their careers.
- Leaders and managers should prioritise training for tutors to further develop their teaching, learning and assessment practice to help apprentices learn more and remember more.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53671
Address	18 Pelham Road Sherwood Rise Nottingham NG5 1AP
Contact number	01159691650
Website	www.nhta.org.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Charlotte Moreland
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	18 May 2015
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the managing 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.

Inspection team

Angela Twelvetree, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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