

Inspection of GHQ Training Limited

Inspection dates: 10 to 13 December 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

GHQ Training Limited was established in 1992. Its head office is in Plymouth. It trains adult learners at four learning centres, with the majority attending the main centre in Plymouth. Learners can also choose to study at training centres in St Austell or Torbay in the south west of England, or Stockport in the north west.

At the time of inspection, 45 adult learners were enrolled. All learners were 19 years of age or older. Most learners were studying hairdressing or barbering qualifications, predominantly at level 3. Fewer than five were studying courses at levels 2 or 3 in make-up artistry, nail services, supporting teaching and learning in schools, early years education, assessing vocational achievement and beauty therapy.

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

Learners feel welcomed and cared for by training staff. Learners enjoy their studies and look forward to attending the training centres, where they study in a very supportive environment. Most are rightly proud of their achievements and praise their tutors for guiding them well throughout their learning journeys. Most learners develop significant new knowledge, skills and self-confidence, which serves them well in gaining employment or enhancing their businesses.

Learners gain skills beyond the technical aspects of their course. For example, in hairdressing and beauty therapy, learners extend their interpersonal skills by providing 'pamper sessions' for vulnerable or marginalised clients from the local community.

Learners feel safe in the training centres and know who to contact if they need help or support. They have access to the correct protective equipment and follow safe working practices in salon environments. Learners have a good general understanding of health and safety.

Learners' attendance at planned training sessions is not high enough, largely due to learners' unavoidable absences, for example when managing childcare responsibilities. Learners welcome the flexibility that they have to catch up on what they miss, such as attending two short training days rather than one long day. Most learners who have taken a break in learning feel well supported to return and complete their course.

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

Since the last inspection, a small team of new leaders has been successfully implementing a broad range of improvement strategies. While leaders recognise there is still room for improvement, these strategies have led to nearly three-quarters of learners achieving their qualifications in 2023/24 compared with only around half in 2022/23. Learners often gain multiple qualifications, building a portfolio of related skills. Leaders have substantially reduced the proportion of learners who have not completed their courses in the planned timescale and ensured that these learners move on swiftly to complete their qualifications. Two external governors now provide leaders with appropriate support and challenge. Their influence has led to leaders implementing impactful quality improvement arrangements and using data more effectively to track and monitor learners' progress.

Leaders and managers have constructed relevant and ambitious curriculums for adult learners. These provide good opportunities for learners to develop careers in hair and beauty, childcare and education. Leaders and managers cater equally well for learners who want to enhance their existing skills and learners with little or no previous experience. Leaders and managers ensure training is planned well and sensibly sequenced to enable learners to relate theory to practical aspects. For

example, hairdressing learners build their skills from simple to more complex cuts, and most have good opportunities to practise their skills on clients before observations and assessments. However, in a very few cases, leaders did not meet employers' additional skills needs promptly, such as teaching 'skin fade' techniques in hairdressing. This was because they were focused solely on teaching only the existing requirements of the qualification.

Leaders have appointed trainers who are well-qualified and highly experienced practitioners in their industries. These trainers teach learners up-to-date techniques and the latest trends. They link theory to practice effectively, which enhances learning. Trainers teach learners the importance of empathetic communication and treating clients with respect at all times.

Most trainers have teaching qualifications. Leaders have ensured that trainers receive the specialist training needed to help learners with additional support needs. This means that trainers provide effective tuition and support for these learners, enabling them to make good progress and achieve well.

Trainers use questioning effectively to check what learners know and to reinforce their learning. Trainers' assessment of learners' written work and observations of their practice lead to constructive advice on what can be further improved. Trainers' practical feedback to learners is specific and useful. Trainers use practice and routine effectively to build learners' long-term memory and develop their practical skills over time. Most learners recall and can apply what they have learned fluently.

Trainers ensure that learners develop the skills they need to be highly competent and confident. Learners gain the practical skills to run their own businesses and broaden the services they can offer clients. However, a very few learners do not have a wide range of external clients on whom to practise barbering, hairdressing or beauty skills. This slows their skills development.

Most trainers encourage learners to push themselves to learn new and useful techniques. However, trainers do not routinely support learners in developing their mathematics or English skills when needed, such as calculating ratios or formal report writing. Trainers do not routinely correct learners' spelling, punctuation and grammar, so learners do not know how to correct their work.

Leaders and managers provide learners with good advice on career options available to them at the end of their courses, such as further study, employment and self-employment. Leaders run a range of live events which provide learners with further insights into careers and facilitate personal development. However, as these events are not recorded, too many learners miss out and do not benefit.

Teachers provide learners with a helpful induction at the start of their course, which includes teaching them about safeguarding, fundamental British values and how to keep safe from extremism and radicalisation. Learners watch videos on avoiding and dealing with domestic abuse and coercive control. However, as these topics are

mainly taught at the beginning of their course, learners sometimes struggle to recall them in depth later.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Support learners in developing the mathematics and English skills they need which are relevant to their area of study.
- Ensure that all learners can watch and benefit from the careers insight events that leaders provide.
- Ensure learners' understanding of safeguarding, fundamental British values and how to keep safe from extremism and radicalisation is refreshed in depth during their courses.
- Ensure that the curriculums offered always meet employers' needs fully.

Provider details

Unique reference number	51961
Address	2 Elizabeth Court Whimble Street Plymouth PL1 2DH
Contact number	01752 218086
Website	www.ghqtraining.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Jean Rogers
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	5 to 7 July 2022
Main subcontractors	Not applicable

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the centre 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 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

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Jackie Moores	Ofsted Inspector

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