

REINSPECTION REPORT

Positive Approach Academy for Hair Reinspection

25 September 2003



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

REINSPECTION REPORT

Positive Approach Academy for Hair Reinspection

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The Positive Approach Academy for Hair (PAAH) is a privately owned training provider in Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire. The company was formed in 1984, and specialises in work-based learning for young people in hairdressing. Programmes are funded by Humberside Learning and Skills Council (LSC), and include foundation modern apprenticeships, advanced modern apprenticeships and national vocational qualifications (NVQs). Since the previous inspection, PAAH has begun to work with schools, providing day-release opportunities for young people in year 11. The success of this partnership with North Lincolnshire Council is beginning to be reflected in recruitment to the foundation modern apprenticeship programme. There are five staff including the managing director, a course director, two trainer/assessors and an administrative assistant.

2. Scunthorpe is an industrial town set in a predominantly rural area. It has a long association with the steel industry, which is still a major employer in the town, despite the problems it has faced in recent times.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

3. There are 52 learners on the hairdressing programmes, of whom 13 are advanced modern apprentices and 38 are foundation modern apprentices. One learner is working towards an NVQ at level 2. All learners are employed except for 23 foundation modern apprentices. Learners work in a wide range of local salons. Off-the-job training and assessment is provided in a purpose-built training academy in Scunthorpe. Learners attend for background knowledge, key skills and practical training for one day a week. Assessment of background knowledge takes place at the training centre. Practical assessment takes place at the centre and in the workplace salons. Some salons have qualified work-based assessors, and PAAH's assessors also visit salons to carry out assessments.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learner interviews	13
Number of staff interviews	10
Number of employer interviews	6
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	7

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

4. At the previous inspection, leadership and management, including equality of opportunity and quality assurance, were found to be unsatisfactory. Provision in hairdressing was also found to be unsatisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, all aspects of provision were found to be satisfactory or better. More specifically, leadership and management, equality of opportunity, and provision in hairdressing are good, and the approach to quality assurance is satisfactory.

GRADES

grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

	Inspection	Reinspection
Leadership and management	4	2
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity	4	2
Quality assurance	4	3

	Inspection	Reinspection
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	4	2
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

5. **Achievement rates have significantly improved from the previous inspection** and are now satisfactory. Of the three advanced modern apprentices who started in 2002, all three have achieved the qualification. For foundation modern apprentices, the achievement rate increased from 20 per cent to 53 per cent between 1999 and 2000. From the 2002 intake, 73 per cent of learners are still in learning.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions at the original inspection

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	6
Total	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	6

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	4
Total	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	4

6. **There is some good background knowledge and practical training.** Four training sessions were observed, all of which were satisfactory or better. There are good working relationships between learners and trainers, and this has created an environment which is conducive to learning. Additional specialist training is available. Regular reviews take place, supported by improved documents.

7. **PAAH has a well-equipped salon on the ground floor and a dedicated training room upstairs for background knowledge and key skills sessions.** The training room is well resourced, with a computerised smart board to support the delivery of background knowledge sessions. There is a range of work placements providing good standards of commercial work to meet different learners' needs. All learners have access to experienced and qualified trainers and assessors.

8. **There is good support for learners.** Learners who lose their work placement are well supported until a new one is found. An additional trainer is available to support learners during background knowledge and practical training sessions and the ratio of trainers to learners is good. Extra evening workshops are arranged on request. Learners who have personal problems are well supported.

9. **Key skills are an integral part of the hairdressing programme.** Hairdressing assignments clearly identify key skills evidence and learners understand the key skills requirements for their frameworks.

10. **There is slow progress for some learners.** Targets which are set in the individual learning plan and in progress reviews are not sufficiently challenging to encourage progress.

11. **Initial assessment identifies learners' level of key skills and literacy and numeracy needs.** Learners are supported through individual sessions and worksheets. However, none of the staff are trained to support learners who have additional literacy and numeracy needs.

Leadership and management

12. **PAAH has taken effective action to remedy weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.** Some of the weaknesses have now become strengths and achievement rates show significant improvement.

13. **Internal and external communications are good.** Staff are well informed and employers are effectively involved in the training processes. A useful employers' pack helps employers to support learners at work.

14. **Managers are open and responsive.** Staff are encouraged to be involved in day-to-day and strategic planning processes. All staff are effectively involved in the implementation of the action plan.

15. **Equality of opportunity is well promoted to learners and employers.** Learners have a good understanding of equality of opportunity. Teaching and learning materials are good and teaching methods encourage participation. Learners' files contain extensive information on equality and diversity, and understanding is checked during progress reviews. The equality and diversity policy has been adapted for learners and is used in training sessions. Equality of opportunity is well promoted to employers through information in the employers' pack.

16. **Internal verification is detailed and thorough.** There is good support for assessors through effective monitoring, constructive feedback and standardisation initiatives.

17. **Management information is insufficiently used as a development tool.** Directors do not regularly analyse trends in performance over time and staff are not fully aware of retention and achievement rates, or if they are improving or declining.

18. **The management strategy for learners who have literacy, numeracy or language needs is incomplete.** Although learners who need additional help with key skills are identified through initial assessment, there are no formal arrangements to provide adequate support for literacy, numeracy or language.

19. **Men and learners from minority ethnic groups are under-represented at PAAH and there are insufficient strategies to attract them.** Some strategies are being tried, but these are limited and are not yet having an effect on recruitment.

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- successful action to remedy weaknesses from the previous inspection
- good internal and external communications
- open and responsive management
- good promotion of equality of opportunity to learners and employers
- detailed and thorough internal verification

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of management information as a development tool
- incomplete management strategy for learners with literacy, numeracy or language needs
- insufficient strategies to promote learning opportunities to under-represented groups

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Strengths

- some good background knowledge and practical training
- well-resourced training and salon environment
- good support for learners
- good integration of key skills with NVQ training

Weaknesses

- slow progress for some learners

DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- successful action to remedy weaknesses from the previous inspection
- good internal and external communications
- open and responsive management
- good promotion of equality of opportunity to learners and employers
- detailed and thorough internal verification

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of management information as a development tool
- incomplete management strategy for learners with literacy, numeracy or language needs
- insufficient strategies to promote learning opportunities to under-represented groups

20. PAAH has made significant progress towards rectifying the weaknesses from the previous inspection. Most of the weaknesses are now at least satisfactory and some have become strengths. Achievement rates have significantly improved and higher proportions of learners are remaining on programme for longer. There is a greater emphasis on continuous improvement and the organisation has developed a wide range of useful management systems since the previous inspection. Although these systems are relatively new, they are having a positive effect on learners.

21. There are good internal and external communications, a strength partly identified in the self-assessment report. Frequent meetings take place with standard agenda items. All staff attend these meetings and there is a clear expectation for the whole team to contribute to ongoing business development and improvement. Staff are routinely involved in day-to-day and strategic management decision-making. Communication with employers is good. Training co-ordinators and company directors visit employers frequently and involve them in the training processes. Recently a revised employers' pack has been issued, which gives valuable information to help learners and employers. PAAH is represented at several local association meetings and links with other providers to discuss good practice.

22. There is an open and responsive management team, a strength that was identified at the previous inspection and partly identified in the self-assessment report. Directors have appropriately delegated roles and responsibilities and work closely with staff, to enable them to better contribute to strategic decision-making. Directors provide good support

to the team. Information is effectively shared with the team and the directors have successfully encouraged good teamwork. The staff team share good practice. Management information is shared with all staff and their views are valued. Directors use PAAH's action plan particularly well and have put many new procedures in place to improve the operational management of the training academy. The action plan is a very well used document which collects detailed evidence on the progress being made to improve previously identified weaknesses. The action plan is updated regularly during staff meetings. Individual staff members have their own action plans. These are cross checked in meetings to monitor progress made by staff.

23. Management information is produced to meet funding requirements, and charts are used to help training staff identify individual learners' progress. Additionally, a number of management reports are issued, usually quarterly, to help staff set and monitor learners' achievement against targets. The monitoring and reporting of learners' gender and ethnicity are satisfactory. Staff are set targets for the proportion of learners they are expected to retain on the programme. However, they do not analyse achievement or retention rates in sufficient detail to monitor performance over time. There is little analysis of trends on improving or declining achievement rates and how learners who are currently in training are performing in line with these trends. This weakness was partly identified in the self-assessment report.

24. Arrangements for strategic and operational business-planning are satisfactory. Staff understand the key business priorities and their individual contribution to meeting the objectives. Forward planning has improved since the previous inspection, but PAAH recognises that many of the new management procedures are not yet fully established and do not impact sufficiently on future business planning.

25. The staff appraisal process is satisfactory. All staff receive an annual appraisal and their development needs are recorded. Staff development is supported by the company and is planned in response to requests from staff. Several staff are about to begin training in areas that have been identified as company priorities, such as literacy and numeracy training and teacher training. Staff maintain comprehensive records of their own development. However, there are not always clear links between the staff development needs and the business plan.

26. There is a management strategy for the provision of learner support, but the procedure does not identify how literacy, numeracy or language needs will be provided. Satisfactory support is provided to learners who have additional training needs in key skills, but arrangements are not clear for learners who need additional help with literacy and numeracy. For example, recently a learner has been identified as needing support with literacy at a level below key skills level 1, but there is no process or flowchart to help ensure that these needs will be fully met.

27. The training resources provided by PAAH are good and the salon workplaces are a good learning environment. Up-to-date equipment is used, such as computer linked audiovisual equipment. Staffing levels and their expertise are generally appropriate, and PAAH has recognised a number of staff development priorities which are planned to

start during the next few months.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

28. PAAH has made considerable improvements in dealing with inadequacies in equality and diversity. Equality of opportunity is now being dealt with strategically within the organisation to a satisfactory level. It is specified in the strategic aims of the organisation and there is an equality of opportunity action plan. Two members of staff are now responsible for equality of opportunity, one strategic and one operational and they have attended training events. There is an appropriate equality and diversity policy which has been adapted for learners. There is a range of other policies linked to equality of opportunity, including those for harassment, complaints and grievance.

29. Equality of opportunity is now well promoted to learners and employers. Learners and staff now have a good level of understanding. There is a good range of teaching and learning materials at different levels to match and extend learners' understanding, and a good range of teaching methods is used to encourage interaction and participation by learners. There is good use of role-play to extend learners' understanding of equality of opportunity. Discussion with learners indicate that this understanding was being used in the workplace. Learners' files contain extensive information on equality and diversity. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is identified during progress reviews. Evening workshops are offered to learners who cannot attend in the day. The list of support agencies and help-line numbers for learners has been maintained and is displayed in the training room and washroom facilities. There is an equality of opportunity noticeboard in the training room which displays positive and diverse images and a further noticeboard in the training room where all policies and procedures relating to equality of opportunity are displayed. There is an equality and diversity policy which is comprehensive in scope and includes up-to-date legislation. The policy has been suitably adapted for learners and is used in training sessions. There is a rights and responsibilities leaflet which indicates the expectations of the organisation and learners, and learners are aware that these rules are carried out in practice. Learners have good personal support from PAAH's staff and problems are promptly and effectively dealt with. There is a leaflet about the rights of those who have a disability, including contingency arrangements for access to the training centre. There is some celebration of success of learners who have completed their programme through lists on the noticeboard, and also through the organisation's newsletters. Equality of opportunity is promoted to employers through the comprehensive employers' pack, which contains a good level of information about roles and responsibilities, the need for a policy on equality of opportunity and the need to ensure appropriate access arrangements. Employers are fully aware of the pack and its usefulness and have an appropriate level of understanding of equality of opportunity.

30. There are insufficient strategies to promote learning opportunities to minority groups. Men and learners from minority ethnic groups are still under-represented at PAAH, and this was identified by the organisation's analysis of data. There are a number of strategies to improve recruitment from under-represented groups, including a link with a local group representing those from minority ethnic backgrounds, and promotional

activities in local schools and youth clubs. However, the strategies are limited and have not as yet impacted on recruitment.

31. The staff profile at PAAH is more gender balanced than the intake of learners. One of five of the staff team is a man. Recruitment and selection procedures for staff conform to equal opportunities practice. Recruitment of learners is open to all applicants who are interviewed and offered a taster day at the learning centre.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

32. Overall, quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, many new quality assurance procedures have been implemented. These include a comprehensive range of monitoring procedures and a clear audit cycle. Some of the systems were in place at the previous inspection, but most have been put in place recently and are now an integral part of the day-to-day activities. Although a full cycle of audits has not yet been completed, there is evidence that the quality assurance arrangements are adequately monitoring the key learning processes, such as progress reviews. There are adequate arrangements for ensuring that documents are quality controlled, but in a few cases, the procedures have not sufficiently identified spelling or grammar errors.

33. There is a detailed and thorough internal verification process. Internal verification is well planned and well recorded. The plans are comprehensive and include detailed sampling arrangements which exceed awarding body requirements. Many observations of assessors take place and assessors value the feedback and the improvements that have been made in the standardisation of the assessment process. New or inexperienced assessors are given additional support and visits from the internal verifier. In some cases, work-based assessors are particularly well supported with assessment decisions and in administering tests.

34. Monitoring of the quality of learning programmes is satisfactory. Observation of learning sessions takes place through a system of peer observation. Staff use an agreed set of criteria, and are observed by a colleague who gives them feedback on the session and suggested areas for improvement. Currently, observations are not graded. Feedback is obtained through a number of questionnaires, which are appropriately used to collect evidence of learners' and employers' satisfaction. In most cases, an evaluation is completed and actions are developed to ensure continuous improvement.

35. PAAH has satisfactory arrangements for completing the annual self-assessment report. Some of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors matched those in the self-assessment report and many others were partly identified. The grades given by inspectors were higher than those in the self-assessment report, apart from quality assurance, which was the same. PAAH has developed a strong culture of continuous improvement to review the quality of the training and implement actions.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	52	2

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- some good background knowledge and practical training
- well-resourced training and salon environment
- good support for learners
- good integration of key skills with NVQ training

Weaknesses

- slow progress for some learners

Achievement and standards

36. Achievement rates have significantly improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. All of the three advanced modern apprentices who started in 2002 have completed the framework. For foundation modern apprentices, achievement rates have also improved. For example, between 1999 and 2002, achievement rates rose from 20 per cent to 53 per cent. Of the learners who started in 2002, 73 per cent remain in learning. Out of the 15 learners who completed their foundation modern apprenticeship in 2003, 13 have progressed to advanced modern apprenticeships. Standards of learners' work are generally satisfactory and some learners are producing work at a higher standard than the level expected of them. A learner who has recently completed an advanced modern apprenticeship has been entered for a national hairdressing award and has been selected to attend the finals.

Quality of education and training

37. There is some good background knowledge and practical training which is meeting the needs and aims of learners. There are good working relationships between learners and trainers, and this has created an environment which is conducive to learning. All four training sessions observed were satisfactory or better. Portfolios are well constructed, show a good standard of written work, and include appropriate feedback from trainers. Learners have an on-the-job training booklet to record practical training that has taken place at work. Employers are given a scheme of work to enable them to co-ordinate training and this is reinforced as part of the review process. Additional

specialist training days from hairdressing product manufacturers are available at PAAH's and the learners' workplaces. Learners have a progress review at least every eight weeks. Since the previous inspection, much work has been carried out to improve the progress review documents. Reviews now include all aspects of learners' progress and involves the reviewer, learner and the employer. Targets are set during the review and on- and off-the-job training is discussed and agreed with the employer. However, the training log is not always completed to show the on-the-job training activities that have taken place.

38. There is a well-resourced training and salon environment, a strength that was recognised at the previous inspection and in the self-assessment report. PAAH has a well-equipped salon on the ground floor and a dedicated training room upstairs for delivery of background knowledge and key skills. The training room has computerised audiovisual equipment to support the background knowledge sessions. The training room has many individual noticeboards which contain information on careers, individual learner progress charts, health and safety information, equal opportunities, key skills and PAAH's policies and procedures. There is a comprehensive range of hairdressing equipment and tools. Support materials such as textbooks and weekly hairdressing magazines and good learning packs are available for learners. PAAH has good relationships with a wide range of salons, which operate to commercial standards. Most salons offer additional training sessions where learners work alongside experienced stylists to practise their skills. All learners have access to experienced and qualified trainers and assessors during on- and off-the-job sessions. There are currently four staff who are qualified assessors. They carry out assessment in the training centre and visit learners in the workplace to carry out assessment at least every eight weeks. At the previous inspection, there were five work-based assessors, but this has now increased to nine. However, only three are currently active.

39. As identified at the previous inspection and in the self-assessment report, learners receive good support. Learners who lose their work placements are offered a short-term placement in the academy salon until a new salon is identified. During practical training and background knowledge sessions, an additional trainer is available to support learners. The ratio of learner to trainers is good and in most cases there are two trainers for every 15 learners and in some cases one trainer to every five learners. Additional evening workshops are available and are arranged for learners on request, particularly for NVQ level 3 learners. Learners who have personal problems are well supported.

40. Key skills are an integral part of the NVQ training, and this was identified at the previous inspection. Learners are given information packs and hairdressing assignments clearly indicate where key skills evidence is covered. Learners are aware of the requirements for key skills and understand the units they are working on. Evidence for key skills is clearly identified in the learners' portfolios. Learners who choose to work towards the information technology (IT) key skills are offered the option of attending a specialist training company.

41. There is slow progress for some learners. Targets which are set on individual learning plans and during the review process are not always sufficiently challenging. For

POSITIVE APPROACH ACADEMY FOR HAIR REINSPECTION

example, a learner who started in March 2002 did not start assessments for shampooing and conditioning until October 2002. During the off-the-job training and assessment sessions there are not always sufficient numbers of clients for learners to practise their practical skills. A recently introduced document is in place to help learners and trainers identify the clients needed for assessment. A lot of work has been completed to increase the number of work-based assessors since the previous inspection. There are now an additional four work-based assessors, with four more planned to start training in January 2004. However, at the time of the reinspection, only three of them are active. Assessment plans are completed and the assessor gives constructive feedback after each assessment.

Leadership and management

42. Internal verification is thorough and takes place frequently. Detailed reports ensure that any emerging problems are picked up and dealt with quickly. All assessors are monitored every two to three months. Documents show that all assessors are monitored, across all assessment methods and all learners. A final internal verification check is made of completed portfolios.

43. An initial assessment is carried out during induction. Learners complete a key skills assessment and learners' support needs are identified to ensure learners are working at the correct level of qualification. Additional support is given through worksheets and individual training. However, none of the current staff are trained to support additional needs in literacy and numeracy.