

Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Training Ltd

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Background information

Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorates' monitoring visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Description of the provider

1. Hair and Beauty Industry training Ltd (HABIT) was formed in 2003 and incorporated Sinclair Hair and Beauty Academy which was established in 1998. It is a privately owned company with two directors. The company provides government funded work-based learning in hairdressing, offering apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship programmes. The head office is located in Sunderland. HABIT works with mainly larger employers throughout the UK providing training in the workplace. The company hold contracts for the delivery of work-based learning programmes with Tyne and Wear LSC. The contract provides training for 75 advanced apprentices and 70 apprentices. All learners are employed and attend off-the-job training on one day each week for practical and related theory, assessment, and literacy and numeracy training.
2. The senior management team consists of two directors, a general manager, an assessment team manager and a management information systems manager. Assessment is carried out by a team of three assessors, although the company are currently recruiting a further three assessors. In addition the company employs a further six associate assessors who work within the larger groups of salons the provider works with.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject area

Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Good: Grade 2
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

3. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. Achievement and standards are good as are the quality of provision and leadership and management. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy is good.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

4. HABIT's capacity to improve is good. Progress since the previous inspection is good; many actions have been implemented to improve the overall quality of the provision. The company has been re-structured with a strong strategic approach to quality improvement. Business planning has improved and is communicated well to staff. The provider has been successful in resolving weaknesses found at the previous inspection, some of which are now strengths. The provider has invested in information learning technology which has been used well for the benefit of both learners and assessors. The management information system has been much improved since the previous inspection and is now used to produce a range of detailed reports to help business planning and course management. Comprehensive quality improvement systems have been developed and introduced since the previous inspection and are well understood by staff. Regular auditing and evaluation now takes place to assess the effectiveness of key processes. Links with employers have been expanded and improved with good co-ordination of training in the workplace. Strategies have been introduced to improve learners' success rates which have indicated an improving trend over the last three years.
5. The self-assessment process is good. The process is clear and well understood by staff who have a good understanding of its value and how it links to quality improvement. The process is well planned and linked to the quality calendar. Effective data use contributes to the process and supports strengths and areas for improvement. Feedback from learners and employers also contributes to the process. The resulting report is clearly written and is sufficiently critical. It successfully identified most of the strengths and areas for improvement found at inspection and grades awarded at inspection broadly reflected those proposed in the self-assessment report. Sufficient evidence is used to support the key findings. The quality improvement plan linked to the self-assessment report is clear and used as a working document to help ensure that objectives are on target to be met. The self-assessment process is seen by the company as central to its quality improvement strategy.

Key strengths

- High success rates
- Good development of hairdressing and customer care skills
- Good training with particularly effective individual support
- Good strategic development with a strong focus on continuous improvement

- Very effective partnership links with employers to benefit learners
- Comprehensive collection, effective analysis and use of data

Key areas for improvement

- Inconsistent target-setting at progress reviews
- Outcomes from some employer meetings are insufficiently actioned

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

6. Achievements and standards are good. Overall success rates for apprentices are good and indicate an improving trend. Success rates for apprentices improved from 48% in 2005/06, to 69% in 2006/07, well above the national average. Timely success rates have also

improved significantly over the last three years, from 17% in 2004/05, to 31% in 2005/06, to 56% in 2006/07. In-year data indicates a continued improving trend in both success and timely rates.

7. Overall success rates for advanced apprentices are high and have significantly improved since 2004. Timely success rates for advanced apprentices have also improved. In 2006/07 success rates were 73% which is significantly above the national average, timely success rates for the same period were 70%. In-year data indicates that the improving trend continues with high success rates. All current learners on programme are on target to achieve. Indications are that many will successfully complete in advance of their planned programme.
8. Learners develop good practical and employability skills which are valued by employers. They develop their hairdressing skills quickly and gain confidence when working with clients. Learners are able to carry out complex tasks such as cutting and hair colouring in a professional way using good customer care skills and communicating well with their clients. Learners are skilled at evaluating the treatments appropriate for their clients and the correct product choice for their hair condition. Standards of learner's written work are satisfactory. The self-assessment report correctly identified success rates and the standard of learners' work as a strength.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

9. Teaching and learning are good. Practical training is particularly good. Learners benefit from tutors who have a good understanding of the current commercial industry. They use their experience effectively to illustrate key learning points in an industry context. Group sizes are small and learners benefit from good individual coaching. Tutors are skilled at giving learners clear explanations of difficult techniques and in practical sessions respond well to individual learning styles. Assessment opportunities are good and well planned by tutors. Background knowledge is linked well to practical work. Learners benefit from a wide range of clients. Employers support and encourage learners with their assessments and are clear about the type of hairdressing clients they require to help them develop their skills and progress. HABIT assessors visit salons frequently and learners have good access to timely assessment. Good use is made of work-based assessors. Materials to support learning are effective and produced to a high standard. Delivery of theory sessions is satisfactory. However, in some theory sessions planning took insufficient account of learning styles, with little active participation by learners.
10. Targets set for learners at progress review are inconsistent. Some targets are too general, not time bound and insufficiently challenging for learners. Learners are sometimes unclear about what they need to achieve to help them progress.
11. The range of provision is good. HABIT works with highly professional, good quality supportive salons. Learners and employers benefit from the development of flexible training programmes. HABIT work closely with employers to plan training which effectively meets the needs of employers and learners. HABIT work with salon trainers and co-ordination between employer training and the requirements of the qualification are good. HABIT, working with employers, has developed flexible national vocational

qualification (NVQ) level 3 programmes that are effectively delivered in the workplace. Progression from level 2 to level 3 has significantly improved with currently 61% of learners following level 3 programmes. Learners receive valuable information, advice and guidance before starting the level 3 programme and are clear about how they will progress. Learners are actively encouraged to have high aims and consider their future careers within the industry. Learners recognise the value of progression to level 3 and how it can increase their employment options. Employers recognise and value the additional skills that learners are developing.

12. Support overall is satisfactory. Learners receive individual literacy and numeracy support from HABIT tutors. Initial assessment is effective at identifying learners who require additional support and HABIT has developed good links with specialist external organisations who offer support to their learners. HABIT has recently introduced laptop computers for learners to enable them to access learning materials remotely and carry out online testing. Learners are confident about asking their tutors for support and HABIT staff frequently help learners resolve problems in the workplace. Learners receive good support with their training from their employers who encourage their learners to acquire skills above the level required for the NVQ.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

13. HABIT has a clear strategic direction for the development of the provision. Plans place good emphasis on improving the experience of learners and continued improvement in overall success rates. Since the previous inspection the company has been reorganised and the curriculum reviewed. The company made a strategic decision to concentrate their efforts on hairdressing programmes and expand this area of provision. Senior managers give clear leadership and direction to staff in ensuring that key objectives are achieved. The development plan clearly identifies progression targets and is regularly reviewed and monitored. Staff have a good understanding of the objectives of the company and staff morale is high. Strategies have been introduced to improve success rates such as the better monitoring and identification of learners at risk. Success rates on all programmes have indicated a sustained improvement over the last three years. Current learners are all on target to achieve, many ahead of their planned completion date. Opportunities for staff development are good and many learners who started their training with HABIT have progressed to senior positions. The overall strategy for the provision of literacy and numeracy has recently been updated and reviewed as part of HABIT's ongoing quality improvement plan. Effective strategies are in place to refer learners with particular literacy and numeracy needs for external specialist help and support.
14. Working relationships with employers are good. The provider has a good understanding of employer needs and works well with employers in developing training programmes that have a strong commercial focus. The company has developed flexible training programmes with employers to help learners progress to level 3 qualifications with little disruption to their working week. Schemes of work have been developed that successfully link the commercial needs of the employer with the assessment need of the learner in progressing towards achieving their qualification. HABIT have clear criteria for the salons

that they will work with, ensuring that learners receive a good standard of in-salon training. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report.

15. Quality assurance systems are comprehensive and cover all the key processes of a learner's programme, as identified in the self-assessment report. Significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection where quality assurance was found to be weak. An audit cycle, linked to an overall quality calendar, is in place to ensure the consistent application of the quality improvement strategy. Staff understand key improvement processes and are observed for compliance. An annual observation of teaching and learning links systematically to staff appraisals and forms the basis of staff development plans. Improvements have been made since the previous inspection to the observation of teaching and learning. However, feedback to tutors is not always sufficiently developmental.
16. The collection, analysis and use of data is good. The management information system is much improved since the previous inspection and now provides good and reliable statistical data. This is correctly identified by the provider in the self-assessment report. Staff have a good understanding of the use of data and effectively interpret and use the reports produced to plan support for their learners. A range of reports are produced systematically which contribute to business and curriculum planning at all levels. Assessors and managers very effectively use data analysis at monthly case conferences to identify learners who are falling behind with assessments and target additional support. Monitoring of learners' progress is thorough and is well used by assessors.
17. Internally, a range of meetings take place and staff are well informed about the progress the company is making. Staff are confident about proposing areas for improvement and appreciate the open style of management. However, in meetings with some employers outcomes to be achieved in the workplace are not always actioned in a timely manner.
18. The procedures for safeguarding learners do not yet fully meet government requirements. However, policies and procedures are in place and have been clearly communicated to all staff. Some training in safeguarding has taken place to raise awareness with staff. The provider has established links with the designated person within the local education authority responsible for child protection issues.
19. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. HABIT has appropriate policies in place that give clear information on discrimination legislation and how it is interpreted by the company. Learners receive clear information on their rights and responsibilities at induction. Policies are in place to deal with bullying that are well understood by learners. Equality of opportunity is monitored during learners' reviews and used as an opportunity to reinforce learners' wider understanding. HABIT is currently developing a range of materials to help further develop a better understanding of equality of opportunity and diversity by learners. Learners' understanding is broadly satisfactory. Learners are given clear information on the standards of behaviour expected by HABIT and staff and learners work in a positive environment of mutual respect. HABIT have worked with employers in helping them ensure that recruitment of learners is fair. No specific targets are set for the recruitment from under-represented groups. However, HABIT positively promotes to their employers the need to target under-represented groups. The performance of under-represented groups is analysed to ensure that learners are progressing well.

20. Learning materials to help support learners with specific needs are appropriate. Learners requiring specialist support with dyslexia are referred to external specialist providers. HABIT has developed good links with a range of providers who are able to support learners who have specific learning needs. Access to areas of the training centre is poor for learners or clients with restrictive mobility.

What learners like:

- The practical training
- Friendly helpful tutors
- 'The way I am treated as an adult'
- Individual training with good attention
- Opportunities to complete training in the salon
- The straightforward approach
- Opportunities to progress

What learners think could improve:

- More theory
- Less changes in associate assessors

Annex

Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning apprenticeship programmes** managed by the provider **2004 to 2007**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	2004/05	overall	21	38	41	29	29
		timely	31	16	28	13	20
	2005/06	overall	24	50	45	46	36
		timely	15	27	26	20	19
	2006/07	overall	11	82	58	73	51
		timely	10	80	41	70	35
Apprenticeships	2004/05	overall	13	54	50	38	42
		timely	18	39	33	17	28
	2005/06	overall	77	53	55	48	52
		timely	72	33	38	31	36
	2006/07	overall	26	69	61	69	59
		timely	27	56	47	56	45

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** Provider and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'