

# Aurelia Training Limited

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**Inspection date**

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329976

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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](http://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](http://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:

- Health and social care
- Warehousing and distribution
- Literacy and numeracy

## Description of the provider

1. Aurelia Training Limited (Aurelia) is a private training company based in Kenilworth, Warwickshire providing training across the West Midlands and increasingly in the East Midlands. The managing director looks after the management of the company. The operation director is responsible for the provision of training supported by five programme coordinators. A further 17 assessors provide training and assessment for learners and four staff provide administrative support. A business development manager promotes training to employers.
2. Aurelia has a contract through the Coventry and Warwickshire area of the LSC for Train to Gain provision. At the time of the inspection, Aurelia had 288 learners. The company provides work-based learning and assessment for 140 health and social care learners, 25 warehousing and distribution learners and literacy and numeracy for 104 skills for life learners. Inspectors did not inspect the provision for six customer service learners, 10 team leadership learners and three management learners. Aurelia started providing Train to Gain provision in July 2007. Some 95% of its work is Train to Gain and the remainder is private.
3. The population of the West Midlands is 5,366,700. The unemployment rate for the region between May and July 2008 was 6.3% against a national rate of 5.5%. The rate for those without qualifications in the West Midlands is 17% compared with a national rate of 13.2%. Some 10% of the population in the West Midlands are from minority ethnic groups; 37% of Aurelia learners are from these groups.

## Summary of grades awarded

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

## Sector subject areas

<b>Health and social care</b>	<b>Good: Grade 2</b>
<b>Warehousing and distribution</b>	<b>Good: Grade 2</b>
<b>Literacy and numeracy</b>	<b>Good: Grade 2</b>

Overall judgement

## Effectiveness of provision

### Good: Grade 2

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates and the standard of learners' work are high. The quality of provision is good including teaching, training and learning, the response to the needs of learners and particularly to employers, and guidance and support. Provision is good in health and social care, warehousing and distribution and literacy and numeracy. Leadership and management are good and equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

## Capacity to improve

### Good: Grade 2

5. The capacity to improve is good. Directors, programme co-ordinators and assessors, with the support of employers, use particularly effective arrangements to improve provision for learners. Overall success rates are increasing and are high. Learners receive good support and training, which develop their personal and workplace skills to a high standard. Aurelia is very responsive to the needs of employers. Quality improvement arrangements are effective and well documented but observations of learning are insufficiently thorough.
6. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate. The self-assessment process takes account of the views of learners and staff and uses data well to analyse learners' performance. However, employers are not always fully involved. Inspectors agree with most grades, strengths and areas for improvement in the self-assessment report. They found a minority of strengths are just normal practice and a few further areas for improvement. Self-assessment action plans are clear, regularly monitored and updated.

## Key strengths

- High overall success rates for learners completing in the first quarter of 2008/09
- Good development of the workplace and personal skills of learners
- Very strong response to the needs of employers
- Good support for learners
- Strong and particularly effective direction set by directors
- Good use of management information

## Key areas for improvement

- Insufficient account of the needs of the more able learners
- Insufficiently thorough observation of the learning process

## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

#### Good: Grade 2

7. Achievement and standards are good. The overall national vocational qualification (NVQ) success rate for the Train to Gain provision and for the learners successfully completing NVQs with planned end dates for the first quarter of 2008/09 was high and a significant increase on 2007/08. The overall success rate for Train to Gain Skills for Life literacy and numeracy provision and the proportion of learners from this area completing successfully with planned end dates in the first quarter of 2008/09 was high and had increased very substantially from the low level in 2007/08. The success rates were similar for male and female learners, those receiving additional learning support and those from different ethnic groups.
8. NVQ learners have developed good workplace and personal skills, a strength identified in the self-assessment report. Care learners' practical skills are of a high standard and warehousing and distribution learners' productivity and health and safety awareness increases during their training. Skills for Life learners develop good literacy and numeracy skills. Learners make appropriate progress on prior levels of attainment. While training most learners' motivation and self-esteem improves substantially. Learners' portfolios are well organised and of a good standard, particularly those for warehousing and distribution learners.

## Quality of provision

### Good: Grade 2

9. The quality of provision is good. Teaching, training and learning are good. The self-assessment report records this strength. Assessors and literacy and numeracy tutors, supported by employers, plan training and learning thoroughly. They are well aware of the sensitivities of those returning to learn since leaving school. Training and learning places a particularly effective focus on improving learners' workplace and personal skills. Employers provide a strong variety of learning opportunities in the workplace to develop these skills and to support training. Off-the-job training workshops include a good range of learning activities, portfolio work and preparation for assessment, which link well to NVQ criteria. Assessors provide good support to learners requiring additional help to finish their training successfully. However, more able learners do not receive further work to extend their ability and help them complete early. Assessment is accurate and fair.
10. The response to the needs of learners and employers is good. The range of training programmes and qualifications meets the requirements of learners well and helps them progress further with their training and careers. Aurelia directors and staff are very responsive to the needs of employers. They work very closely with employers to ensure Aurelia's range of Train to Gain provision meets very effectively their specific requirements.
11. Support, information, advice and guidance are good. Pre-enrolment information provides learners with good guidance on the most appropriate training programme for their individual requirements. Induction settles learners into training effectively but some aspects of induction are dull. Arrangements for identifying those with additional learning needs are thorough. Support for those with additional learning needs including literacy, numeracy and language is good. Further wider personal support is available to learners. Assessors and tutors monitor learners' progress closely and take prompt action when they have concerns. Assessors and tutors provide learners with effective guidance and advice

on progression at the end of training. A minority of learning targets are insufficiently precise.

## Leadership and management

### Good: Grade 2

#### Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

12. Leadership and management are good, a strength noted in the self-assessment report. Directors provide a strong strategic focus for the company, supported by staff, to improve the levels of skills in sectors of the economy where they have traditionally been low through the provision of good quality Train to Gain programmes. Directors work well with training coordinators and assessors to set a clear direction to ensure learners are successful and receive high standards of training and support. They and staff meet regularly to review the performance of learners and the learning they receive. Directors and programme coordinators take prompt action when they have concerns about learners' and course progress. Lines of accountability are clear with each director, training coordinator and assessor fully aware of their responsibilities to ensure learners receive a high standard provision.
13. Quality improvement arrangements, including policies and procedures, are clear and well documented. Regular meetings between Aurelia and employers monitor the quality of learning well. Internal verification ensures that assessment is accurate. Use of management information is good. Managers and staff use management information particularly well to monitor success rates, learners' and staff performance, to set clear targets and to plan provision. Effective arrangements are in place to improve staff performance through staff development. Observations of learning take place but these are insufficiently thorough and do not cover all aspects of learning. Aurelia collects the views of learners but no written analysis of their views takes place. Aurelia has identified this as an area for improvement in its self-assessment report.
14. Engagement with employers and external organisations is particularly good. Aurelia's directors and staff work very well with employers. They have a strong understanding of the needs of the different employment sectors with which they work. Communication with most employers and links with a substantial number of external organisations are very good. Managers use these links well to obtain funds to widen opportunities for those who cannot access learning through traditional routes. Staff keep up-to-date with developments through strong links with sector specific groups. Good links with the local skills brokers have helped increase the participation of employees on Aurelia's Train to Gain programmes.
15. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Directors regularly review and update the relevant policies and procedures on equality of opportunity. Staff receive satisfactory equality of opportunity training at induction and at training events. The staff handbook has clear information on equality and diversity. Promotion of equality of opportunities to learners is satisfactory, including coverage of diversity. They receive training at induction and assessors reinforce this at workshops and visits to learners in the workplace. Aurelia collects and monitors equal opportunities data effectively. Thorough analysis of data compares the performance of specific groups of learners. Learners' participation closely



matches the gender make up of the relevant sectors. Aurelia carries out activities to increase the participation of males into care programmes and females into warehousing and distribution programmes. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups is higher than the West Midlands' average. Aurelia considers marketing materials carefully to ensure these reflect the needs of different groups of learners. However, the written content of some promotional materials is at too high a level for learners with literacy and language needs.

16. The procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. Aurelia undertakes Criminal Records Bureau checks on its staff. Relevant policies and arrangements are in place for safeguarding. Assessors provide clear information to learners about their rights and responsibilities including anti-harassment, discrimination and anti-bullying arrangements.

## What learners like:

- The committed, enthusiastic and helpful Aurelia staff
- 'Readily available Aurelia staff'
- 'Aurelia staff always do what they promise'
- The workshops that help learners to progress towards the NVQ
- The enjoyable, relaxed and effective learning environment in workshops
- 'Training which improves job skills'
- 'Achieving a recognised qualification'
- 'Training which improves opportunities for promotion'
- The good individual support

## What learners think could improve:

- Too much time between learning sessions
- The lack of variety in some teaching methods
- 'Some teaching in workshops is too fast'

Sector subject areas

## Health and social care

### Good: Grade 2

#### Context

17. One hundred and forty Train to Gain learners are working towards NVQs in care, including 124 at Level 2 and 16 at Level 3. All learners are employees in residential, nursing homes or community venues. The planned length of programme is nine months for both Level 2 and 3. Monthly off-the-job training workshops takes place in venues conveniently located for learners and employers. All other learning and assessment takes place in the workplace. Assessors visit the workplaces at least monthly.

#### Strengths

- High success rates in the first quarter of 2008/09
- Good workplace and personal skills of learners
- Highly effective response to employers' needs
- Good leadership and management of the care provision

#### Areas for improvement

- Insufficient account of the needs of the more able learners

#### Achievement and standards

18. Achievement and standards are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. The success rate for Train to Gain NVQ learners with a planned end date for the first quarter of 2008/09 is high. The overall NVQ success rate at Level 2 was slightly higher than at Level 3. The proportion of learners that completed successfully by their planned end date in 2007/08 was low. However, the proportion that completed successfully by their planned end date for first quarter of 2008/09 was high. The increase was particularly significant at Level 3.

19. The standard of learners' workplace and personal skills is high. They have developed a good range of practical care skills that they use well with clients and residents. Learners' understanding of theory is good. During training, learners gain substantially in confidence and self-esteem and improve their ability to work effectively with others. Learners enjoy the theory and assessment workshops. On completion of training, most learners take on roles with greater responsibility.

#### Quality of provision

20. The quality of provision is good. Teaching, training and learning are good. Assessors and employers provide good training in the workplace to develop learners' occupational and personal skills to a high level. Assessors plan workshops effectively to incorporate a range of assessment and learning activities that relate well to the requirements of the NVQ. A particular and very useful focus of training is current legislative requirements. Assessors provide prompt and good support to learners who require further help to complete successfully. However, learners that are more able do not receive additional work to

extend or challenge their abilities and to complete at a faster rate. The self-assessment report does not include this area for improvement. Assessors make effective use of resources. The use of information learning technology (ILT) is improving. However, assessors make insufficient use of it as an interactive learning tool. Assessors identify learners' preferred learning style but they do not make sufficient use of this information when providing tuition. Assessment is accurate and fair.

21. Responsiveness to the needs of learners and employers is good. The range of programmes and qualifications is particularly effective. It meets the local and national requirements for qualified care staff and provides learners with the opportunity to build on their existing knowledge and experience. An expanding programme of learning helps learners continue their studies after completing their Train to Gain programme. Opportunities exist for learners to gain higher-level qualifications in supporting subjects such as team leading and information technology. Aurelia is very successful in establishing highly effective partnerships with employers. Aurelia places a strong focus on flexibility to ensure training arrangements meet the requirements of each individual employer. Employers value the qualifications learners gain and find that employees on Train to Gain provision improve the standards of care for clients and residents.
22. Support, information, advice and guidance are good. Pre-enrolment guidance ensures learners are on the appropriate NVQ programme, units, and levels that meet their needs. Aurelia provides those not ready to proceed to an NVQ programme with support to prepare them for training. Initial assessment is good and identifies learners' additional learning needs promptly and effectively. Specialist staff provide high standard literacy, numeracy, language and dyslexia support. Aurelia staff integrate this support effectively into programmes of learning. Assessors use workshops and visits to learners effectively to monitor their progress. They take prompt action if learners are not making sufficient progress. Induction settles most learners into their studies effectively, but some induction is dull and does not involve the learner sufficiently. Aurelia provides learners with effective guidance and advice on progression after training.

### **Leadership and management**

23. Leadership and management are good. Management of training is good. Managers have been particularly effective at ensuring learners receive high standards of training. They have increased success rates for learners in 2007/08 and for the first quarter of 2008/09, particularly the proportion that complete successfully by their planned end date. All staff are experienced and well qualified. Managers ensure staff and learners receive a satisfactory level of resources. Staff development is good and with appraisal concentrates effectively on improving the provision for learners. Care assessors are fully involved in the self-assessment process. Strengths and areas for development in the self-assessment are broadly accurate. Initiatives to resolve areas for improvement are mostly successful. Aurelia collects learners' views but it does not analyse these thoroughly.
24. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Assessors provide appropriate tuition on equality of opportunities at induction, at workshops and during visits to the workplace. Managers are aware of the performance of different groups and take action if concerns arise.

## Warehousing and distribution

**Good: Grade 2**

### **Context**

25. Twenty-five learners are on Train to Gain NVQ at Level 2 warehousing and distribution programmes. All learners are employees of logistics companies. Off-the-job training takes place in workshops and individual coaching sessions. On-the-job training and assessment take place at the learners' workplace. Assessors visit learners in the workplace at least monthly.

### **Strengths**

- High success rates in the first quarter of 2008/09
- Good personal and workplace skills of learners
- Good organisation of assessment
- Particularly effective portfolio-building process

### **Areas for improvement**

- Weak aspects of communications with employers
- Insufficient occupational updating for assessors

### **Achievement and standards**

26. Achievement and standards are good. In 2007/08, the overall NVQ success rate at Level 2 for Train to Gain warehousing and distribution learners was low. For learners with a planned end date for the first quarter of 2008/09, the success rate increased very substantially and is now high. The proportion of learners that completed successfully by their planned end date in 2007/08 was low. However, the proportion increased markedly for those with a planned end date for the start of 2008/09.
27. Learners' personal and workplace skills are good. During training, they show increased confidence, a more focused approach to their job, and a greater awareness of key aspects of their work. Their productivity and motivation increases and their attentiveness to health and safety improves. The self-assessment report did not identify these improvements in learners' performance. A high proportion of learners completing their Train to Gain programme take on the role of mentor to other staff. Portfolio evidence, including personal statements and answers to written questions, is of a good standard.

### **Quality of provision**

28. The quality of provision is good. Teaching, training and learning are good. This agrees with the self-assessment report. Assessors plan and structure workshops well. They take good account of each learner's particular learning needs in individual coaching sessions. Assessors make good use of workbooks. They are particularly effective at involving learners in learning. Assessors provide clear explanations of learning topics and make good use of discussion and relevant examples from the workplace to develop learners' understanding of warehousing and distribution. Employers provide good opportunities for training in the workplace. Regular reviews take place of learners' progress but assessors do not record quantifiable measures of progress on progress review paperwork.
29. Organisation of the assessment process is good. Planning and coordination of assessment is particularly effective. A comprehensive timetable enables assessors to ensure assessment of learners takes place in a complex pattern of shift working. Assessors make very effective use of tape recordings of observed assessments in this environment to provide very detailed and thorough assessment reports that link clearly to the NVQ criteria.
30. Assessors make sure portfolio-building is particularly effective. Learners' portfolios are very well organised with each NVQ unit achievement record and range of evidence clearly separated into different sections. Portfolios contain well designed standard documents to record evidence and learners' progress. The portfolios hold highly detailed

answers to questions and high standard written exercises that clearly demonstrate learners' good knowledge and understanding.

31. Aurelia's response to the needs and interest of learners and employers is good. The warehousing and distribution training that Aurelia provides for learners and employers meets their requirements particularly well. Employers value the Train to Gain programme as it provides learners with good development of distribution, warehousing and personal skills and improves the performance of their business. Assessors discuss the progress of learners frequently with workplace supervisors. However, the formal communication of overall learners' progress on a regular basis to employers is insufficient, particularly at a senior level. Key managers at employers' premises are not aware of the self-assessment process and Aurelia staff have not asked them to contribute to this process.
32. Support and guidance are good. Before enrolment, Aurelia staff provide clear guidance on the type of programme best suited to the learners' need. Induction helps most learners start their training effectively. Thorough initial assessment identifies learners' additional learning needs. While on training, learners receive a good range of support including help with literacy, numeracy and language. On completion of training, assessors provide learners with suitable advice and guidance on progression.

### **Leadership and management**

33. Leadership and management are good. Managers work closely with staff to increase success rates and ensure learners receive good training and support. Training programmes meet the needs of learners and employers. Internal verification ensures assessment is accurate and fair but internal verifiers do not record the contents of interviews with learners sufficiently clearly. Quality improvement arrangements are in place and include the regular observation of the quality of training. Most judgements in the self-assessment report are accurate but a minority of strengths are just normal practice. Managers ensure staff and learners benefit from good resources. Assessors are appropriately qualified and have substantial experience in distribution and warehousing. However, industrial updating for assessors is insufficient despite the close links with employers.
34. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Learners receive training on equality of opportunity at induction and at workshops. They have a satisfactory awareness of equality of opportunity. Assessors at workshops and at visits to the workplace check that learners are not subject to discrimination, harassment or bullying. Managers are aware of the performance of different groups including those from minority ethnic groups and those receiving additional support.

## **Literacy and numeracy**

### **Good: Grade 2**

#### **Context**

35. Aurelia has 104 Skills for Life Train to Gain literacy and numeracy learners. Literacy learners include 49 at Level 1 and 34 at Level 2 and numeracy learners include four at Level 1 and 17 at Level 2. Twelve learners are following both literacy and numeracy

programmes. Aurelia offers literacy and numeracy programmes alongside NVQ provision in health and social care and warehousing and distribution at specialist workshops and individual sessions.

### **Strengths**

- High success rates in the first quarter of 2008/09
- Good learners' literacy, numeracy and personal skills
- Good training and individual coaching for learners
- Good initial assessment

### **Areas for improvement**

- Insufficiently precise learning targets

### **Achievement and standards**

36. Achievement and standards are good. The overall success rate for literacy and numeracy Train to Gain skills for life learners with planned end dates for the first quarter of 2008/09 was high, particularly at Level 2. The overall success rate for literacy for the first quarter of 2008/09 was high and a very substantial increase on 2007/08 when the rate was very low. The proportion of literacy learners that completed successfully by their planned end date for the first quarter of 2008/09 was satisfactory at Level 1 and very high at Level 2. The success rate for numeracy learners with planned end dates in the first quarter of 2008/09 was very high and represented a substantial increase on the very low rate in 2007/08. The proportion of numeracy learners completing successfully by their planned end date in 2008/09 was satisfactory.
37. Learners have developed good literacy, numeracy and personal skills. They demonstrate a good understanding of complex calculations and read and communicate to a high standard. Learners make good progress on prior levels of attainment, particularly those that have not been in learning since leaving school. Learners improve their self-esteem, motivation and confidence to a high level. This helps them to collaborate more effectively with colleagues and improve how they work with customers, clients and residents.

### **Quality of provision**

38. The quality of provision is good. Teaching, training and learning are good. This strength is recognised in the self-assessment report. Skills for Life tutors employ a range of particularly effective coaching and training methods in workshops and individual learning sessions to develop learners' literacy, numeracy and personal skills to a high level, an area for improvement when Aurelia first started providing provision in this area. Tutors are especially aware of the sensitivities and the levels of confidence of those that have been away from learning since school. The linking of literacy and numeracy to learners' main area of learning has taken place but it is at early stage of development. Although tutors identify learners' preferred ways of learning they do not always use this in their planning. The use of ILT is limited to online assessment, an area for improvement noted in the self-assessment report. Assessment is thorough and accurate and takes place at the learners' workplace.



39. The response to the needs of learners and employers is good. Aurelia has established a useful range of programmes to support Train to Gain learners whose levels of literacy and numeracy are barriers to completing NVQ awards and reduce their effectiveness in the workplace. Programmes build well on learners' prior levels of attainment.
40. The support and guidance learners receive are good. Tutors use prompt, thorough and particularly effective initial assessment arrangements to identify learners' learning and support needs and their barriers to learning. Tutors use these well to establish good support arrangements and a learning programme at the appropriate level to meet each learner's individual literacy, numeracy and support needs. During training, tutors monitor learners' progress thoroughly and provide comprehensive feedback on strengths and areas for improvement. When concerns arise, Aurelia quickly puts in place additional support to ensure learners continue to make good progress. Although learning targets are clear in individual learning plans, those in progress reviews are too general. At the end of literacy and numeracy programmes, tutors provide effective guidance on progression to further learning.

### **Leadership and management**

41. Leadership and management are good. Managers have a clear focus on improving literacy and numeracy provision for learners. They meet with staff regularly to discuss how to improve provision for learners and how learning is organised and managed, including the good use of management information. They have successfully increased the very low success rates, ensuring learners receive high standards of learning and support. The range of provision that Aurelia offers meets employers' requirements for a literate and numerate workforce. Staff undertake professional development related to literacy and numeracy and have or are working towards teaching qualifications. The resources that managers provide for learners and staff are satisfactory. The self-assessment report is generally accurate but the wording of judgements is not always clear. Quality improvement arrangements contribute to raising standards.
42. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Learners' training on equality of opportunities takes place at induction and at workshops. Literacy and numeracy provision at Aurelia is particularly effective at providing fresh opportunities for those under-represented in education and training to develop and improve their skills. Tutors regularly check that learners are not subject to harassment, discrimination or bullying.

## Annex

## Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning Train to Gain NVQ** programmes managed by the provider **2007/08** to **2008/09**

**Overall for the provider**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**
	2007/08	overall	95	70%
		timely	76	41%
	2008/09	overall	62	85%
		timely	62	82%

Success rates on **work-based learning Train to Gain Skills for Life** programmes managed by the provider **2007/08** to **2008/09**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider skills for life rate**
	2007/08	overall	16	23%
		timely	13	19%
	2008/09	overall	30	96%
		timely	30	80%

**Note:** 2008/09 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the first three months or greater of the LSC contract year

\* 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

\*\* NVQ qualification success rates are calculated using data supplied to Ofsted by the provider before inspection