

Skills Academy for Health

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 58437

Name of lead inspector: Elaine Clinton HMI

Last day of inspection: 23 April 2010

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Information about the provider

1. Skills Academy for Health (SAfH) is part of Skills for Health, the sector skills council for health. SAfH is part of the council's delivery arm, with three academies offering programmes for young people and adults located in London, Liverpool and Newcastle. For governance purposes, Skills for Health's head office is located in Bristol, the company being hosted by Bristol University Hospital Foundation Trust. Skills for Health is governed by a council and board with distinct roles and responsibilities; it is independent in its aims, objectives and ways of working. The organisation has held its own contract to provide government funded training since 2007/08. SAfH has contracts with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to offer young apprenticeships and Train to Gain programmes in the North West, London and the North East. Manchester is the lead SFA. It also holds a contract for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision in London.
2. In the last two years the organisation has gone through major changes and the number of learners has increased significantly. Following a rigorous audit and review of its management structures and functions SAfH completed a significant reorganisation in September 2009. The SAfH management structure now consists of an executive director, a director and a senior management team. Assessment and internal verification are carried out by subcontractors, except in the North East on the young apprenticeship programme.
3. Programmes include courses from entry level. The majority of learners are in the North West. Most are on programmes in health and social care, business administration and foundations for learning and life, which includes ESOL. This is the first inspection of SAfH. The inspection graded programmes in health and social care and business administration. Foundations for learning and life and European Social Fund (ESF) programmes were not inspected as the numbers of learners were low.
4. The provider delivers training on behalf of the following organisations:
 - Knowsley Council
 - Liverpool City Council
5. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the provider:
 - Aintree University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
 - Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust
 - Barnet College
 - Beacon Educational Services
 - Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
 - Calderstones NHS Trust

- Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Cheshire HR Services (NHS West Cheshire & Central & East Cheshire PCT, East Cheshire NHS Trust)
- College of North East London (CONEL)
- Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Enfield Enterprise Agency
- Greater Manchester West Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Information Horizons
- Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust
- Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Liverpool Heart & Chest Hospital NHS Trust
- Liverpool PCT
- Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust
- London Met University
- Mersey Care NHS Trust
- Mid Cheshire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- NHS East Lancashire
- NHS Manchester (IT Section)
- NHS North Lancashire
- North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- North Cumbria University Hospital NHS Trust
- North West Ambulance Service
- One Spare Chair
- Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
- Portable Group
- Quay Assessments
- Refugee Women Association
- Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University hospitals NHS Trust
- Salford Royal Hospitals Foundation Trust
- Social Action for Health
- South Thames College
- St Helens & Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

- Stockport NHS Foundation Trust
- The Limehouse Project
- The Walton Centre for Neurology & Neurosurgery NHS Trust
- Tower Hamlets
- Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust
- Umbrella
- University Hospitals of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust
- Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Provision for young learners: 14 to 16	163 part-time learners
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	12 full-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain ESF DWP (ESOL)	954 learners 53 learners 45 learners

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Grade 3
Overall effectiveness	Grade 3
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3
Subject areas	Grade
Health, public services and care	3
Business administration and law	3

Overall effectiveness

6. Most learners achieve at a satisfactory rate. Young apprentices achieve very well. Overall, across all programmes, except the young apprenticeship programme, too few learners achieve in the planned time. SAfH has recently implemented a good range of actions to improve the speed at which learners achieve their qualifications. Learners enjoy learning and gain good work-related skills.
7. The overall quality of provision is satisfactory and good for young apprentices. Assessors are knowledgeable and provide valuable help and support for learners. However, tracking information is not used consistently to ensure all learners complete within their planned timescales. A significant minority of learners do not have regular access to their assessor and to assessment. Reviews of learners' progress and individual planning of learning lack rigour.
8. SAfH works well with employers to develop and expand provision that meets the needs of local communities. The organisation has established strong partnerships to engage learners from under-represented groups and deprived communities. Good use is made of the specialist knowledge of SAfH to support staff training across the regions.

9. Managers provide strong, motivational leadership and have a good understanding of what SAfH needs to do to improve, although new quality improvement arrangements are not working fully, and associated target setting to ensure the long term stability of the organisation are weak. Arrangements to safeguard learners are good. Learners feel safe. Promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Opportunities to reinforce learners' understanding of diversity and health and safety are missed at many progress reviews.
10. SAfH uses self-assessment well to identify the strengths and areas for development of the provision. Quality improvement arrangements have been developed recently and are not used systematically across the organisation. Data are not used to evaluate and improve all aspects of provision.

Main findings

- Management action has brought about improvement in success rates over the past year, leading to satisfactory outcomes for most learners. Overall success rates in 2008/09 were satisfactory for Train to Gain learners and high for young apprentices, with many young apprentices achieving high grades.
- Timely success rates are low. The timely success rate for Train to Gain learners in 2008/09 was 24 percentage points below the national rate. SAfH recognises this issue and has put in place measures that are taking effect. Timely success rates so far for 2009/10 are satisfactory, as is the progress made by new learners.
- Provision for learners aged 14 to 16 is particularly good. Young people receive a very effective introduction to vocational training. They achieve highly, enjoy the subjects and make very good progress in developing practical skills. Progression rates to further courses are high.
- The quality of provision is satisfactory overall. Learners enjoy their programmes and develop good workplace skills and knowledge. Planning of learning, reviewing, target setting and recording lack rigour. Learners use safe working practices. They feel safe and generally have a satisfactory understanding of equality and diversity.
- Learners have a satisfactory choice of programmes that meets their needs. Well-established working relationships with partner organisations benefit many learners aged 14 to 16 and those who are not employed, through the provision of work placements. However, planning for progression for health and social care learners is not consistent across the organisation. Opportunities to progress beyond level 3 are limited.
- SAfH has good partnerships with industry, schools and the community to benefit learners. This partnership working is highly effective and greatly enhances the provider's ability to reach a wide range of communities and learners. SAfH works well with partners to both lead on specific strategic health matters and to create good resources for learners at a range of levels.

- Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Teachers, assessors and support staff provide highly flexible and responsive individual care and support. However, access to more specialist information advice and guidance varies across the subcontractors.
- SAfH has strong strategic direction in a period of significant change. Senior managers lead the organisation well; staff are motivated and enthusiastic about recent changes. However, this clear direction is not supported by a long-term plan to ensure the stability and sustainability of SAfH's core business.
- Target setting is not systematically used to provide clear direction or to track and measure improvement. Action plans to improve the quality of provision lack clear and realistic targets. Business plans do not have detailed targets and do not link to operational teams.
- Safeguarding arrangements are strong. The safety and well-being of staff, learners and clients takes a high priority. Incidents and accidents are responded to promptly. SAfH promotes equality and diversity effectively although opportunities to reinforce learners' understanding are missed at a minority of progress reviews.
- The self-assessment process is satisfactory, leading to improved outcomes for learners. Realistic and challenging objectives are set and met. In recent months there has been a significant improvement in success rates and good progress in improving the quality of provision
- The use of management information and quality improvement processes is not fully established. Data are not used well to plan and monitor the provision. Although SAfH has made recent improvements in order to manage the quality of provision more effectively, it is in the process of reviewing and developing arrangements further.
- SAfH provides satisfactory value for money. Staff are well qualified, experienced and access good continuing professional development. Too many learners do not complete on time.

What does Skills Academy for Health need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve and sustain learners' overall and timely success rates by improving target setting and monitoring of learners' progress, and through better planning of assessment.
- Ensure that individual learning plans and reviews consider and record specific targets that reflect the complete learner journey. Increase the frequency and consistency of assessment across the provision and reinforce with employers their obligations to support the learners to ensure they can always access learning and assessment.
- Extend the work in mapping progression routes to cover all parts of the provision. SAfH and their partners should have a working knowledge of progression routes and be able to adequately advise learners at all levels.

- Further develop and implement quality improvement arrangements by continuing to improve the use of data monitoring and analysis and reporting systems, so that all managers and subcontractors are aware of trends and changes across all areas of provision.
- Develop clear and robust strategic plans for the long-term of the organisation to ensure that changes are implemented and their impact monitored.
- Identify and appoint a strategic lead on equalities and diversity to promote best practice.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the good level of help and support provided by assessors
- courses that fit in well with working days
- the rapid response made to requests for help
- being given more responsibility at work
- being given the opportunity to move on to bigger and better things
- being able to achieve a qualification
- being respected.

What learners would like to see improved:

- a minority of learners would like the opportunity to do additional courses
- more frequent and regular opportunities for assessment.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like about the provider:

- having a very good relationship with the organisation
- the very responsive and flexible nature of the organisation
- SAfH's good understanding of employers' needs
- the commitment to breaking down barriers and supporting the local community to participate, use and benefit from the learning opportunities
- the improved responsiveness and commitment from assessors.

What employers would like to see improved:

- no improvements were identified.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

11. SAfH demonstrates satisfactory capacity to make and sustain improvements. Recent organisational changes are beginning to have a significant impact on the provision. Increasing numbers of learners are achieving the best outcomes of which they are capable. Overall success rates show a significant trend of improvement and are now above the national average for most learners. Whilst remaining below national rates, the number of learners completing their framework within the expected timescale is improving. Success rates for young apprentices are high.
12. SAfH has identified its key priorities for improvement. There is a shared vision and set of priorities to drive the provision forward and managers set a clear lead in the development of the programmes. However, long-term planning to ensure the stability of the organisation is not clearly established. Whilst targets are set, they are not used effectively to bring about improvements, or to monitor progress. A supportive but challenging management style motivates staff and encourages healthy competition across and within subcontractors. Management information is used appropriately to analyse overall performance. Data are collected on the outcomes for different groups of participants, although this is not used fully to monitor and improve performance.
13. The self-assessment process is thorough and inclusive. The self-assessment report used for the inspection is the first that SAfH has produced. Inspectors agreed with all of the judgements in the self-assessment report; most grades proposed through self-assessment matched the grades proposed by inspectors.
14. Quality improvement arrangements are incomplete. Data are not used effectively to monitor and improve performance of staff and learners. Assessment and tracking information is not used consistently to ensure that all learners achieve well. There are no arrangements to observe aspects of the provision such as assessments, reviews or initial assessments; arrangements to observe teaching are insufficiently developed. Monitoring of subcontractor performance is effective, although systems to ensure consistency of the participant experience are underdeveloped. Engagement with learners, employers and staff is good; however, their feedback is not used sufficiently to bring about improvements in the provision.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

15. Learners enjoy their training programmes and overall success rates are satisfactory; many learners make significantly better progress than is expected of them. Success rates for Train to Gain are satisfactory and are above national rates. Outcomes for learners aged 14 to 16 are good and increasing numbers of young apprentices are achieving high grades. Male and female learners achieve broadly similar success rates, as do those from different ethnic groups.

16. Success rates for learners completing within their expected timescales are low. Since 2007/08, the number of learners achieving their qualification in their expected timescale has increased, but rates remain significantly below the national averages. SAfH have identified this as a key area for improvement and current data for 2009/10 identify that most learners are completing their qualifications within the expected timescales.
17. Learners enjoy learning and take pride in their work. They develop a good range of workplace and social skills and benefit from their training programmes. They make good progress in the development of caring skills and understanding the needs of those they are caring for.
18. The standard of learners' work is generally satisfactory, and in some cases good, and this equips learners well for further study or employment. Learners' progression into further study or employment is good, and is particularly strong for learners aged 14 to 16. Many learners have progressed on to other courses that further enhance their value in the workplace and their own sense of worth.
19. Learners feel safe at work; they demonstrate safe working practices and have a good understanding of the health and safety procedures in their workplace. They understand their rights and responsibilities at work.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

20. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessors share their extensive, relevant industrial experience in vocational areas with learners and use it well in planning activities related to employment practices. They are skilled motivators, encouraging learners to participate fully both in direct training workshops and workplace activities. Mentors work particularly well with cadets to develop their skills. Whilst the teaching of the vocational subject is effective, understanding of equality and diversity is not sufficiently reinforced in teaching.
21. Provision for learners aged 14 to 16 is particularly good. These learners, who include disaffected learners or those at risk of dropping out of school, receive a very good introduction to the provision. Teachers act as good role models and many learners who had little or no educational aspirations are motivated to achieve highly. Teachers plan activities very well and make good use of their occupational knowledge to make learning enjoyable. They help learners to develop self-confidence, interpersonal skills and to take responsibility for their behaviour.
22. Training rooms are good with a wide range of access to information and communications technology (ICT). SAfH is very active in developing new materials across the provision and lead the sector in creating both e-learning resources and paper-based materials. Business administration learners have limited access to subject-specific learning resources.
23. The quality and frequency of assessment is varied. Not all learners have regular access to assessment and a few learners have long gaps between assessments.

This has been identified by SAfH as a key area for improvement. Assessment and tracking information are not always used consistently across the curriculum to enable learners to achieve their potential outcomes. The majority of learners receive useful verbal feedback from assessors on their work; however a few assessors do not sufficiently record details of observed assessments.

24. Overall, initial assessment is satisfactory. However, the process to identify literacy, numeracy and language support needs is not systematic, with variations across subcontractors. SAfH is aware of this issue and is currently revising its processes. A new member of staff is developing a whole organisation approach to skills for life, including initial assessment. Where the provider identifies that learners have a development need, the teaching of literacy, numeracy and language is good.
25. Planning of learning does not include all aspects of the learner experience. Learners access a wide range of training from their hospital training which is not included in learning plans. Many individual learning plans lack detail and target setting does not clearly identify what the learner needs to do to make progress. Progress monitoring during reviews lacks the clarity and detail needed to develop effective action plans. Employers are not always involved in reviews. SAfH and its partners have recently developed monitoring and tracking processes but these are not yet used by all subcontractors to measure learner progress. Target setting for young apprentices is good; however, employers are not fully involved in setting them targets or planning their learning in the workplace.
26. The range of provision across the regions is good and provides learners with a choice of options in the health care sector. SAfH provides a range of routes into the sector which include pre-employment training, cadet programmes aimed at 16-19 year-olds, targeted provision for young people at risk of becoming not engaged in education, employment and training, work with speakers of other languages and Train to Gain programmes in both health and social care and business administration.
27. Planning for progression is insufficiently developed. All three regions have developed some innovative programmes, however this information is not shared across or within the regions. Not all learners have access to clearly planned progression routes and opportunities to progress beyond national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 3 are limited for Train to Gain learners.
28. Partnerships with schools and employers are particularly good. SAfH is working very closely with the strategic health authority to re-establish a coherent training programme to encourage young people into the sector and ensure the continuing professional development of existing health service staff. In the North West, SAfH brokers work with 62 hospital trusts across the region, supporting and developing a range of bespoke training and development packages for staff. They facilitate a regular forum to encourage sharing of practice across trusts to improve the quality of provision for all learners. SAfH takes a strong lead in developing a range of materials with partners to meet the

needs of both employers and learners. Partnerships with schools are strong, especially in the North East. Staff from SAfH and schools work very well together to decide and amend the curriculum.

29. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory, with individual support for learners by assessors and tutors being good. Staff are flexible in their approach to meeting the needs of learners, completing assessments in unsociable hours and giving additional support whenever requested. Personal support is supplemented with a range of high quality learning materials. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory, and good for young apprentices. Train to Gain learners have limited access to impartial advice and guidance; the quality available is dependent on the knowledge of individual assessors. SAfH is developing materials with its various partners to improve guidance for adult programmes.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

30. Senior and operational managers within the organisation provide a strong vision to inspire, motivate and promote high standards in the healthcare sector. Senior staff have managed the complex changes well during the recent reorganisation. Lines of reporting and accountability are clear. Staff are passionate about their work and use their considerable knowledge, experience and expertise to forge new partnerships and funding opportunities. They develop new products and services and design and implement programme pathways in the sector and allied occupational areas, to provide good skill development and job progression opportunities for learners.
31. SAfH makes good use of national and local information to develop the provision. Senior managers make good use of their representation on national advisory groups to keep ahead of national government initiatives. Operational teams provide good information, advice and guidance to hospital trusts, employers and training providers. They share information to plan appropriate training and development for learners. Brokers play a key role in promoting training and the benefits it brings to the workplace.
32. The use of targets to raise the standard of provision and manage performance is weak. Target setting is not systematically used to focus the direction of progress or to track and measure improvement. Action plans to improve the quality of provision lack clear and realistic targets.
33. The board and sub-committee provide clear direction and a strong focus on establishing common values and key principles to inform the development of the provision. More recently, the levels of detail for performance management in the reporting process to the board have improved significantly. However, slow progress has been made in providing a strategic plan to ensure the implementation of the key principles and future direction of the business. SAfH has no clear long-term plan to ensure stability of the core business.

34. The safety and well-being of staff, learners and clients takes a high priority. Strong and effective links have been established with local safeguarding boards. Incidents and accidents are particularly well managed. Policies and staff guidance are used appropriately to ensure all learners are safe. All relevant staff have completed an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check which is recorded in a single central record. Learners have a good understanding of safe working and the wider aspects of safeguarding. Good arrangements are in place to risk assess and support the most vulnerable learners whilst on placement, to ensure they and those they are working with will be safe.
35. Promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Training is provided for all staff and appropriate policies and procedures are in place. Learners are clear about policies on harassment and bullying. A culture of respect for learners with disabilities and/or from different cultural groups is promoted. Assessors know their learners well and carry out appropriate early interventions to address any identified barriers to learning. However, not all learners have a clear understanding of equality and diversity legislation in the workplace, and their understanding of diversity is not always explored, challenged and reinforced at reviews. Equality and diversity impact measures are set and monitored; recent initiatives have had an impact on increasing the number of males and minority ethnic learners. Data are regularly collected and analysed, although actions to improve the performance of diverse groups are not sufficiently challenging, and monitoring of their progress is insufficiently rigorous.
36. SAfH has a good range of partnerships that are effective in promoting inclusion in local communities. Projects in London are particularly effective at working with learners from a range of minority ethnic communities. The organisation is actively involved in providing a range of programmes to support unemployed adults to return to employment and is responsive to the feedback received from learners, employers and stakeholders. Operational staff use the network of employers very effectively to discuss workforce development and plan specific training issues and future plans. Learner and employer feedback is not systematically captured and used to improve the quality of provision. Arrangements to engage learners and employers in the wider aspects of the development and design of the curriculum are at an early stage.
37. SAfH makes good use of self-assessment to improve the quality of provision. Self-assessment is inclusive and associated action plans are monitored regularly. Staff have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of the organisation. The self-assessment report effectively includes the analysis of individual self-evaluations from the regions. The quality improvement plan has been used well to ensure rapid improvement to learners' overall success rates in a short time. However, many of the quality processes are recent, and focus on compliance rather than continuous improvement; they are not yet systematically applied across all regions. SAfH has identified this as an area for improvement and has recently revised its procedures.
38. Arrangements to evaluate performance are not sufficiently embedded. Data are not sufficiently well used to develop appropriate actions. Management

information is not used systematically to inform and influence management decisions. Realistic targets are set for learners' performance but these are not always analysed and reported on at a senior level. Success rate data have only recently been used to plan interventions, improve outcomes and identify inconsistencies in the monitoring and auditing of key training activities. SAfH recognises the use of data as an area for development and is currently introducing a comprehensive management system

39. Resources are well managed and SAfH offers satisfactory value for money. Financial management is satisfactory; historical data inaccuracies have been effectively resolved. Success rates are satisfactory, but too many learners are making slow progress. The quality of resources for staff and learners are good. Learners across the regions benefit from the effective use of e-learning products. Within the regions capacity building of staff is fostered through good peer and mentoring support. Sustainability, recycling and a commitment to a paperless environment are strongly encouraged.

Subject areas

Health and social care

Grade 3

Context

40. Currently 717 learners are working towards level 2 and 3 qualifications in health and social care. Two hundred and two learners are young apprentices working towards a range of level two health and social care qualifications as part of the BTEC diploma. Learners from 18 schools are participating in the Young Apprenticeship programme. Their training takes place either in their school or in local training venues.

Key findings

- Success rates have improved significantly and in 2008/09 were just above national averages. Timely success rates are low. For Train to Gain learners in 2008/09 they were 24 percentage points below the national rate. SAFH recognises this issue and has put in place measures that are taking effect. Timely success rates so far for 2009/10 are satisfactory, as is the progress made by new learners.
- For young apprentices, overall success rates have been consistently high over the last two years, and were 82% in 2008/09. Increasing numbers of learners are achieving high grades. Students enjoy their learning and in many cases make good progress. They develop good learning and employability skills, such as undertaking research and taking part in discussions and presentations.
- The standard of learners' work is good for Train to Gain and very good for young apprentices. Learners enjoy the opportunity to do new activities; those aged 14 to 16 are inspired to stay in school and many progress to further education. Many have increased their job role and responsibilities and others have gained promotion as a result of their qualifications and training.
- Generally, outcomes of initial assessment are used appropriately to plan learning and assessment. However, this assessment does not consistently identify specific literacy, numeracy or language support needs for all learners. When needs are identified, additional support for learners is good.
- Planning of learning is weak. Individual learning plans do not clearly identify all aspects of the learner's programme and learners are not provided with sufficiently clear and challenging written targets. Reviews do not effectively target what the learner needs to do to progress and do not coordinate on- and off-the-job training sufficiently.
- Assessment processes lack rigour, and for many learners opportunities for assessment are limited and infrequent. Feedback to some learners is limited and does not sufficiently enable Train to Gain learners to develop knowledge and skills. Feedback gives insufficient guidance to the learner on how to progress.

- Resources are generally good and staff have good levels of skills and experience. Resources to support learning are good and e-learning is used well. Investment in high quality accommodation and resources has improved learners' training and workplace experience.
- The range of provision meets the needs and interests of learners and employers. Well-established partnerships provide good employment opportunities. Employers value learners' work. Standards of learners' work are good. Progression opportunities vary across the provision and most Train to Gain learners do not have the opportunity to progress beyond level 3. Some are not aware of progression opportunities outside of SAfH.
- Partnerships are strong and are used effectively to promote and support learning and meet employers' needs. The provider offers employers good advice and support to establish whole-organisation schemes for increasing literacy, numeracy and occupational skill levels within the workforce.
- Support for learners is good. Learners can make immediate contact with assessors through different methods of communication during unsocial hours. Learners and managers value this good support. Arrangements for accessible, independent information, advice and guidance in some regions have only recently been implemented and currently have little impact.
- Safeguarding is good; tutors and assessors have participated in training and are able to deal effectively with safeguarding issues and concerns. The promotion of equality and diversity is covered well during induction and mandatory training; learners apply it well in the workplace. However, both safeguarding and equality and diversity are only briefly covered in reviews and assessments.
- Operational management is good. Staff are appropriately qualified and have valuable professional experience that contributes to motivating and inspiring learners. Use of data is weak, but improving, particularly in the monitoring and managing of learner performance. Staff are fully involved in the self-assessment process.

What does Skills Academy for Health need to do to improve further?

- Continue the focus on success rates to ensure that the significant improvements are sustained.
- Make better use of progress reviews and learning plans to ensure learners and managers have clear targets that will help learners to complete their qualifications within the planned timescales.
- Improve the consistency of initial assessment across the provision to ensure that all learners with additional support needs have access to the good teaching and learning.
- Promote and reinforce safeguarding, and equality and diversity, during assessments and reviews.

Grade 3

Business, administration and law

Context

41. Currently, 110 learners are working towards qualifications in business administration, customer service and management. Most learners are on Train to Gain programmes with a minority on ESF provision. Learners are working towards qualifications at levels 2 and 3. All learners are employed and can join the programme at any time. All training and assessment is carried out in the workplace.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. In 2008/09, the first full year of the programme, overall success rates were just below national rates at 78%. Data for 2009/10 show an improving trend to 90%, eight percentage points above the national average.
- A low proportion of learners complete their qualifications within agreed timescales. SAFH has identified this as a priority for action. Recent performance management of subcontractors and improved assessment planning are beginning to lead to improvement. Timely success rates so far for 2009/10 are satisfactory, as is the progress made by new learners.
- Learners develop good workplace skills. Many have improved their skills in managing complex working roles in areas where high levels of patient care and a high degree of accuracy in recording patient details are required. Some learners work with complex spreadsheets to record clinical trials and monitor outcomes of audits on infection control across the hospital.
- Learners feel safe. They know who to contact if they have concerns related to their own safety or that of others. Appropriate arrangements are in place to support lone workers, or those working late at night.
- Initial assessment is satisfactory; it takes place at interviews and makes good use of appropriate assessment processes where both previous learning and specific support needs are identified. However, it does not systematically identify specific support needs. Where support needs are identified, learners are usually referred promptly to other providers.
- Planning for individual learning is weak and lacks continuity. Target setting is not sufficiently focussed and too few learners take responsibility for the planning of their own learning.
- The monitoring of learner progress is satisfactory. Whilst most employers are involved in the review of learners' progress, reviews do not provide learners and their employers with clear information to plan future assessments and work roles. Assessors do not consistently reinforce learners' understanding of equality and diversity or health and safety during reviews.

- Resources are satisfactory. Training rooms across the provision offer good learning environments with a high standard of ICT. Staff are well-qualified and make good use of their expertise to inspire and motivate learners. The use of e-learning is underdeveloped. Many learners do not have access to vocationally relevant resources.
- The range of provision meets the needs of learners and employers. Visits to learners fit into their working patterns. A range of progression opportunities is available to learners in different job roles, although opportunities to progress beyond level 3 are limited. Partnership working with employers is strong. Employers play an active role in developing programmes.
- Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Assessors are responsive and flexible and provide learners with effective support in the workplace. Learners receive appropriate information advice and guidance, although for many learners the quality of this advice is dependent on the knowledge of individual assessors.
- Improvements are taking place to the management of the area. SAFH has a clear view on what is required to continue to raise achievement levels and improve communications. Target setting is not used effectively to improve performance. New policies and procedures for quality improvement are in place but have not had sufficient time to have an impact.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are good. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory.

What does Skills Academy for Health need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve timely success rates by strengthening individual planning of learning.
- Improve the use of individual learning plans; ensure all action plans have precise targets to help staff, learners and employers monitor individual progress.
- Ensure programmes and progression opportunities are clearly identified and matched to the needs of learners by identifying their career aspirations, existing qualifications and employers' needs.
- Ensure that learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity are clearly reinforced at reviews.

Information about the inspection

42. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's head of education as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the local SFA and data on learners and their achievement over the period since receiving government funding for training.
43. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the college. They also observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in all of the subject areas the provider offers.

<p>Record of Main Findings (RMF)</p> <p>Skills for Health</p> <p>Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; 16-18 Learner responsive: FE full-time and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including E2E); 19+ responsive: FE full- and part-time courses; Employer responsive: Train to Gain, apprenticeships Blank Column: insert DWP employability programmes (including Workstep), or Judicial Services or nextstep as appropriate</p>
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Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners at the time of inspection Full-time learners Part-time learners	1,440	202	1,238
Overall effectiveness	3	2	3
Capacity to improve	3		
A. Outcomes for learners	3	2	3
A1. How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3		
A1.a) How well do learners attain their learning goals? A1.b) How well do learners progress?	3 3		
A2. How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2		
A3. How safe do learners feel?	3		
A4. Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*	n/a		
A5. How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*	n/a		
B. Quality of provision	3	2	3
B1. How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3		
B2. How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	3		
B3. How well do partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2		
B4. How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3		
C. Leadership and management	3	3	3
C1. How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	3		
C2. How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*	3		
C3. How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2		
C4. How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3		
C5. How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3		
C6. How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3		
C7. How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3		

*where applicable to the type of provision

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