

The Beauty Academy Ltd

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates

28 February–2 March 2017

| Overall effectiveness | | Inadequate | |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Inadequate | Adult learning courses | Inadequate |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement | | |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Requires improvement | | |
| Outcomes for learners | Inadequate | | |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | | Not previously inspected | |

Summary of key findings

This is an inadequate provider

- Safeguarding arrangements and processes are ineffective and weak.
- Too few learners on flexible 'long' courses make sufficient progress, remain on their programme and achieve their qualifications.
- Too few learners progress into further training or employment on completion of their programme.
- The processes and procedures for observing and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are weak.
- Leaders have not fulfilled their obligations under the 'Prevent' duty; learners do not have an understanding of how to keep themselves safe from the threats of radicalisation and/or from extremist groups.
- Too many learners do not receive sufficient information, advice and guidance to ensure that they understand the assessment requirements of the course or further training and work opportunities available to them.
- Leaders have not taken effective action to ensure that tutors identify English and mathematics errors in learners' work or encourage learners to improve their English and mathematics skills.
- Leaders have been too slow to implement effective quality improvement arrangements and take sufficient action to improve the quality of provision. Self-assessment and quality improvement arrangements are weak.
- Leaders do not use data sufficiently well to monitor learners' progress or to inform the self-assessment process.

The provider has the following strengths

- Current learners on recently introduced 'short' courses make good progress and most achieve their qualification.

Full report

Information about the provider

- The Beauty Academy Ltd is an independent learning provider and has a training centre in the city of Cambridge with further training centres in London, Birmingham and Manchester. It provides specialist training in beauty therapy for adult learners as part of the government advanced learner loan initiative.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Urgently ensure that all safeguarding arrangements and processes are effective.
- Monitor rigorously the progress of learners on flexible 'long' courses and ensure that they are better prepared for their assessments and examinations.
- Secure the destinations of learners on completion of their courses so as to inform accurately the planning of the curriculum.
- Apply robust quality assurance processes in order for the evaluation of the provision to be accurate; put in place a challenging and realistic action plan using accurate performance data and information that will help lead to rapid improvement.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - tutors plan and sequence effectively assessment for learners on flexible 'long' courses
 - tutors plan learning sessions to meet the different abilities of learners in order for them to make the progress expected of them
 - tutors enable learners to improve and develop good English and mathematics skills
 - leaders provide effective feedback to tutors on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment practice and that all improvement actions are monitored thoroughly within agreed timescales.
- Ensure that obligations under the 'Prevent' duty are met. Leaders should ensure that staff and learners understand how to keep themselves safe from the threats of radicalisation and/or from extremist groups.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have been too slow to implement effective quality improvement arrangements, resulting in inadequate outcomes for learners, and teaching, learning and assessment that require improvement. Self-assessment is insufficiently critical and the quality improvement plan does not set sufficient actions and targets to improve the overall quality of provision. The observation process has for too long focused on assessment and compliance against lesson planning criteria rather than on the quality of teaching and learning or the progress learners make. Observers do not provide sufficient feedback so that tutors know what they need to do to improve their teaching practice. The collection and use of learner exit feedback are underdeveloped and the small sample to date indicates that too many learners are not satisfied with their learning experience.
- Leaders do not scrutinise data well enough to monitor performance and implement appropriate actions to improve. Leaders do not collect and evaluate routinely data on learners' progress and achievement. Leaders do not monitor the destinations of learners in order to identify rates of progression into employment or further learning and inform their planning of the curriculum. Strategic planning does not use data to plan appropriate medium and long-term specific and measurable targets to improve the quality of provision.
- Leaders do not have an effective strategy to promote the development of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) skills of learners. Tutors are not encouraged to highlight learners' shortfalls in spelling and grammar. Tutors do not encourage learners to develop further these skills or direct them to appropriate learning support resources. Centres are not equipped with ICT equipment, such as computers, to help learners gain these skills. Tutors do not ensure that learners' starting points are established to inform their teaching practice or identify learners' skills gaps or support needs.
- Leaders have not established productive working partnerships with relevant organisations to better support learners, enrich their experience and ensure that they receive impartial information, advice and guidance. Although a small number of employers engage and advertise job vacancies on a linked website, very few learners take up the opportunities to make contact. Links with appropriate agencies to raise awareness of self-employment, to provide insight into relevant industries or to refer to other learning opportunities are poor. These relationships have not been developed to consider work experience placements or to further promote awareness of working in the industry.
- Leaders have taken effective action to revise the curriculum. The recently introduced 'short' course for massage is meeting learners' employment needs and leaders' data indicates high achievement rates. Leaders have stopped recruitment onto the poorly performing 'long' courses in make-up and nail technology. Leaders have recently implemented improvements effectively as they have become aware of underperformance. For example, at one London centre a highly experienced tutor was appointed to improve the quality of teaching and learning and as a consequence performance has improved.
- Leaders ensure that vocational teaching and learning resources are of good quality and these are now being used effectively by the majority of tutors and learners on 'short'

courses. Each training centre is well equipped for beauty therapy training, with high-quality physical resources replicating industry standards. Recently introduced learning videos enable tutors to enhance their practice and bolster their teaching.

The governance of the provider

- The two directors of The Beauty Academy Ltd have close operational involvement in the business and have only very recently become aware of some of the significant improvements that are needed to improve the quality of the provision. However, to date they have not monitored performance and the quality of provision effectively. They have insufficient understanding of the requirements of delivering government-funded learning provision.
- Leaders' strategic planning is not formalised sufficiently to plan effectively to secure medium- and long-term aims and objectives which ensure high-quality teaching, learning and assessment and enable learners to improve their English, mathematics and ICT skills.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders have not undertaken Disclosure and Barring Service checks for most staff, including the designated safeguarding officer. Leaders have not established appropriate systems to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are followed through to a satisfactory conclusion.
- Too few leaders, tutors or staff have undertaken any training around safeguarding or the 'Prevent' duty in order for them to ensure that learners understand how to keep themselves safe. Leaders have very recently identified appropriate training for staff and plans are now in place for staff to complete this as a matter of urgency.
- Leaders do not promote British values to ensure that learners are prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders, staff and learners do not receive sufficient training in British values, or equality and diversity.
- Learners are not informed sufficiently on how to stay safe online. However, learners say they feel safe and understand to whom and how to report any concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The large majority of current learners attend a 'long' flexible learning course with block study at one of three centres over a six-, nine- or 12-month period. A small minority of current learners attend 'short' 16-week courses, of two days a week, combined with further independent study. Leaders introduced the 'short' courses at the beginning of the academic year.
- Too many learners following flexible 'long' courses do not complete their practical assessments and examinations or make the progress expected of them. Leaders and tutors do not ensure they establish information on learners' starting points or that feedback following assessment enables learners to improve their knowledge and

understanding.

- Leaders and tutors do not prepare learners on flexible 'long' courses well enough for their formal assessments. Tutors do not ensure that learners understand fully their formal assessment requirements or they do not attend on the set times and/or dates. Consequently, not enough learners complete their courses successfully.
- Tutors do not ensure that their theory teaching engenders the more able learners to make the progress of which they are capable. For example, too much work is set at the same pace and level and does not provide learners with sufficient opportunities to deepen their understanding and knowledge.
- Learners improve their speaking and communication skills well. However, tutors do not pay sufficient attention to the development of learners' writing skills. Tutors do not determine learners' English and mathematics starting points or provide learners with necessary feedback on significant errors in their spelling of key vocabulary and terminology or on their use of punctuation.
- Tutors are skilled and experienced, with good, current industry expertise, that they apply appropriately in practical sessions. Tutors make learning interesting and relevant for learners and enable learners to gain high levels of confidence in their development of a wide range of practical skills in beauty therapy. Learners on 'short' courses, the minority of the total volume of learners, receive good feedback and coaching in their practical sessions on how to improve and refine their skills further. As a result, they are clear what is expected of them and most work to these high standards.
- Most tutors utilise good-quality learning resources, including workbooks, diagrams, photographs and industry-standard salons, to reinforce learning effectively. For example, learners on 'short' courses gain a good understanding of facial muscles, using helpful worksheets and clear diagrams, which enable them to apply daytime, special occasion and evening facial make-up adeptly.
- Most learners on 'short' courses work productively in sessions and diligently complete independent work between sessions. For example, they produce illustrative case studies and a good standard of photographic evidence that demonstrate good skills development in their own time.
- Learners improve their understanding of diversity in relation to the diverse practical needs of individual clients, for example their differing body types and skin tones. Learners demonstrate good levels of tolerance and respect for their tutors and for each other. However, tutors do not promote equality in their theory teaching and consequently, few learners improve their understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

- Tutors do not enable learners to improve their English, mathematics and ICT skills as part of their learning courses. Tutors do not correct poor spelling, especially technical words and terminology; they do not motivate learners to use mathematics in their industry, for example, by calculating ratios and proportions when mixing products used in the beauty industry.
- Leaders and tutors do not promote the full range of career pathways or future training

opportunities available to learners on completion of their courses. For example, too few learners access the dedicated website used by a few employers to promote their job vacancies.

- Leaders and tutors have not provided training or promoted learners' awareness of British values or the dangers faced from those who promote extremism or radicalisation. Consequently, too many learners do not have an understanding of such fundamental aspects of life in modern Britain.
- Too many learners on flexible 'long' courses drop out of learning. A very high proportion of learners on 'short' courses attend their learning sessions, are punctual and adopt professional attitudes to their learning. For example, these learners wear their uniform with pride, show respect to each other and communicate well with their tutors and clients.
- Learners pay good attention to health and hygiene and their application in practical and professional beauty therapy practice. For example, learners are aware of the need to use disposable applicators to avoid cross-contamination when applying mascara to different clients.
- The small minority of learners who study on 'short' courses develop good practical skills valued by employers as part of their training. Almost all learners on 'short' courses complete an additional qualification at level 2 as a part of their study at level 3. As a result, these learners widen their understanding of different beauty treatments and adopt a broader skills base.
- Learners on 'short' courses improve their readiness for the workplace. For example, they often improve their confidence and communication skills working in pairs or teams to solve problems effectively.

Outcomes for learners

Inadequate

- Too few learners following flexible 'long' learning courses achieve their qualifications and complete their programme. For example, in 2015/16 only a quarter of learners achieved their qualifications and only one tenth did so in the expected timescales.
- Leaders' data for current learners enrolled on 'long' learning courses indicates that only a small minority have achieved their courses or are on target to do so in 2016/17. Too many learners studying 'long' courses do not complete their portfolios or make progress. Too many current learners on 'long' learning courses have either suspended their learning or have withdrawn from their programme with no opportunity to complete and achieve their qualifications.
- Significant achievement gaps exist between different groups of learners and between the different training centres for learners on 'long' courses. For example, a higher proportion of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve better than White British learners. Learners training at centres in London do not achieve as well as those in other areas of the country, such as Birmingham.
- Too few learners move into further training or employment on completion of their courses. Leaders do not know the destinations of most learners on completion of their courses.

- Leaders' data for the small minority of learners studying the recently introduced 'short' courses indicates a large majority complete successfully and all within their expected timescales. However, the proportion is only around a fifth of the total of current learners on courses.
- Almost all current learners on 'short' courses develop their practical skills well. They make progress towards the development of their practical skills, enjoy their learning and make at least the progress expected of them. Most of the current learners on 'short' courses are on target to achieve their qualifications.

Provider details

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Unique reference number | 1237200 |
| Type of provider | Independent learning provider |
| Age range of learners | 19+ |
| Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year | 462 |
| Principal/CEO | Mr Terry Hadley |
| Telephone number | 01284 703 400 |
| Website | www.thebeautyacademy.org |

Provider information at the time of the inspection

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----|----------|-----|---------|-----|------------------|-----|
| Main course or learning programme level | Level 1 or below | | Level 2 | | Level 3 | | Level 4 or above | |
| | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ |
| Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships) | - | - | - | - | - | 262 | - | - |
| Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age | Intermediate | | Advanced | | Higher | | | |
| | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ | | |
| | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| Number of traineeships | 16–19 | | 19+ | | Total | | | |
| | - | | - | | - | | | |
| Number of learners aged 14 to 16 | None | | | | | | | |
| Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding | None | | | | | | | |
| Funding received from: | Skills Funding Agency | | | | | | | |
| At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors: | None | | | | | | | |

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the academy principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. Inspectors used group and individual interviews and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Steve Hunsley, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Gary Adkins | Ofsted Inspector |
| Bev Cross | Ofsted Inspector |
| Kathleen Tyler | Ofsted Inspector |

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