

NHTA Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		18–21 May 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Outstanding-1
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement-3
Outcomes for Apprentices		Outstanding-1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding-1
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Outstanding-1

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is outstanding because:

- apprentices' achievements are outstanding; they make excellent progress and achieve their qualifications within the planned time
- the proportion of apprentices progressing from intermediate to advanced apprenticeships is exceptionally high; many progress well in the workplace and become valuable and valued employees
- apprentices develop very good English and mathematics, and personal and employability skills, allowing them to cope easily with routine calculations in their day-to-day work and communicate very effectively and professionally with a range of clients from diverse backgrounds
- employers make a valuable contribution to the training of their apprentices; they have an excellent working knowledge of the programmes, provide exceptional support and on-the-job training for their apprentices, and contribute very effectively to curriculum management and development ensuring that programmes meet their needs
- managers have developed excellent links with the local enterprise partnership and local authorities which have resulted in a very well-informed approach to curriculum development
- managers and staff demonstrate a relentless drive for improvement that has resulted in significant year-on-year improvements in outcomes and in teaching, learning and assessment
- managers and staff work very effectively with employers to provide excellent support that motivates apprentices to succeed and do the best they can
- apprentices benefit from a high proportion of good and outstanding lessons and training sessions
- managers and staff work very effectively to promote equality and diversity; apprentices have a good understanding of equality and diversity and of safeguarding.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that tutors in functional skills lessons provide sufficient challenge to develop further the skills of those apprentices who have already achieved a level 2 qualification.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
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- NHTA only offers apprenticeships in hairdressing and barbering at intermediate and advanced levels. All the provision is funded by the Skills Funding Agency.
- Apprentices' achievement of their qualifications in 2013/14 was outstanding. Provider in-year data show that the outstanding achievement rates have been sustained for a second year after significant year-on-year improvement since the last inspection.
- Apprentices achieve particularly well in functional skills tests, particularly in English and mathematics. They use their English and mathematics skills well at work, in tasks such as routine calculations of stock levels and requirements and in making first contact with clients while undertaking reception duties.
- Apprentices produce high-quality written and practical work and develop very good personal and employability skills. They perform competently and professionally in the workplace and quickly become useful and productive employees. For example, in one salon the apprentice was unable to answer the telephone in a professional manner and was ineffective in meeting and greeting clients when she was first employed. After six weeks, the apprentice was carrying out reception duties in a highly professional manner.
- Most apprentices make much better progress than expected from their qualifications on entry to the programmes; a very high proportion of apprentices enter the training programmes with various additional learning needs or skill shortages in English and mathematics, but these do not hinder their progress.
- All apprentices, irrespective of their background, gender, ethnic origin or additional learning needs achieve at the same exceptionally high level. There are no under-performing groups of apprentices.
- The proportion of intermediate apprentices that progresses to advanced programmes is exceptionally high; most apprentices continue in employment in the hairdressing profession and many achieve promotion and advancement.
- Apprentices gain excellent English skills and communicate highly effectively with their clients, colleagues, managers and employers. During client consultations they listen attentively to the requirements of their clients and incorporate this into their plan for styling. They advise clients on a range of options and build a good working relationship with them. Apprentices use their English skills effectively in a variety of professional contexts.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding because almost all teaching, learning and assessment are good or better and support for apprentices is excellent, which reflects the exceptionally high proportion of apprentices that successfully complete their qualifications and progress to higher qualifications and sustained employment.
- Tutors provide a very high level of individual challenge in the classroom which helps apprentices to progress and achieve at an outstanding rate. Apprentices benefit from excellent academic and pastoral support both in the workplace and in the training salons. Staff hold regular and highly-productive meetings where they discuss the progress of each individual apprentice. The prompt and effective support and individual challenge to learners to do better that arise from these meetings have been instrumental in producing outstanding learner outcomes.
- Tutors ensure that apprentices are as busy and productive in the training salon and classroom as they would be in a busy professional salon. For example, apprentices are required to complete additional tasks while they are waiting for their clients' hair to process; this develops the multi-tasking skills required of the modern professional hairdresser effectively.
- Tutors use a broad range of teaching and learning resources and a variety of activities that ensure that apprentices critically evaluate their own practical skills, engage in excellent collaborative learning and develop their own skills independently.
- Apprentices develop good employability skills in practical sessions, display a highly professional approach to customer care and are confident, accomplished communicators. Apprentices have excellent access to large numbers of clients and models in the training salon, which helps them to develop very good practical and personal skills.
- Tutors provide fair, accurate and reliable assessment; they give feedback on written work which is constructive and motivational and identifies how apprentices can improve further. Tutors use searching questions very well to confirm apprentices' understanding of the practical application of skills.
- Tutors place a high priority on the development of apprentices' English and mathematics both in the academy and in the workplace, which helps apprentices to develop very good skills. For example, apprentices use their mathematical skills to calculate ratios and percentages accurately when mixing colours, and use accurate angle measurement in cutting. Apprentices produce a very high standard of written work. However, the level of challenge to extend further the skills of apprentices who have already attained a level 2 qualification is occasionally insufficient.
- Apprentices benefit from progress reviews that engage them effectively in good professional discussion with employers on progress in both the academy and work place. Many apprentices are developing the skills to critically evaluate their performance and complete their own progress feedback sheets.
- Apprentices benefit from excellent individual coaching in the workplace. For example, one learner was challenged to create a number of linked styles on one client in one session and in doing so demonstrated and further developed some excellent creative skills.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Apprentices have a good understanding of equality and diversity and speak confidently on many of the principles and practices. Assignments specifically related to equality and diversity helps them to develop a broader and deeper understanding of the subject. For example, apprentices researched and wrote about radicalisation and produced an information leaflet that was then used for raising awareness with other apprentices and employers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leadership and management are outstanding because managers have successfully implemented a range of strategies to improve outcomes for apprentices and teaching, learning and assessment. Outcomes are now outstanding for the second consecutive year and there is a high proportion of good and outstanding teaching and learning.
- Directors have high aspirations and expectations and have set a clear strategic direction, supported by excellent planning and ambitious strategic targets. In writing their plans, directors and managers have established good links between strategic and operational planning. Managers and staff are making excellent progress towards achieving their strategic and operational objectives.
- Apprentices benefit from excellent employer engagement in their apprenticeship programmes. Many employers have joined a working group that meets regularly with NHTA to support and improve the provision. Consequently many employers have an excellent knowledge of the training programmes and, as a result, are able to shape and influence day-to-day operations and curriculum development.
- The provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of apprentices, employers and the local community; managers have developed excellent links with the local enterprise partnership and local authorities which have resulted in a very well-informed approach to curriculum development.
- Managers and staff, working with apprentices and employers, make excellent use of data to review performance frequently and identify any concerns about individual apprentices. This approach to supporting apprentices by early identification of issues affecting progress and the provision of timely and excellent support has been instrumental in raising overall and timely success rates. Employers receive comprehensive reports on all aspects of their apprentices' training, which helps to resolve any issues that might hinder the progress of an apprentice.
- Managers make good use of their well-established performance management arrangements to bring about improvements in the provision. Managers have used the proven policies and procedures in a fair and equitable manner to deal successfully with staff who do not reach the standards they expect.
- The self-assessment process and report are evaluative and self-critical, and are instrumental in bringing about improvements. The self-assessment report and quality improvement plan make good use of a variety of evidence from a range of different sources on which to base the judgements.
- Managers and assessors promote equality and diversity successfully to apprentices and employers. Apprentices work in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance. In the training salon, apprentices benefit from access to a large number of clients and models from a variety of diverse backgrounds. During their everyday work, apprentices develop a good understanding of different cultures. They know how to engage with older people, young people and people from different ethnic groups. Apprentices can speak with confidence and sensitivity on many aspects of equality and diversity.
- The arrangements for safeguarding apprentices are good. Staff benefit from good training and updating and know how to deal with cases of suspected abuse of apprentices. Managers keep a comprehensive register of safeguarding incidents and monitor actions and intervene effectively to protect apprentices appropriately, where necessary. Managers have developed good links with local safeguarding bodies and local authorities. Apprentices have a good understanding of safeguarding and have produced a useful guide on the dangers of radicalisation in all its forms. They are protected from bullying, harassment and the dangers of misuse of the internet and know how to raise a concern. Apprentices feel safe.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

NHTA Limited

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	1						1		
Outcomes for learners	1						1		
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	1						1		
The effectiveness of leadership and management	1						1		

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Hairdressing	1

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	16-18, 19+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	200							
Principal/CEO	Ms Charlotte Moreland							
Date of previous inspection	February 2014							
Website address	http://www.nhta.org.uk/							
Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	49	1	33	13	N/A	N/A		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							

Contextual information

NHTA Limited currently offers hairdressing and barbering apprenticeships to apprentices and employers principally in the Greater Nottingham area. All apprentices are employed in 66 salons in Nottingham, Chesterfield, Mansfield, Newark, Loughborough, Derbyshire and surrounding areas.

In late July 2013 the Managing Director took on the role of Chairman and a new Managing Director was appointed bringing the total number of directors to three. In addition to these three directors, the Company employs five full-time tutors, a salon manager and support tutor, five full-time and two part-time administration and management staff.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

John Dunn AI

Three additional inspectors, assisted by the Quality Manager as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on apprentices' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of apprentices and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012

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[Piccadilly Gate](#)
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