

CVQO Ltd

Community learning and skills

Inspection dates

5–8 February 2019

Overall effectiveness		Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good	
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good	
Outcomes for learners	Good	
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Leaders and managers provide unique opportunities for young people in the cadet service. They have designed courses that accredit the knowledge, skills and experiences young people gain in the cadet forces.
- Leaders, managers and trustees have taken decisive and successful action to deal with the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.
- Leaders and managers have introduced well-planned staff development that has led to an improvement in tutors' skills. As a result, teaching, learning and assessment are now good.
- Learners benefit from tutors and cadet instructors who have extensive experience in the uniformed and emergency services and cadet corps.
- Learners make good progress from their starting points and value the qualifications they achieve.
- Learners develop the knowledge and skills they need for the next steps in their careers. Such knowledge and skills support them to apply for jobs in the Armed Forces or to move to higher education and apprenticeships.
- Tutors and learners exemplify cadet service values and British values in their behaviours.
- Volunteers do not benefit from the same level of monitoring and professional development as tutors. As a result, the quality assurance of their teaching is less rigorous.
- A small minority of tutors do not consider learners' previous knowledge, skills and experience sufficiently when they plan learning and support for them.
- Tutors and assessors do not correct spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in learners' written work. Consequently, learners repeat the same mistakes.

Full report

Information about the provider

- CVQO Ltd (CVQO) is a registered UK education charity, based in Frimley, Surrey. It offers a range of vocational qualifications to cadets and adult volunteers, from level 1 to level 7. There are over 1,500 cadet delivery centres throughout the UK, with around 1,000 in England. Most of the cadet learners take a level 2 qualification in teamwork and personal development in the community. Much smaller numbers are enrolled on level 2 music for practical performance or leadership and management at level 3. The qualifications offered are designed to enhance the cadet experience, add to the employability skills of the young learners, or to help them into further education or apprenticeships.
- CVQO has around 5,500 learners aged 16 to 18. They are taking vocational qualifications on a part-time voluntary basis, usually one evening a week after school or college, and at the weekends. Around one third of learners are in the Army Cadet Force, with another third in the Air Training Corps. Approximately one fifth of learners are in the Sea Cadets and the remainder are in the Combined Cadet Force or other youth organisations.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers should improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment further, by:
 - providing more training for volunteer staff and introducing robust quality assurance processes that include observations of their taught sessions
 - ensuring that all tutors and volunteers consider learners' previous knowledge, skills and experiences so that they can plan learning more effectively and better support all learners
 - ensuring that tutors and assessors help learners to recognise spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in their work so that they do not repeat the same mistakes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, managers and trustees have been successful in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, learners' outcomes and personal development, behaviour and welfare. All of these are now good. They have dealt effectively with most of the recommendations for improvement identified at the previous inspection. New systems and processes add more rigour, scrutiny and challenge to the management of provision. New managers have been appointed to key roles, such as teaching and learning development and human resources, adding greater levels of expertise and experience. As a result, the quality of the provision and the learners' experience have improved.
- Leaders, managers and trustees have realistic but high ambitions for the organisation. They communicate these clearly to the staff. They focus on the promotion and provision of opportunities for young people to enhance their knowledge, skills and experience. They are committed to the further improvement of the provision so that it continues to meet the needs of the learners and the cadet forces. They seek expansion opportunities that might benefit the young people with whom they work. They successfully pursue funding from a range of stakeholders to secure future training opportunities.
- Leaders and managers have maintained well-established relationships, working collaboratively with the cadet forces and other partners. They ensure that the range and content of the provision continue to be relevant and aligned to cadet priorities. As a result, learners benefit from a highly appropriate curriculum. This accredits the wide range of skills and experiences that they are exposed to within the Army, sea, air, fire and combined cadet forces. Senior leaders and trustees carefully consider the appropriateness of the qualifications they offer. They are active in sustaining the organisation, taking into consideration the constantly changing landscape of qualifications.
- Leaders and managers have focused on training the members of the teaching and learning team to develop their teaching skills quickly. All teaching staff are now qualified or are completing their teaching qualifications. More recently, staff have benefited from a carefully planned programme of professional development. As a result, tutors now have the skills they need to support their learners in the classroom. Tutors who are less confident or inexperienced receive further support and development.
- Volunteers within the cadet force units who deliver in the classroom are checked carefully and assessed to ensure that they are competent and can meet the standards of delivery required by CVQO. Although they receive some training and guidance, they do not benefit from the same professional development training that the tutors receive, and they do not have developmental observations with feedback. Because of this, they do not always know what they need to do to improve their teaching skills.
- Staff promote the value of diversity and learners demonstrate mutual respect and tolerance towards each other, staff and visitors. Staff and learners demonstrate British values in their behaviours very successfully. Learners have opportunities to voice their opinions and give feedback on their experiences. However, leaders and managers do not use this feedback effectively to make sure that any emerging concerns can be picked up quickly and acted upon.

The governance of the provider

- Trustees know the provision and understand its strengths and weaknesses. They are highly motivated and demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that CVQO is successful. They support the strategic direction of the organisation and ensure that it meets the needs of the cadet forces it serves.
- Trustees provide appropriate support and challenge to senior managers and hold them to account at full board and committee levels. They have a wide range of expertise and skills which help them to be effective in their roles. They provide good support to key areas of the organisation, such as safeguarding, finance, and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Learners feel safe at the cadet delivery centres. They have a good understanding of potential risks and know how to protect themselves and others from harm. Learners are aware of the support available to them through their cadet units and with CVQO. They know how to report any instances of bullying, harassment or concern and to whom. Leaders, managers and staff respond effectively to any concerns raised. They work closely with external partners and agencies when necessary.
- Leaders and managers have effective safeguarding processes and support arrangements in place. Managers responsible for safeguarding record and monitor any incidents in detail.
- Staff recruitment procedures are effective. Leaders and managers scrutinise very carefully the suitability of all candidates. All staff receive safeguarding training that is proper to their role. Staff attention to health and safety is good in the cadet delivery centres. Leaders and managers work closely with their cadet force partners to ensure that all cadet unit volunteers who work with their learners are fully compliant with the safeguarding checks required by the Ministry of Defence.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved. Learners enjoy their learning and produce work of a high standard. They receive help from tutors and cadet instructors who have extensive experience in the uniformed and emergency services and cadet corps. Tutors use their knowledge and experience effectively to contextualise training. They often use anecdotes from their own experiences to enliven learning sessions and to keep learners interested and engaged.
- The large majority of learners make good progress in classroom sessions. They develop a better understanding of the teamworking and personal skills they have gained. They become more confident about their future in higher education or the uniformed and emergency services that many aspire to join.
- Most learners enjoy the discussions and practical activities that tutors have developed. These help learners to reflect on the knowledge and skills they have gained while on outdoor pursuits and adventure activities. For example, tutors use a 'brick-building serious

play' activity and a variation on a tower-building game to analyse teamworking skills.

- Learners benefit from good-quality resources to support their learning. As a result, a high proportion of learners complete their workbook assignments to the required level at the first attempt.
- Tutors provide learners with immediate and effective oral feedback during discussions. This helps them to deepen their knowledge. In many instances, learners' current beliefs are challenged positively so that they have to think hard and widen their understanding.
- Learners develop their spoken English skills and technical vocabulary very effectively. Tutors have high expectations for the use of specialist and technical vocabulary within discussions. Learners read aloud from the learning guides and make presentations following group activities. They improve their skills and gain confidence.
- A small minority of tutors do not routinely identify and consider all learners' starting points and previous knowledge and skills. They do not plan group activities with additional challenge for the learners with more experience. As a result, a few learners do not make the progress they should in taught sessions.
- Assessors' feedback on learners' written work, while prompt, is not sufficiently helpful. Assessors do not help learners to understand what they need to do to improve their knowledge further and improve the answers they record. Learners whose abilities and work are of a high standard do not receive sufficient feedback to challenge them to extend their learning beyond the requirements of the qualification.
- Assessors do not help learners to avoid spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in written work. They do not provide learners with any strategies they can use for self-correction. As a result, learners repeat the same mistakes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Learners are polite and respectful to each other and to staff members. They speak positively and with confidence about their courses and how these will help them with their future career intentions. For example, learners apply to the Royal Air Force or to become commercial airline pilots.
- Learners talk meaningfully about their courses and what they learn. Learners have high aspirations. They gain university places and succeed with applications to join the police force.
- Learners develop their confidence and personal and social skills very effectively through peer working and group discussions. They demonstrate useful skills in teambuilding, problem solving and communication that prepare them for work.
- Learners' attendance is high. They arrive on time, and are keen to learn and fully prepared for their taught sessions.
- Tutors ensure that they embed British values into the values of the cadet forces and those of CVQO. Learners and staff demonstrate these effectively in their interactions.
- Learners understand the importance of healthy living. They know the benefits of exercise and produce a healthy plan for dietary intake to make sure they stay fit and well. Learners are able to make good links between the need to stay fit and healthy and the

requirements of the jobs for which they may apply. For example, those wishing to become a police officer know they must be able to run a reasonable distance.

- Learners demonstrate a good understanding of the diverse world we live in and the importance of tolerance. They give good examples of how people in their towns have suffered discrimination because of their culture or race. They recognise that gender-fluid individuals need to be better understood, particularly by potential police officers making arrests. Learners improve their community awareness through their written assignments.
- Learners benefit from useful careers information, advice and guidance. They effectively research the knowledge, skills and qualities needed for different job roles and learn the importance of completing an accurate job application form and CV. As a result, they are more confident when they complete application forms for future work or education. Army cadet learners benefit from opportunities to attend a residential 'work and apprentice ready' programme to support them to make decisions about their future careers. Because of this effective and useful programme, cadets have applied to be tank engineering apprentices with an international company.
- Leaders and managers celebrate the success of cadets. Learners are highly motivated by the opportunity to be nominated for the Westminster Award. Staff nominate those who have shown excellence and overcome adversity in their lives for this award. Finalists attend an awards ceremony held at the House of Lords. The 10 finalists are then invited to visit South Africa, where they benefit from the opportunity to teach in orphanages and work in local communities on environmental awareness projects.
- Learners have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and each other safe. During their classroom activities, they discuss how to minimise the risks in outdoor activities. They know what steps to take if an unexpected incident or accident happens while on an outdoor or adventure activity.
- Learners are safe and feel safe. Most learners have a basic knowledge of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. However, the large majority do not have enough knowledge about local risks of radicalisation and extremism and how these might relate to their own lives and future careers.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- The large majority of learners make good progress from their starting points. They value the qualifications they achieve. These enable them to apply for jobs in the uniformed and emergency services, to move on to higher education or apply for apprenticeships.
- Learners produce work of a high standard. They complete their assignment workbooks promptly. Staff support them effectively if they fall behind the strict completion deadlines. They use the knowledge and skills they gain both in and outside the cadet service. Learners explain how valuable such skills and knowledge are for their careers and jobs.
- Leaders and managers effectively support over the one fifth of learners who demonstrate the ability and desire to move on from level 2 publicly funded courses to level 3 qualifications for which they pay. As a result, learners achieve higher level qualifications to use in their careers.
- Leaders and managers do not collect sufficient destination data to analyse how useful the courses are for learners' careers. Where they do know the destinations, progression is

very positive. Learners move on to higher education, apprenticeships or employment. For example, they become chartered managers, study for degrees in forensic psychology, or enter the Armed Forces.

- Leaders and managers analyse accurately differences in achievement between specific groups of learners. Currently, there are no differences. For example, learners with declared learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve in line with other learners.
- Leaders and managers use data effectively to identify learners who are not reaching their targets. Consequently, learners receive effective support to make sure they complete their qualifications.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have introduced effective initial advice and guidance to make sure that learners are on the most suitable level of study and that they are able to achieve. However, the impact is not reflected in the 2017/18 achievements because some learners were enrolled under the previous regime.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1248225
Type of provider	Community learning and skills
Age range of learners	16–18
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	9,132
Chief Executive	Mr Guy Horridge
Telephone number	01276 601703
Website	www.cvqo.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)	0	0	4,821	421	210	0	0	0
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	0							
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 deputy chief executive officer, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and staff; 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

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