

# Enabling Development Opportunities Ltd

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

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**Unique reference number:** 1236712

**Name of lead inspector:** Martin Ward HMI

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**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Enabling Development Opportunities Ltd was inspected in September 2018. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement. The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in addressing the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 203 learners. The four largest areas of learning were adult social care, beauty therapy, personal training, and nail technology. Most learners were studying on level 3 diploma courses. Some 193 learners were funded through advanced learner loans. The provider has enrolled 10 apprentices on business and management courses, with training provided by a single subcontractor.

### Themes

**How much progress have tutors made in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by using information about learners' starting points, setting challenging work and providing constructive feedback?**

**Reasonable progress**

Tutors now gather more information on learners' starting points. All new learners assess their own levels of expertise in relation to the knowledge, skills and behaviours which will be required to achieve the qualification. They do this using selected statements from the qualification specification. However, too many learners complete this assessment without the support of the tutor and are unable to assess their starting points accurately. As a result, tutors are not using correct starting point information for all learners, from which to measure their progress over time.

Where learners have previous experience of elements of the course, tutors support them to complete some higher-level units, and others finish the course more rapidly. For example, a level 3 adult care learner completed some level 4 supervisory units, as this reflected his experience, job role and ambition.

On vocational courses, tutors provide oral and written feedback which challenges learners to improve their work. For example, tutors in adult social care challenge learners to state the specific actions they would take if they identified the potential abuse of a client. Tutors challenge learners in the nail technology course to improve the quality of their manicure and pedicure procedures through further reflection. Although tutors provide helpful feedback, their targets for learners are still based on unit or task completion. As a result, tutors do not reinforce the development of knowledge, behaviours and skills with learners. Learners are not clear about what they need to improve to achieve the highest standards.

Tutors on the beauty therapy course build effectively on learners' previous experience. Some learners are self-employed in the sector. Tutors use question-and-answer techniques effectively to involve these learners. Learners share their knowledge beneficially with the group. Tutors use learners' existing knowledge and skills to extend their understanding into new areas. For example, tutors in beauty therapy build on the skills employed by learners in body massage by applying them to Indian head massage.

In vocational areas, tutors develop learners' technical understanding and use of technical terms well. A learner on the level 4 adult care course clearly understood the importance of the concept of mental capacity when dealing with adults with learning difficulties. Learners in beauty therapy use the terms of 'effleurage' and 'petrissage' correctly when discussing the benefits of different massage techniques.

**How much progress have managers made in improving the quality of information, advice and guidance so that learners make good progress towards their next steps? Reasonable progress**

Managers have improved the process for providing initial information, advice and guidance. Managers and tutors meet with learners in person, and no longer recruit learners solely through social media. Managers and tutors provide learners with more information about the requirements of the course. Through taster sessions, managers and tutors ensure that learners realise that the course includes a balance of practical and written work. They explain the additional costs linked to materials and uniform. Managers communicate high expectations in terms of attendance. All learners complete initial assessments in English, mathematics and the knowledge, behaviours and skills that are related to the specific vocational qualification. As a result, prior to enrolment, learners have a good understanding of what the course involves.

Managers complete risk assessments with learners who have a medical or health condition. They ensure that appropriate modifications are made to the learning environment so that such learners are supported appropriately.

After enrolment, managers provide learners with a time for reflection. Within this period, learners can withdraw their registration without financial penalty.

During the course, tutors provide learners with guidance on their next steps. Managers have decided that all tutors will study for a level 4 qualification in information, advice and guidance. Although this initiative is not yet complete, current learners receive good support for their next steps. Through their own experience, tutors provide good advice on how to set up in self-employment. Many learners stay in their current employment and gain promotion.

Despite improvements in information, advice and guidance, too many learners have left their courses before the planned end date. Staff have not kept in touch with these learners and therefore have not been able to identify the reasons for their departure.

**How much progress have tutors made in extending learners' skills in English so that they are well prepared for higher-level roles? Insufficient progress**

Managers have very recently introduced the assessment of all learners' starting points in English. They identify the level of learners' English skills and the areas that they need to improve. Managers and tutors have not yet ensured that individual learners receive specific learning activities to address the weaknesses in their English.

Learners have improvement targets in English on vocational courses, but tutors do not make use of them or monitor learners' progress towards them. Learners are not aware of their targets for improvement in English, and therefore are not able to clearly explain the progress that they are making in improving their English skills.

Tutors' feedback to learners is too limited and general to be effective. Tutors record that learners need to improve their spelling and grammar, but do not provide ways of helping learners to improve. They do not set specific targets for extended writing or writing for different audiences, skills which would prepare learners for higher-level positions or further education.

Within learning plans, tutors' targets for the development of English skills are too general. For example, learners were not taking notes in a consistent and clear way, and so their tutor set the target of improving note-taking. However, the tutor did not explain what they would expect to see to demonstrate effective note-taking and did not check that learners were taking appropriate notes.

Managers have not provided any professional development or training for tutors on the implementation of the new approach to the development of learners' English skills. When observing lessons, managers make very general comments about the teaching, learning and assessment of English skills; they do not identify in sufficient detail how tutors are helping learners to improve. Managers do not encourage tutors to develop English skills in a planned way. As a result, learners do not make the progress of which they are capable.

**How much progress have managers made in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for learners through devising an effective quality improvement plan?**

**Insufficient progress**

Managers have developed a detailed quality improvement plan which covers teaching, learning and assessment, governance, initial advice and guidance, and the quality of staffing.

Senior leaders have now strengthened the quality improvement function by developing two new quality improvement roles, to replace the previous single manager role. These changes in the management team are only just starting to make a positive impact. Senior managers have not displayed effective coordination or oversight of quality improvement activities. Managers have been slow to improve the quality of the learners' experience.

In their quality improvement plan, managers do not evaluate the impact of their actions on learners. They do not set precise targets with a date when they will measure progress. For example, managers do not set a target for the percentage of learners to stay on courses. Despite efforts from managers, the number of learners leaving early remains high.

Managers have not developed an effective approach for improving the quality of teaching and learning. As at the previous inspection, observers focus on the performance of the tutor and do not report in detail on the progress that learners make in terms of their skills and knowledge. They do not evaluate the impact that teaching has on learning. Most observers provide generous praise and very little detail on how to improve. Managers do not use the outcomes from the internal observation of teaching and learning to develop the staff development programme.

At the previous inspection, inspectors judged that staff did not have sufficiently high-level teaching skills. Directors have invested in delivering the initial teacher training qualification to four existing assessors in the past four months. Trainers have focused on supporting staff to plan lessons which develop knowledge, behaviours and skills and secure higher standards of work from learners. Staff have begun implementing this approach.

Directors ensure that staff continue to update their vocational skills. To this effect, they offer staff five days per year to refresh their knowledge of the sectors in which they teach. This means that learners learn from staff who have up-to-date professional experience and expertise.

Directors made the decision to strengthen the curriculum leadership of the provision by splitting the role of performance manager into two curriculum managers, responsible for beauty therapy and care programmes. Early signs are that this is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Tutors on beauty therapy programmes meet once a week to share good practice, discuss

new approaches, learning resources, and learners' progress. Managers are planning to extend the sharing of good practice to all vocational areas.

After recent staff training, all staff use the online tracking and learning system. Tutors receive assignments from learners and mark them promptly. Tutors do not yet use the system well enough to consider the outcomes from initial assessment. Tutors do not provide specific enough learning targets for those learners who need to improve their English skills.

Managers have a clear grasp of the performance of tutors and course results. They hold staff to account more rigorously against their workload and profile of learners. Managers have identified tutors who need to improve their performance. However, in a small number of cases, learners have not achieved their qualifications due to poor staff performance or staff changes.

Managers have improved the monitoring of learners' destinations. A greater number of learners are gaining higher-level skills, promotions or pay rises at the end of their programme in care. An increasing number of learners are moving on from beauty therapy programmes into self-employment or further education.

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