



Intuitions Ltd
School of Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy



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1. Assessment Information

Assessment Type	ACCREDITATION REVIEW
Assessor's Decision	STANDARD MET
Assessor's Name	STUART MCRILL
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2. Organisation – Introduction, Aims, Objectives & Outcomes

Established in 1993, Intuitions Ltd School of Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy (Intuitions) is an independent training provider delivering all age apprenticeships, traineeships and classroom based provision. A direct Education and Skills Funding Agency contract (that includes Advanced Learner Loans provision) is the core income stream for this Harrogate based provider.

With a mission focussed on '*bringing the best learning experience to students through innovative, creative and passionate education*', Intuitions last met the **matrix** Standard in June 2014. Over the last three years the organisation has embraced the changing world of education and skills and is firmly focused upon shaping the sector's future suite of qualifications.

Since the last assessment the Managing Director and her leadership team have not only embraced the austerity funding challenges but invested leadership resource in developing relationships with independent hairdressing and beauty training providers across the north of England. Today Intuitions subcontracts to partner organisations across Yorkshire, Cheshire and the north east. At the core of this partnership is a comprehensive package of support that is managed by an Intuitions Director and includes data management, CPD, quality assurance and the implementation of self assessment and quality improvement practices.

Most learners on an Intuitions programme are aged between 16 and 19 but, increasingly, the sector generally is reaching out via talent development approaches to engage with adults wishing to retrain. Here, the Advanced Learner Loan is an important funding option. IAG is an integrated feature of the Intuitions learning portfolio and, whilst all staff have a part to play in supporting individuals on their hair and beauty learner journey, a number of key posts play a core role in supporting students to realise their learning, work, careers and life goals:

Centre Manager - very much at the IAG core and championing learner support across Intuitions, the post holder is central to the pre-entry and induction support. Alongside the Managing Director, the Centre Manager is a Designated Safeguarding Officer, with IAG delivery not only supporting learners with learning, work and career goals but also pastoral life challenges and goals;

Educators - with a caseload of learners, Educators support students at every step of the learner journey. Each Educator continues with their own professional practice which brings with it an IAG experience that reflects the changing trends across the sector and also the credibility that inspires individuals to aim to be the best possible hair and beauty therapist;

Reviewer - this experienced colleague visits students in their place of work and ensures one to one support enables students to reflect upon punctuality, attendance and safety (including safeguarding). The structured reviews capture the personal and professional goals realised and set new actions for the coming month or so.

Integrated, these roles ensure an Intuitions IAG service that is seamless and delivered in a very naturally occurring manner.

Accreditation Review planning commenced in the spring of 2017 although, with an integrated approach to IAG delivery, Intuitions prides itself as living and breathing continuous improvement with an ethos that it is continually inspection and assessment ready. The overall impression gained from this Review is of a high quality training provider whose increased hairdressing and beauty footprint has developed in parallel with enhanced quality IAG. Effective leadership provides high quality support to the workforce and robust communication ensures that staff consistently provide quality support and can make the links between IAG and the organisational milestones.

Throughout the Accreditation Review staff demonstrated a clear understanding of how, through delivering quality IAG, this golden thread of the learner journey links to the Intuitions Quality Improvement Plan and the 2016/17 ESFA key performance indicators. The overarching milestone for the organisation is a challenging achievement target of 85%. This remains a work in progress but one that the leadership team is firmly striving to realise. Currently achievement data is at 75% with IAG support at each stage of the learner journey critical to achieving sub targets of punctuality and attendance. Data analysis is robust and well managed by the Director. This monitoring leads to service delivery improvements which were showcased by the Centre Manager and the enhanced pre-entry service launched earlier this year.

The most significant development made to IAG delivery since the last assessment has been reviewing and then refreshing pre-entry support and help. Whilst taster days continue to be a part of school liaison activities, the emphasis in 2017 is upon days that combine theory and practical activities into a 'day in the life' approach. Taster days bring to the fore more explicitly the skills, but also attitudes and behaviours, that are essential to succeed in the sector. This methodology is achieved with a counterbalancing blend of hair and beauty reality alongside aspirational and motivational support. Increased recruitment practice confidence has led to Intuitions training solutions being marketed as up to a 4 year training programme comprising a seamless package of both a level 2 and a level 3 offer. Pre-enrolment questionnaires and learning style inventories are well designed and culminate in the new starter information pack. Whilst the motivation for strengthening these IAG practices has been to realise the 85% achievement milestone, it is as yet too soon to evaluate whether the investment has had its full impact. The indications though strongly suggest achievement data is on an upward trend with the 2018 Continuous Improvement Check providing a natural monitoring point.

Enhanced support in motivating students to embrace functional skills delivery has been an important development for Educators, with tailored support packages that have led to a 5% improvement in functional skills achievement in the 2016/17 year. Learner reviews are firmly focused upon maintaining retention key performance indicators with a supportive yet directive emphasis placed upon punctuality and attendance and the linkages between these behaviours and the time management employability skill. Short term action plans are well used to set short term targets. Clearly the emphasis here is upon capturing qualification units but also in part the defined attitudes and behaviours that have previously been defined as expected soft outcomes. At the Initial Assessment in 2014 Intuitions was very much at the foundation stages of monitoring and evaluating IAG impact. Three years on and IAG outcome based practices are more mature, with the whole workforce demonstrating a clear understanding of how bespoke learner support can enable individual, organisational and sectoral impact.

The Accreditation Review highlighted how the workforce ensures its learners feel safe, have time management and organisation skills, technical skills, study skills and self confidence. Educators consistently defined the IAG service with feedback from learners showcasing that they understood what they can expect from their tutor and assessor.

Learners were effusive about how Intuitions was an informed career choice with one student explaining:

'My educator has been there for me at every stage. She is so supportive. I was slipping behind with my course but I have almost completed my qualification. Intuitions have made me the hairdresser that I am today'.

Intuitions is nurturing hair and beauty talent for the future with high quality standards at the core of every feature of this provider. This focus upon quality is best captured by the words of an employer partner who remarked:

'Intuitions is our training provider of choice. They not only provide quality hair and beauty theory but also drive up aptitudes and standards. My Intuitions employees are exemplars and are much more commercially aware than those from all other local training providers'.

3. Strengths

A number of strengths were identified during the assessment. These are detailed below. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the **matrix** Standard.

- Intuitions leadership is visionary and firmly focused upon striving for excellence across all areas of the business. Although a relatively small provider, the organisation is centred upon influencing hair and beauty skills developments nationally and raising standards across its growing partnership base. Leadership of IAG provision mirrors this overarching rigour, with managers clearly showcasing how a quality IAG experience will in turn lead to student outcomes and realisation of wider business key performance indicators. The Managing Director leads by example and has created a culture of engagement, continuous improvement and innovation. A good illustration was given in the form of recently held strategic planning meetings where teaching, learning and IAG refreshment practices have been redesigned to ensure that forthcoming hair and beauty qualifications have a launch pad with robust quality practices. (1.2)
- Training suites clearly promote to students three underpinning organisation values of innovation, creativity and passion. The Accreditation Review showcased how the whole organisation brings to life the suite of values and integrates them across all aspects of their learner interface. With delivery staff not only occupationally competent, but also still practising their profession, they instil within the training environment these values and in so doing create another one - inspiration. Educators create a safe and welcoming setting for learners to aim higher and realise their potential. Feedback from students highlighted how their Educators and reviewer ignite a passion to build a compelling hair and beauty career. Staff too highlighted how they benefit from an innovative, creative and passionate Managing Director. (1.3)
- In recent months Intuitions has transformed pre-entry and induction centred support. As outlined above, the key business driver is to realise the overall achievement target of 85%. IAG is intrinsic to this goal, with the organisation focused upon ensuring that pre entry support offers a blend of hair and beauty taster activities, work related learning and initial assessments to ensure students make an informed choice that is both realistic and relevant to their goals and skill sets. Overseen by the Centre Manager, the learner probationary period is generating excellent feedback from the workforce and students with a 'no stone left unturned' approach to talent attraction at these early stages of the Intuitions learner journey. (3.2)
- The Observation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment (OLTA) is applauded as being particularly rigorous with an emphasis upon how staff ensure personal development, improved behaviours and learner welfare transparent throughout the framework. This OLTA cycle is the standard that Intuitions is integrating across its provider base to ensure consistency of approach. Stretch and challenge targets are raising standards and are welcomed by a workforce which is striving for excellence. (4.5)

4. Areas for Future Development

A number of areas for future development were identified during the assessment which may develop or enhance the service delivered. These are detailed below and for the organisation to consider as part of its ongoing continuous quality improvement actions. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the **matrix** Standard. These will form the basis for discussion at the Continuous Improvement Checks (CIC) conducted twelve and twenty-four months from the date of this Assessment, along with any other notable developments.

- Through the delivery of quality IAG, Educators continue to make a real difference to their learners. Feedback from students confirmed that these staff have transformed learner confidence, resilience, grit and determination, optimistic thinking, communication, organisation and career planning. However, with the exception of the gained qualification, the full impact of an Intuitions learning experience is not consistently captured. Revisiting approaches to more rigorously monitor and evaluate the full IAG impact will help showcase to students, their parents and the employer base the full impact of an Intuitions experience. Feedback from learners and employers highlights that any future Intuitions Careers Success 'Talent Passport' should include both enterprise and commercial awareness skills. Evaluation of the suite of attitudinal changes could be more effectively highlighted within the electronic learner review plan with evaluation practices more impact focused. (1.5, 4.2)
- Intuitions staff firmly embrace CPD and progression opportunities and were able to clearly describe the impact of recent training on the Prevent Duty, British Values and Safeguarding. Here the investment in training has informed IAG service delivery. Educators and managers deliver quality one to one support across a broad range of career, learning, work and life support needs. Looking ahead, the organisation is encouraged to consider investing in enhanced IAG training for one or two staff that play a championing role in IAG. The most obvious posts to consider would be the centre manager and reviewer where enhanced IAG is a core function. Exploring a training solution that meets the business needs of Intuitions could include an advice and guidance level 4 qualification or a coaching or mentoring programme. The latter might be particularly pertinent given that students often cite their Educator as being their career mentor. (2.4)
- The current IAG policy details the IAG service with a definition for students promoted across the learner handbook. Intuitions is encouraged to reflect upon the extent to which the definition and policy reflect the IAG service. In so doing it would seem sensible to ensure these processes reflect not only *what* the IAG service is, but also *how* it is delivered at the key stages of the learner journey and finally the *so what* factor which clearly outlines the expected soft outcomes an individual can expect to gain from their Educator's support and guidance (3.1)

The annual **matrix** Continuous Improvement Check will allow the organisation to demonstrate on an ongoing basis the developments they are continuing to make in order to support individuals <http://matrixstandard.com/continuous-improvement-checks/>. These may include the Areas for Future Development above.

Please note that annual Continuous Improvement Checks are mandatory and non-completion within the required timescale will impact on your organisation's accreditation.

5. Methodology

The following methods were used to gather evidence against the **matrix** Standard during the assessment process.

- One-to-one interviews with the Intuitions Directors (2)
- One-to-one interviews with managers and Educators delivering the service (6)
- One-to-one interviews with external partners (3)
- One-to-one and small group interviews with a representative sample of clientele (13)
- A review of strategic, service delivery and evaluation documentation which staff used to help illustrate business planning, implementation monitoring and impact
- Tour of the Harrogate training centre