

# Urban Futures London Limited

Not for profit

## Inspection dates

9–11 May 2017

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

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good provider

- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders, managers and staff have worked tirelessly and successfully to tackle the majority of areas for improvement.
- Senior leaders, managers and staff have high expectations for learners.
- Managers and staff track the progress of learners closely and intervene swiftly when their progress stalls. As a result, the majority of learners make good progress during their training.
- Staff provide very good support that helps learners to overcome their personal difficulties so that they are successful.
- Managers ensure that there is a very good range of high-quality work experience placements available to enable learners to develop a wide range of skills and knowledge. As a result, learners are well prepared for their next steps.
- Employers contribute well to the design of the learning programmes and, as a result, apprentices and trainees learn skills that employers require, in particular those at a local airport.
- Staff provide good advice and guidance that support most learners to progress into employment, further education or training.
- Managers do not use a wide enough range of management information to inform senior leaders of the progress being made in all areas and this stops them providing greater challenge on Urban Futures' performance.
- Managers' overview of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not sufficiently detailed for them to identify how further improvement can be made.
- The targets set for a few apprentices are too general and do not identify specifically what they need to do to improve. This slows the progress made by a minority of apprentices.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Urban Futures is a 'not for profit' social enterprise company established in 2001 that works to support young people and adults to help them gain the skills and qualifications they need to support their progress towards employment and long-term careers. The company provides employability training and a small number of apprenticeships on behalf of other providers as a subcontractor. Urban Futures gained its first contract to provide apprenticeships directly in August 2013.
- Urban Futures delivers apprenticeships for 16- to 18-year-olds and, from July 2016, traineeships to young people aged 19 to 24 from Haringey, other London boroughs and Essex. These are largely centred on supporting young people to take their first steps in employment in job roles within Stansted Airport in business administration, customer services and in health and social care. Since the previous inspection, there have been some staff changes at an operational level and a small overall reduction in the number of staff.

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of observations of teaching, learning and assessment so that judgements on the quality of teaching reflect the learning taking place and the progress that learners make.
- Improve the use and analysis of a wider range of management information and data so that senior leaders are fully informed of the performance of all aspects of the learning programmes.
- Improve the targets that staff set for apprentices so that they know what to do to improve.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders and managers have adopted a more critical approach to assessing the effectiveness of training programmes. As a result, they have an accurate understanding of the key strengths and weaknesses of the provision.
- Performance management is effective. Since the previous inspection, senior leaders and managers have successfully addressed the key areas of underperformance and maintained key strengths. For example, the improved advice and guidance that staff provide to learners – a weakness at the previous inspection – ensure that learners are well prepared for their next steps.
- Leaders and managers have successfully improved the quality of the apprenticeship provision since the previous inspection and it is now good.
- The high expectations that leaders and managers have for learners, many of whom have low prior educational attainment or are vulnerable, lead to an ambitious and nurturing culture throughout the organisation. Managers and staff go the extra mile for learners at times when they need extra support to help them stay in learning.
- Managers and staff know the learners well and maintain good contact with them after they complete their programmes. As a result, managers collect accurate and up-to-date information on the destinations of learners and continue to support them beyond the requirements of programmes.
- Young people are highly motivated to succeed and many become valued employees once they have completed their programmes.
- Managers regularly observe the teaching and training sessions for young learners and have an accurate view of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment overall. However, in their observations of teaching, learning and assessment, managers do not focus sufficiently on evaluating the progress that learners make. This hinders managers in identifying areas where improvements are needed and limits improvements in the quality of delivery.

### The governance of the provider

- The board of directors has a sound understanding of the key strengths and areas for improvement of the provision. A subgroup of the board, led capably by one of the directors, has routinely scrutinised actions taken by managers since the previous inspection to ensure that they are making the improvements necessary.
- The board provides regular oversight of the progress managers make in developing the provision and hold them to account effectively. However, the information provided by managers on the performance of programmes is not sufficiently detailed on all aspects of the provision. This prevents board members from providing further challenge to managers on all aspects of performance.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Managers have improved safeguarding arrangements since the previous inspection. Staff are now suitably trained.
- Safe recruitment and selection procedures are in place and managers ensure that new staff undergo all the required pre-employment checks.
- Staff respond well when they need to take action to safeguard learners' welfare. Staff liaise effectively with other agencies when learners need additional support and keep clear records of any safeguarding concerns.
- Managers have introduced regular sessions that ensure that learners routinely consider current affairs and contemporary issues such as radicalisation and extremism. As a result, learners have a good awareness of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.
- Learners feel safe and know how to stay safe online and in the workplace.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Staff comprehensively assess learners' needs and abilities at the start of their programme. This ensures that they get the help and support they need, for example to develop their English and mathematics skills.
- Staff provide effective advice and guidance to learners prior to enrolling on a programme of study. For example, apprentices visit prospective employers to gain an understanding of different work environments and the expectations that different employers hold. This ensures that apprentices are in the right workplace to support their learning and progression.
- Staff provide a good induction into the world of work and training and routinely discuss with young people the next steps available to them after they complete their training. This helps motivate young people and raises their aspirations of what they can achieve. For example, a few learners progress to study professional-level qualifications after completing their apprenticeship.
- Learners benefit from the skills of enthusiastic and experienced staff. Learners enjoy their learning in a supportive and encouraging environment.
- Workshops enable apprentices to develop well the knowledge and understanding they need to complete their qualification and become effective employees.
- Staff use a good range of resources to enthuse and motivate learners. A newly introduced activity, 'think, talk, do', prompts learners to reflect on what they have learned, and how this new knowledge can be applied in the workplace.
- Staff carefully track the progress of learners and act swiftly to put in place additional support for learners when needed. This helps the majority to make good progress and achieve well.
- Employers contribute well to reviewing the progress that learners make. For example, they provide clear feedback to trainees on work experience placements on what they do well and what they need to do to improve further so that they become effective

employees.

- Employers participate well in training programmes. For example, senior managers observe learners making presentations during classes and give them encouraging feedback. They give learners useful information about long-term job opportunities in their sector.
- In classes, staff use a good variety of teaching methods that ensure that learners participate well, such as the use of videos and role play.
- Staff promote equality and diversity effectively in classes. As a result, learners develop well their understanding of modern Britain and, for example, understand better the needs of those who have disabilities and the importance of not making assumptions about people based on their appearance.
- In a few cases, the targets set for apprentices by staff are too general and do not specify how and what learners need to do to achieve or by when. As a result, this limits the speed of progress for a minority of learners.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

- Young people acquire good skills that prepare them well for future employment, such as speaking in public and making presentations using information and communication technology. They take great pride in their achievements.
- Most learners develop excellent attitudes that stand them in good stead for their future roles. They attend well, dress in a professional way, are polite and courteous and become confident communicators.
- Learners significantly improve their self-esteem and maturity during their programmes. They make a useful contribution to their employers' businesses.
- Staff provide very good support to learners that helps them to overcome any personal difficulties and barriers that they face. As a result, the majority stay on track during their programme and achieve well.
- Staff facilitate interesting discussions with learners, which increase their respect and tolerance for each other and for those with different views to themselves. In classes, learners from different backgrounds cooperate and work well together.
- Most learners make good progress in improving their English and mathematics skills during their programmes. However, the small number of apprentices who have already achieved GCSE English and mathematics are not sufficiently encouraged to develop their skills further.

### Outcomes for learners

**Good**

- Current learners are making good progress. Most learners achieve equally well and there are no differences in the performance of different groups of learners.
- All current apprentices are on target to achieve their qualification, with the majority on track to do so on time. Almost all trainees successfully achieve their qualification.
- The standard of learners' work in portfolios and workbooks is generally good.

- The progression of learners after completing their training is good. The majority of apprentices progress to permanent employment after training and a few gain promotion with their employer. Most young people on the traineeship programme secure employment.
- The proportion of apprentices who complete their training successfully is improving, although in 2015/16, achievement rates were below the national rate. A small number of apprentices have left training early due to them progressing on to better paid employment, to full-time education and training or through personal circumstances.

## Types of provision

### Apprenticeships

**Good**

- There are currently nine apprentices in business administration, customer service and health and social care. Seven apprentices are working at intermediate level and two at advanced level. All apprentices are 16 to 18 years old.
- Leaders, managers and assessors plan and provide an effective, good-quality apprenticeship programme which meets the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship.
- Senior leaders and managers have responded well to the skills shortages at a local airport and work closely with employers to develop young people to become effective administrators and customer service staff.
- Managers and employers work well together to plan and review training and provide a supportive environment that ensures that apprentices develop a good range of vocational skills.
- Managers and employers have regular and effective communication that ensures that apprentices receive good support in all aspects of their development and understand the standards and skills required of them by industry and individual employers.

### Traineeships

**Good**

- There are currently six young people on the traineeship programme. Young people undertake classroom-based learning to prepare them for the world of work and develop their English and mathematics skills. All young people attend work experience placements.
- Managers ensure that there is a very good range of high-quality work experience placements available for young people, for example with national retail chains and internationally known companies.
- Learners develop very good skills, attitudes and behaviours that prepare them well for future employment. They are punctual and develop their self-confidence well, for example in talking to customers. They extend their vocabulary well through researching new words when developing their curriculum vitae.
- Managers and employers work effectively together to oversee work experience placements and closely monitor the effectiveness of these to ensure that they fully meet

the needs of learners.

- Staff provide good support to young people for their next steps, for example through promoting local job vacancies.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	59166
Type of provider	Not for profit
Age range of learners	16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	21
Principal/CEO	Steve Delaney
Telephone number	020 8352 5900
Website	urbanfutures.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 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	4	2	–	–	–	–	–	–
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	7	–	2	–	–	–		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	4		2		6			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	–							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	–							
Funding received from:	Education and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	–							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of training and quality, 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 employers; 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

Jon Bowman, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Pauline Dixey

Ofsted Inspector

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