



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

ORGANISATION: Global Knowledge Network Training Ltd

ADDRESS: Mulberry Business Park
Fishponds Road
Wokingham
RG41 2GY

HEAD OF ORGANISATION: Mr Allan Pettman

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of inspection: 6 August 2015

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: 10 September 2015

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the organisation

Global Knowledge Network Training Ltd (Global Knowledge) provides IT and business skills training to both public and private sector companies and organisations around the world. Its core training is focused in developing skills in using products from major IT vendor organisations such as Microsoft, Cisco, Juniper and Citrix. It also trains people in project and service management, business analysis and leadership development.

Global Knowledge was founded in 1995 and employs more than 1,300 people worldwide. The international headquarters are based in Cary in North Carolina, USA. The UK operation has its head office in Wokingham. The company is now owned by a New York based investment firm called Rhone. The change of ownership took place in January 2015.

2. Brief description of the current provision

Global Knowledge is Europe's largest independent IT training company with over 40 dedicated training centres in 12 countries and offering more than 1000 courses training 2000 delegates every day. In the UK it has four centres, two in London, one in Wokingham and one in Leeds. In addition, it operates in partner sites throughout the country, hiring rooms as required and ranging from Glasgow down to Poole on the south coast. The BAC accreditation relates to the UK provision only.

Global Knowledge uses a variety of approaches to its learning including instructor led, e-learning, mentored and collaborative learning at its training centres, within companies and on-line. Delegates from around the world can join classes remotely using web technology and high definition video. Most courses are of one week's duration.

IT professionals who develop and maintain IT systems require training and certification in the specific technologies that they are working with. The certification generally needs to be renewed periodically. The course content and the certification of the courses offered is determined by the companies that sell the technology, the IT vendors. The vendors produce certification pathways. The vendors also produce the course materials and text books. It is these courses that Global Knowledge is licensed, by the IT vendors, to deliver. Assessment for certification is undertaken through on-line examinations determined by the vendors, moderated by a third party and undertaken at secure centres. The training facilities at Global Knowledge include one of these assessment centres.

In addition to the courses determined by the vendors, bespoke courses are also provided to meet the needs of individual companies that may feature elements from a variety of different courses and vendors. In short, Global Knowledge continues to mount a wide array of short, skills and competence-based programmes. These are offered to approximately 21,000 delegates each year so that the company has an overall income of around £25,000,000 each year.

Global Knowledge has recently won a number of awards. The achievements include IBM Global Training Provider of the Year 2014 and 2015; Microsoft Learning Partner of the Year Award 2013 (UK); VMware Europe Middle East and Africa (EMEA) Region Training Partner of the Year 2014; and Cisco EMEA Region Learning Partner of the Year 2013 and 2015.

3. Inspection process

This interim inspection was carried out over half a day by one inspector. The inspection visit took place at the Wokingham centre of the company. Relevant documentation was reviewed and a meeting was held with the Operations Director for the UK and Ireland. A brief tour was made of the training premises at Wokingham where the inspector was able to see the advanced technology which is used during the training process. Additionally, the inspector was able to view some of the training being undertaken in London via this technology.

4. Inspection history

Full inspection: 11 – 13 June 2014

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

There have been few changes since the last inspection and these are largely cosmetic in nature or where the company has responded to recommendations made during the inspection of June 2014.

2. Response to action points in last report

The joining instructions should contain explicit reference to the need for full attendance at sessions.

Full attendance is implicit within the joining instructions sent to each delegate. However, Global Knowledge has agreed that the position would be strengthened by using the existing database for attendance to conduct quarterly reviews of attendance. In reality, the nature of the provision and delegates are such that trainers are well aware of any absenteeism.

Daily class registers must be maintained in addition to the signing-in at reception.

These are now taken and maintained in the normal manner. They will contribute to the database and reviews referred to above. The procedures are now included as part of the induction process for new trainers. Several other safeguards are also in place.

Delegates should be provided with a contact number for out-of-hours and emergency support.

Considerable discussion took place on this matter. The employer remains responsible for all such matters, whilst Global Knowledge is only responsible for the training provision, the contract being made with the employer. In the circumstances of the provision delegates are, therefore, still employees at the time of their training and all relevant contacts are made through the employer. Overseas employees are in continuous contact with their relevant trainers for the short period of their programmes.

Global Knowledge should ensure that delegates are made aware of the policies to avoid discrimination and for dealing with abusive behaviour.

The relevant policy is spelt out in Global Knowledge's complaints procedure. Individual attention is given to each complaint. There is also a Quality Manager who can be approached by individual delegates. The Quality Manager reports directly to the Operations Director.

Global Knowledge should ensure that international delegates receive appropriate information and advice before their travel to the UK and during their stay.

The Delegate Guarantee has been redrafted. Various guarantees are given to trainees but Global Knowledge does not provide a residential service and mature trainees and their employers are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

The fee refund policy and complaints procedures should be rewritten to ensure that they are clear and transparent.

See above in relation to the Delegate Guarantee; this now spells out in appropriate detail the relevant procedures.

The signage at the London venue needs to be improved.

The signage has now been improved by moving to a new well resourced venue which is used for teaching purposes.

3. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements – spot check

3.1 Management, Staffing and Administration

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments It is clear that this is a well managed, high quality provider which makes very effective use of electronic systems in all management and delivery processes.				

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments During the inspection the Inspector was able to see the high quality teaching resources based at Wokingham and to view a class in progress at a London centre. These were good examples of the processes which Global Knowledge uses in its training programmes and which have enabled the company to win numerous international awards.				

3.3 Participant Welfare

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments It should be noted that Global Knowledge only deals directly with the companies involved in sending their delegates to participate in the programmes on offer. These are mature delegates, mostly from the UK. Global Knowledge has made refinements since the last inspection to make its processes more inclusive and is aware of the need to ensure that its high quality service is maintained. Out of hours contact support should be offered to delegates whilst they are in the UK.				

3.4 Premises and Facilities

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments All are considered to provide a high quality learning environment.				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Institution’s strengths

- High quality management which has contributed to excellent business practice
- Excellent provision of information indicating course content
- Excellent use of electronic systems to contribute to the above
- Good use of quality assurance arrangements
- A high level of satisfaction on the part of delegates with all aspects of their training
- An innovative use of IT to support learning, including remote learning, in a flexible manner

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
Procedures should be put in place to offer delegates out of hours support.	M

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
Further comments, if applicable	