

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

PROVIDER: Future Connect Training and Recruitment

ADDRESS: 24-26 Arcadia Avenue
Finchley Central
London
N3 2JU

HEAD OF PROVIDER: Mr Umar Tariq

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF INSPECTION: 18 May 2020

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation, 16 July 2020

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the provider

Future Connect Training and Recruitment (FCTR/the Provider) is a private limited company. It provides accountancy services and corporate training. It offers accredited certificates and diplomas in book-keeping and accountancy at Levels 1, 2 and 4 to FCTR's client organisations as well as to individual participants.

The Provider is based in Finchley, North London. It also has a training centre in Birmingham. All courses take place in the London or Birmingham training centres. The Birmingham centre is located on the ground floor of a refurbished office block on a main arterial road with good local amenities and public transport links. The London premises are in serviced, ground-floor offices in North London with excellent public transport links.

FCTR provides practical, hands-on training that aims to prepare candidates to take on roles in the accountancy and finance industries. FCTR aims to benefit the operations of its client organisations by providing courses that will enable participants to enter employment at the appropriate level of management.

The Provider has two Directors who are the most senior members of the organisation and form the governing board. They are supported by an Academic Manager and an administrative team.

FCTR was founded in 2014 under the name Iproassist Limited. The Directors identified a gap in the recruitment market for training. In order to enhance its market share, the Provider rebranded in March 2018 from Iproassist to FCTR to focus on practical training courses to complement theoretical learning.

2. Brief description of the current provision

FCTR provides face-to-face accounting training on a one-to-one basis and equips participants with skills for various jobs ranging from book-keeping to the preparation of final accounts. The courses lead to awards at Levels 1 to 4 from the International Association of Bookkeepers (IAB) and at Levels 2 to 4 from the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT). The courses are designed to be interactive, presenting theoretical insight through a focus on case studies and drawing on the experience of course delegates.

The training provides participants with an insight into the day-to-day work of an accounting function and is based on the requirements of clients from various industry sectors, such as information technology, retail, construction and the legal profession. All training takes place through the application of proprietary book-keeping and accountancy industry software and participants progress at their own pace. All courses are of three to six weeks' duration.

Course delivery is on a flexible, part-time basis. Participants are free to plan their individual training and can access FCTR courses up to six consecutive days each week. Participants book individual sessions at FCTR's training centres through the learner portal. Delivery is then provided on an individual basis, with each participant being taught on their own and supported by trainers.

At the time of the inspection, there were 108 participants enrolled from a total capacity of 130, with an equal gender split. All participants were over 18 years of age and were recruited locally. All participants are British nationals. They come originally from a variety of countries, including those of the European Union and South Asia and Africa.

Enrolments are on a continuous basis. At the initial enquiry stage, FCTR staff identify the level of training required during a face-to-face consultation with the applicant. Participants are provided with individual training plans.

3. Inspection process

The online interim inspection was carried out by one inspector over one day. Interviews were held with the Director of Operations, the Director of Training, a participant and a tutor. A range of documents was scrutinised. All information was made readily available. FCTR cooperated fully with the inspection.

4. Inspection history

| Inspection type | Date |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Full Inspection | 13-14 November 2018 |

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the Provider has achieved accreditation with the AAT, allowing for the provision of additional courses at Levels 2 to 4 in accounting and book-keeping.

The Provider has entered into a partnership with Harrow Council as part of a programme to deliver accountancy training to Harrow residents.

2. Response to actions points in last report

2.4 All policies must be reviewed to ensure they are complete and customised to FCTR's requirements and must not refer to other organisations.

All policies have been thoroughly reviewed and are completely customised to FCTR's requirements. The policies make no reference to other organisations.

4.2 FCTR must state clearly on online and printed publicity material that its courses will benefit students of chartered accountancy bodies by providing practical experience to complement their theoretical studies.

The FCTR website and brochure have been revised. It is now clear that participants can enrol on courses that provide both academic content and practical experience or decide to enrol only for the practical experience.

18.2 FCTR must provide an appropriate induction pack for international participants. This must be completed in advance of recruiting any international participants.

All participants are currently recruited locally. Although there are no immediate plans to recruit from outside the United Kingdom (UK), FCTR has produced an induction booklet for any future international participants. The booklet appropriately introduces international participants to the Provider and provides helpful advice regarding immigration guidance and aspects of life in the UK.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

It is recommended that qualifications of prospective staff members which have been verified are always recorded.

Although there have been no new staff members employed since the last inspection, the Provider used the services of two sub-contractors. The qualifications of the sub-contractors were verified, and copies were appropriately recorded.

It is recommended that the spelling errors contained within the prospectus are corrected.

The prospectus has been thoroughly proofread and all errors have been corrected.

It is recommended that participants are always required to sign their enrolment forms.

The enrolment process has been amended. All enrolments are now made online. As part of this online enrolment process, participants have to provide an online signature before the enrolment can be finalised.

It is recommended that some of the trainers undertake training in pedagogic techniques to enhance their skills in readiness for future expansion of provision and that the Participant Welfare Officer receives suitable training in welfare matters in readiness for when FCTR receives international students.

An effective, regular programme of training meets the needs of all staff. This includes training on safeguarding and well-being, and technical update training. The technical update training includes training in pedagogic techniques, so trainers are more aware of how to teach the new content. Trainers also negotiate individual development plans focused on their practice. Trainers consider the training programme to be useful and participants praise the ability of trainers to explain information clearly.

The Participant Welfare Officer has also received the safeguarding and well-being training, but has additional training scheduled for 2020 with an Open University certificate course titled, Health and Wellbeing in Health and Social Care, in order to develop further the knowledge and skills required for the role.

It is recommended that the participant equal opportunities, code of conduct and disciplinary policies are provided in sufficient detail within the participant handbook.

The participant equal opportunities policy, the code of conduct and disciplinary policy have been updated and provide a good level of detail. The policies are easily accessible on the website. However, the updated policies are not included in the participant handbook to ensure that they are appropriately disseminated.

It is recommended that the foyer to the building in Finchley is supplied with a list of the occupants of the building and made available for display and that the toilet facilities are repaired where necessary to ensure that they are of a good and safe standard.

Staff and participants confirm the foyer to the building in Finchley now displays a board with a list of the occupants of the building. The toilet facilities have been repaired and are of a good and safe standard.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

FCTR has suitably qualified and experienced managers who have a clear view of the Provider's future development. Organisational structures are clearly defined, with all staff having detailed job descriptions. Channels of communication are clear and effective. Staff meet regularly and the meetings are recorded. As a consequence, staff are fully aware of the Provider's priorities. However, the minutes of these meetings are too brief to ensure that there is an effective audit trail of decisions made.

The shared database contains all relevant policies and procedures, so all staff can work towards a common goal. Staff are experienced and confident in their respective roles. As a result, the Provider is well managed and appropriately administered.

The publicity material, especially on the website, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the Provider and its curriculum.

The Provider takes exceptional care to recruit and enrol suitable participants to its courses. Full course outlines are readily available on the website. Participants have the facility to speak with an adviser prior to enrolling. Individual training plans, that are negotiated between participants and trainers, ensure participants' needs are met. Consequently, participants can make informed choices regarding their courses and match the courses to their own needs.

FCTR has a systematic approach to obtaining and using feedback to enhance the provision. Feedback is

obtained at each stage and is used well to review standards, assess performance and take appropriate action if needed. As a result, management has a clear understanding of the current provision and how to improve upon that provision.

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

All training at FCTR is on a one-to-one basis. Participants follow courses that are individually designed to meet their needs while closely following the criteria set by the awarding bodies. Trainers are, therefore, able to adjust the pace and content to meet the individual needs of the participants. As a result, participants are very happy with their courses and the delivery of those courses. Retention rates are extremely high and examination pass rates are excellent.

Trainers are highly qualified and have good relevant commercial experience. They make good use of the most up-to-date resources relevant to work in their sector. Accordingly, participants gain experience in the most commonly used specialist accountancy software, and this enhances their prospects of employment.

Procedures for the administration of examinations are in line with the requirements of the awarding bodies.

The FCTR recruitment team provides exceptional support for participants intending to proceed to employment or further training. This support includes help with identifying and applying for posts, as well as curriculum vitae writing and practice interviews. As a result, participants become more confident in their search for employment.

4.3 Participant Welfare (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

FCTR has a named Participant Welfare Officer who is freely available and approachable and able to provide suitable pastoral support appropriate to the age, background and circumstances of the participants. All participants are adult, UK nationals who attend the Provider for very short periods each week. Participants confirm that they know whom to contact if they need welfare support.

Prior to the start of the course, participants are given opportunities to speak to an adviser and their trainer to ensure that they are signing up to a course that meets their needs. Participants confirm that this is useful.

FCTR provides a highly effective induction based on a one-to-one meeting between the participant and the tutor. During the induction, the participant is given a detailed overview of the course, the general requirements and the assessment procedures. The participants are also introduced to the participant portal, which contains all the Provider's key policies. As a result of this induction, participants are able to quickly settle into their courses.

Participants are recruited under fair and transparent contractual terms and conditions, which they accept through the online registration process.

Participants have access to the Provider's detailed complaints procedure, which is available on the website.

However, participants are not advised of BAC's complaints procedure, so participants are unaware of how to take a complaint to a neutral external adjudicator.

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

FCTR is based in well-appointed, serviced offices in London and an additional training centre in Birmingham. Trainers and participants spoke highly of the premises. Both premises are very well located so participants have easy access by public transport.

Both premises have an entrance supervised by a receptionist. All persons entering the premises are required to sign in on entry and all receive general advice on health and safety, so contributing towards a safe environment. Both premises have wheelchair access.

Training rooms are appropriately equipped with sufficient desk space and seating. Complementary coffee and tea are provided. Both premises are clean and well decorated and so provide a pleasant environment conducive to learning.

Trainers can use non-teaching rooms to prepare material or hold meetings. Additional meeting rooms can be hired if required so the premises can be adapted to meet FCTR's needs.

4.5 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

FCTR takes great care to ensure participants enrol on the most appropriate course, so courses are well matched to the requirements of participants.

Training at FCTR is on a one-to-one basis, with the result that trainers are able to focus on the needs of the participants and achieve excellent success rates.

FCTR uses a wide range of up-to-date and relevant resources, such as software appropriate to the sector. Consequently, participants are well placed in the job market and confident of their skills once in employment.

FCTR provides excellent job-hunting support for participants during their courses, so participants are confident in their search for employment.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

The complaints policy must make reference to BAC’s complaints procedure.

High Medium Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT *(to be reviewed at the next inspection)*

FCTR should consider updating the participant handbook to include the updated versions of the equal opportunities policy, the code of conduct and the disciplinary policy.

It is recommended that FCTR ensures minutes of meetings are more detailed to include what was discussed, what was decided and any action points arising.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE