



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

PROVIDER: Takeoff Direct Limited T/A Takeoff Aviation Academy

ADDRESS: G17 Brooklands House
Marlborough Road
Lancing
West Sussex
BN15 8AF

HEAD OF PROVIDER: Mr Oliver Farirayi

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF INSPECTION: 4 December 2020

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation, 6 April 2021

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the provider

Takeoff Aviation Academy (TAA/the Provider) was established in 2009 and offers training to the airline industry in related subject areas. It is owned and run by its sole Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Most of the courses are aligned with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) standards and mapped to European Core Content. The ICAO is a United Nations (UN) body that sets the standards implemented by the Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs) of individual countries.

Training is delivered overseas as well as at the Provider's registered office, which is based in a business park in Lancing, West Sussex. Additional external venues in the UK, such as the old Croydon Airport, hotel venues and conference rooms are also utilised. Only the UK provision is accredited by BAC.

TAA aims to provide its participants with world-class training in aviation services whilst enhancing professionalism in the industry.

The CEO, who has a background of working in the air traffic control sector, acts as Director and is responsible for the overall management of the organisation, as well as the business development function. He is supported by a part-time, freelance Training and Standards Director, who is based at home, and a permanent part-time administrator, who is based at the registered office.

Training services are offered to non-European CAAs. The majority of TAA's customers are CAAs that are responsible for the recruitment, assessment and financing of the participants. Participants are either already employed or guaranteed employment in the aviation sector after successfully completing TAA's courses, subject to meeting medical licensing and the legislative requirements in the sector.

2. Brief description of the current provision

TAA offers a range of accredited courses and skills programmes that are adapted to meet both organisational and participants' needs. These include full-time programmes that comprise 40 hours' face-to-face study and additional self-study modules that last from three days to ten weeks. The provision is intended to meet the changing requirements of the aviation industry.

TAA provides training in Communication Navigation Satellite (CNS) and Air Traffic Management (ATM), as well as additional training in supplementary courses in Safety Management Systems, Airports Operations Services, Aviation Fire Services, Aviation English Language and Aviation Security.

Globally, the standards of Air Traffic Control (ATC) and Air Traffic Management (ATM) are regulated and co-ordinated by the ICAO. All the training is regulated to ensure compliance to the ICAO's standards.

In Europe, the standards are co-ordinated by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) through the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation, commonly known as Eurocontrol, which co-ordinates such activities and has individual countries as members. The courses delivered by TAA are either offered under licence or mapped to Eurocontrol standards and specifications.

This is to ensure a standardised approach to all training, with the aim of ensuring consistency in approach and supporting the job mobility of skilled professional air traffic controllers across the world.

The Provider offers ATC rating courses that last up to a maximum of ten weeks. The majority of courses are delivered under licence from ETZ. Prescribed simulation software is supplied through an agreement with Eurocontrol and meets regulated specifications and standards for this type of training. The Provider has recently acquired surveillance and three-dimensional simulators from Airways New Zealand.

Courses run with a minimum of three participants and a maximum of ten. Participants on courses lasting up to three days receive a certificate of attendance, and all other courses lead to the receipt of a certificate of achievement in line with Eurocontrol and or ICAO standard.

All participants are aged 20 years and over in order to meet international regulatory age requirements. They are recruited and employed by their residency country's CAA and are sponsored by their employers. The majority of participants are male. However, in line with the sector's gender equality targets, the number of female participants has increased in the last four years.

Recently, courses have been delivered in the UK for 40 participants sponsored by the Indonesian CAA. These were courses on Global Navigation Satellite Systems, Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcasts, Performance Based Navigation and Emergency Locator Transmitter combined with the Airborne Addressing Reference System. No courses were running at the time of this inspection.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted remotely over one day by one inspector. The inspector had discussions with the Director and with a trainer and scrutinised documents and electronic records. The Provider engaged fully in the inspection process and made available all relevant information in a timely fashion.

4. Inspection history

Inspection Type	Date
Stage 2 Inspection	17 February 2017
Stage 3 Inspection	19-20 March 2018
Mid-Probation Review	29 January 2019
End of Probation Review	4 April 2019

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 provider.

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The UK centre has been closed since March 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Staffing has been reduced and roles have been redefined to meet future requirements.

TAA has purchased simulator equipment, which has enabled it to offer practical courses in air traffic control, surveillance and aerodrome control.

TAA has also acquired two additional rooms within the centre where it is located, one for the simulation equipment and one to be used as a classroom.

TAA has now developed an online platform to deliver live sessions prior to, during and for six months after courses.

TAA has developed its course offer, with 30 new courses ready to deliver.

2. Response to action points in last report

3.3 The Provider must implement the revised staff performance policy.

The revised staff performance policy is set out in the staff handbook and appropriate accompanying documentation is in place. TAA has not yet had an opportunity to implement the policy because of the fact that the centre has been closed.

17.7 The Provider's staff must undertake basic training in preventing radicalism and extremism and a suitable policy must be included in the staff handbook.

TAA has undertaken a risk assessment regarding radicalisation and extremism. A suitable policy is in place and has been properly disseminated. The Director has had appropriate training and has arranged for that training to be disseminated to staff once TAA re-opens.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

There were no recommendations identified in the last inspection report.

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

TAA uses a very comprehensive learning management system that stores all the policies, procedures and systems for easy and convenient dissemination. Data collection and collation are also effectively administered within the same learning management system.

The learning management system is also used as an effective channel of communication as it has electronic mail and internet video-conferencing facilities. In addition, the staff handbook is comprehensive and contains all policy documents and an overview of the terms and conditions of employment.

As a result of these measures, the Provider is effectively managed and administered.

The Director is highly qualified and experienced in the aviation industry. Most of the staff recruitment to date has been through personal contacts and has resulted in the recruitment of suitable staff.

An appropriate staff performance policy is set out in the staff handbook and accompanying documentation is in place.

3.3 The Provider has not yet implemented the revised staff performance policy.

Publicity materials provide a comprehensive and up-to-date description of the course offer.

The Provider takes extreme care to recruit and enrol suitable participants for its courses, with the result that the needs of the participants and their sponsoring companies are closely aligned and met. Participants are typically sponsored by their companies. Both the employer and TAA screen prospective participants to ensure they meet the course entry requirements, as outlined by TAA, and have the necessary language competency.

The attendance policy is clear and communicated effectively to participants prior to arrival and, on arrival, through the induction.

TAA requires participants to provide feedback on all aspects of the provision. This feedback is co-ordinated by the trainers, who also act as course managers. The course managers compile reports that include the deficiencies identified through the feedback and any resulting remedial actions that are taken.

Feedback is also obtained from the trainers and sponsoring companies. The learning management system co-ordinates the resulting data and produces reports to inform TAA's planning. Feedback is shared with sponsoring companies as part of their contracts with the Provider.

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

Programme management is effective. The Director is well qualified and experienced within the aviation industry and acts as Programme Manager.

All the course objectives and assessments are in line with CAA and international requirements, so the professional needs of the participants are being met. All courses, including materials, assessments and delivery, are systematically audited by the regulatory bodies.

The trainers are experienced and professional aviation specialists with substantial relevant practical skills and are appropriately licensed by the CAA. Consequently, participants are being suitably prepared for their professional qualifications.

Participants benefit from being taught in small groups by skilled trainers. Consequently, success rates are very high. Timely feedback and advice are given through the regular assessments incorporated as part of the course, so participants know how to make progress. Participants are also made aware of their progress through a system of badges that indicate how well they are doing and what they need to do to progress further.

Participants are offered additional support, including extra catch-up classes, should they need it.

Learning materials are available online, with the result that participants are able to develop their independent learning skills.

The administration of the assessments is carried out in compliance with the standards set by the regulatory body.

4.3 Participant Welfare (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

Participants receive excellent pastoral support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances. The trainer acts as the first point of contact for any pastoral issues.

Participants receive a suitable induction on arrival at the centre at the start of the programme. At induction, participants receive out-of-hours contact telephone numbers should they require any emergency assistance.

Effective policies about how to avoid discrimination and deal with abusive behaviour are in place and are widely disseminated through the participant handbook.

The Provider has undertaken a risk assessment regarding the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. An effective anti-radicalisation policy is in place. The Director has received appropriate training in this field and such training is to be made available to other staff when the centre re-opens to ensure that participants are protected from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

17.7 To date, not all staff have yet been trained in preventing radicalisation and extremism.

International participants receive good advice prior to and on arrival in the UK. Excellent arrangements are made to pick up participants at the airport, take them to their hotel, transport them to and from the centre and provide their meals. The sponsoring company typically checks on the welfare provision prior to sending the participants. This includes completing a physical visit to check the arrangements prior to sending participants. As a result of these comprehensive welfare measures, participants are free to concentrate on their studies.

Participants apply for and are enrolled on courses by their companies under fair and transparent terms and conditions.

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

The Provider has an appropriate licence to use its offices within the business centre. Access to the centre is secured by means of a staffed reception desk. All visitors are required to sign in. Appropriate guidance on health and safety is given by the Provider. As a result of these measures, participants are safe when in the centre.

A range of different room sizes is available to ensure that the Provider can readily meet the needs of different teaching groups.

The centre is suitably decorated and maintained to a high level.

Trainers confirm that classrooms are spacious, well heated and properly ventilated. Classrooms are also well resourced, with dependable internet connections, interactive whiteboards and large-screen monitors, all of which ensure that participants benefit from working in a well-resourced learning environment.

The Provider has access to shared toilets that are adequate in number for the use of the participants and are well maintained. Trainers and participants have access to a suitably equipped shared kitchen area.

The centre is well located on local bus routes and within walking distance of food outlets.

4.5 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

The Provider takes extreme care to recruit and enrol suitable participants for its courses, with the result that the needs of the participants and their sponsoring companies are closely aligned and met.

Participants benefit from working in small groups with trainers who are highly qualified and who have extensive experience both in aviation and as trainers.

The courses are well resourced and include online resources that encourage participants' independent learning.

The physical needs of the participants are well catered for, including hotel accommodation, transport and catering, which ensures that participants are able to focus on their studies.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

3.3 The Provider must implement the revised staff performance policy.	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
17.7 All staff must undertake appropriate training relating to preventing radicalisation and extremism.	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low

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

None

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE