

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

MID-WAY PROBATION REVIEW (Short Course Provider)

INSTITUTION: Takeoff Direct Limited T/A Takeoff Aviation Academy

ADDRESS: Suite 3 Brooklands House
Marlborough Road
Lancing
West Sussex
BN15 8AF

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mr Oliver Farirayi

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Probation accreditation

DATE OF INSPECTION: 29 January 2019

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation 28 March 2019

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Takeoff Direct is a private limited company registered in the United Kingdom (UK). Trading as Takeoff Aviation Academy (TAA/ the Provider), it is owned and run by its sole Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). TAA was established in 2009 and provides training in Air Traffic Control (ATC) and Air Traffic Management (ATM) as well as additional training in supplementary courses in safety systems, Airport Terminal Services, Technical Services, risk management, hazard identification and aviation security.

TAA aims to provide customers with world class training in aviation services and to enhance professionalism in the industry. Training is delivered overseas as well as at the Provider's registered office based in a business park in Lancing, West Sussex in the UK. Additional external venues in the UK, such as hotels and offices, are also leased as needed. BAC accreditation is for the Provider's UK provision only.

The CEO, who has a background working in the air traffic control sector, undertakes 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 Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs). The majority of TAA's customers are CAAs which 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 their courses and subject to meeting medical licensing and sector legislative requirements.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Provider offers bespoke and CAA accredited courses in all aspects of airport and air services training. On a global basis, the standards of ATC and ATM are regulated and coordinated by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), a United Nations (UN) body which sets the standards implemented by the CAAs of individual countries. All training is regulated to ensure compliance in relation to these standards. In Europe, the standards are coordinated by the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation, known as Eurocontrol, of which individual countries are members. Courses provided by TAA have been approved to ensure they are delivered to definitive Eurocontrol standards and specifications. This is to ensure a standardised approach to all training with the aim of ensuring consistency in approach as well as supporting the job mobility of skilled professional air traffic controllers across the world.

TAA also offers online training that is hosted and delivered through the Eurocontrol Training Zone (ETZ) which is Eurocontrol's online training platform. All courses must be approved by Eurocontrol prior to publishing on the learning platform.

The Provider offers ATC rating courses that last up to a maximum of ten weeks. The majority of courses are delivered under license from ETZ. Prescribed simulation software is supplied through an agreement with Eurocontrol and meets regulated specifications and standards for this type of training. The provision is intended to meet the changing requirements for the aviation industry.

Courses run with a minimum of three participants and a maximum of ten in the UK. Participants on courses up to three days receive a certificate of attendance and all other courses receive certificates of achievement in line with Eurocontrol standards.

Participants are provided with accommodation as part of the provision and in the vast majority of cases it is provided in the same hotel facilities that courses are delivered or in the clients' own premises

All participants are aged 20 years and over in order to meet international regulatory age requirements and participants are recruited and employed by their residing county's CAA. 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 three years.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted over half a day by one inspector. The inspector had discussions with the CEO and scrutinised documents and electronic records provided. A tour of the registered office and facilities was undertaken. The Provider was supportive of the inspection process and provided all relevant information to undertake the inspection.

4. Inspection History

| Inspection Type | Date |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Stage 2 | 17 February 2017 |
| Stage 3 | 19-20 March 2018 |

PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments 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 August 2018, all TAA administration functions and data management are retained in soft copy and stored in a secure online data storage system. There is also remote storage that provides staff and participants with good access to appropriate information and TAA services online. Participants are provided with tablet devices for the duration of their studies. This provides managers with a monitoring system for attendance as well as progress and achievement monitoring throughout the modules. All systems are password controlled and encryption systems are utilised to enhance secure storage and access to information. These systems are compliant with all statutory data requirements. The systems are ultimately managed and controlled by the CEO.

Additional leased training premises are now used. These are located within easy access of the two main London airports. Additional meeting areas and participant hotel accommodation are also leased on demand.

The aviation sector uses English language as the universal communication language and CAAs have identified the need to support the development of English language skills within the Air Traffic Control sector. In response to the demand, a new Aviation Rater English course is due to be trialled, in the near future, with participants already recruited through the Trinidad CAA. This course will be delivered in the client's facilities.

There are plans to offer General English language tuition in the UK with progression to Aviation English and also as a stand-alone course. On 3 June 2019, an open Aviation Rater English course is planned and three students have been recruited.

2. Response to actions points in last report

1.3 All important TAA meetings and telephone discussions must be recorded and the information retained for future reference to provide an audit of decisions taken.

The vast majority of communication is by means of e-mail and remote document sharing. All communication is managed and stored by means of electronic documents and resources. Information sharing is managed through a range of e-mail folders linked to remote storage areas with managed access as required by data control legislation. The system provides an effective system of recording, managing and sharing information as well as being able to collate information from different sources in a single place for audit purposes. The management system is comprehensive, secure and ensures appropriate access at the correct level.

2.6 24.6 26.1 26.2 26.3 26.5 The director must obtain additional space in the building so that the premises are suitable.

The administrative office provides sufficient space for all the staff based in the registered office to work in comfort and safety.

Additional workspace is available and can be obtained as needed in the registered office. Additional delivery facilities are leased as required.

There are appropriate additional facilities for participants and staff. In the registered office, there is a suitable sized classroom and additional facilities to accommodate classroom breaks. Participants have access to all course materials on the training portal on the online platform and, on arrival, they are issued with tablet devices for the length of their stay to enable them to undertake their studies in their hotel accommodation.

Trainers can prepare lessons at home and there is sufficient space in the administration office and the classroom before and after lessons for them to work if they require. Trainers are provided with hotel accommodation and therefore they have their rooms in which to work outside of classes.

At the registered office there is a well-resourced kitchen area with space to sit and eat. There is a large and well organised outside seating space for use in appropriate weather. Additional meeting space is available for private meetings.

3.1 Contracts must be raised and signed by all employees both full and part time.

Staff contracts are in place for permanent staff and signed copies are scanned and retained in soft copy in a restricted area of the Provider's electronic and remotely stored filing system.

3.3 The policy on reviewing staff performance must be implemented and the policy documented in the Staff Handbook.

This action has been partially addressed. The Staff Handbook has been reviewed and the new version provides a comprehensive range of policies and procedures for working at TAA. There is a draft Staff Performance Policy that is currently with an external Human Resources (HR) consultant to review and return to the CEO. The policy has not yet been implemented.

17.7 TAA must put into place appropriate arrangements to protect participants from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism, such as a risk assessment and training for staff.

Participants are subject to a wide-range of stringent professional security checks which include a risk assessment prior to acceptance to working in the industry. This provides for appropriate protection against the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism for these participants.

24.4 All visitors to TAA must be advised of the health and safety procedures.

On arrival, a brief and appropriate health and safety briefing is undertaken by the reception staff and the Provider also undertakes a tour of the evacuation and assembly points. All rooms used by the Provider have printed evacuation procedures and facilities shared by other users, for example, the kitchen areas have clear and appropriate advice for evacuation and what to do in an emergency.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

The Provider is recommended to consider the recruitment of another experienced person should the business grow as planned.

The CEO has begun to take appropriate steps to improve oversight and has reviewed the current roles and responsibilities. The CEO has identified areas for delegation as well as the range of management information required to enable him to have effective control. Administrative support has been increased and course development has been delegated to the Training and Standards Director with the aim of enabling a more streamlined approach to these aspects.

TAA should ensure that the administration training is completed as quickly as possible in order to enhance the administrative support that is provided.

The administrator has completed her training and is providing highly effective regular support to the CEO.

The Provider should put in place a work alone policy to protect the staff at all times during their work.

The Provider has evaluated the requirement for a lone working policy and considers that the safety and security of the registered office is sufficient, as there is remotely monitored closed-circuit television at the point of entry, a manned reception area and out of hours access is by keys only. However, there is no Provider specific policy.

It is recommended that all staff sign to signify they have read the Staff Handbook.

Staff have signed the current staff handbook and soft copies of the signed documents are retained. The new handbook requires all staff to sign to confirm they have read it. The new handbook will be distributed once the contents of the handbook have been checked and ratified by external HR consultants.

It is recommended that the complaints policy is extended so that it covers what constitutes a complaint and that the procedure is highlighted during the participants' induction.

All participants are given a copy of the TAA Charter. The charter outlines the expectations for acceptance on courses and the expectations of both parties during training. It has a clear policy for complaints, that explains what constitutes a complaint, and provides comprehensive information on the process and procedures to be followed to make a complaint. There is clear reference to the BAC complaints procedure.

In order to comply with statutory requirements:

The establishment must have sufficient staff who are trained in first aid.

All leased facilities used by the Provider have managed services and First Aid is available through the reception areas at each venue.

PART C – SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

FURTHER WORK TO MEET OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

3.3 The Provider must implement the staff appraisal policy once the policy has been ratified.

High Medium Low

FURTHER WORK TO MEET OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Provider is recommended to review the written management structure with the aim of formally recording delegated roles and responsibilities.

The Provider should introduce a Provider specific policy for staff working alone in the registered office and training facilities.

It is recommended that the Provider ensures that all staff sign the staff handbook once the new version is published.