

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (Online, Distance & Blended Learning)

PROVIDER: Zing Performance Ltd

ADDRESS: Rural Innovation Centre
Avenue H
Stoneleigh Park
Warwickshire
CV8 2LG

HEAD OF PROVIDER: Mr Wynford Dore

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF INSPECTION: 30 April 2019

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation, 16 July 2019

1. Background to the provider

Zing Performance (the Provider) was established by its owner and Managing Director (MD) in November 2010. It was initially called Stageahead Limited (Ltd). The name was changed to Zing Performance Ltd and, in April 2017, it was changed again to Performance withZing. The Company is reverting to the name Zing Performance as the MD considers this to be the better name to support an expansion into the United States of America (USA) market.

Overall governance is exercised by the MD, who is supported by a Director of Business Operations, a General Manager and an Executive Assistant. The MD has handed over the running of the company to the General Manager and the Director of Business Operations and now keeps a watching brief on the business as he feels that the day-to-day operation of the company is well served by them.

The Provider aims to be the global leader of applied and innovative learning that improves individual performance and skill ability through the provision of online personalised learning regimes. In order to achieve this aim, the MD has worked over a number of years to develop a programme which enhances the function of the cerebellum and the hippocampus within the brain, leading to the development of core skills such as visual and auditory processing and social skills. Separate programmes have been developed for children, adults and athletes. The programmes have been developed based on scientific research carried out on the cerebellum and the vestibular system, which is the sensory system that is responsible for balance and special orientation. By stimulating the vestibular system, improvements in memory, attention and coordination can be obtained.

The Provider has a Learning Advisory Board, which includes professors from United Kingdom (UK) universities, who are specialists in neuroscience, psychiatry and educational assessment. The specialist knowledge of the members of the board informs the development of the programmes.

The development of the programmes has also drawn on the similarity, experience and staff input of a programme run in Denmark called Detox dig Smuk. The head of the organisation which owns and distributes the Detox dig Smuk programme is known to the MD of Zing Performance, but the organisation is a separate legal entity. Danish mentors, who played a key role in the early stages of the development of Zing Performance, and who supported both organisations, have now been replaced by UK based coaches.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Provider offers three online programmes. These are called Zing Performance Adults, Sport and Kids. The Zing Performance Kids programme offers different content for different age groups. These are for children aged between seven and eleven and those aged between twelve and eighteen. The Zing Performance Kids programme is aimed at children with learning difficulties and disabilities such as difficulties with reading and writing, inability to concentrate or feeling awkward in groups. The adult programmes aim to help learners cope with stress, time management, decisions making, reaching targets, and to increase well-being and happiness. The sports programme aims to improve the connection between brain and body to achieve optimum performance.

The programmes consist of a 26-week series of co-coordinative exercises, which are designed to develop cognitive abilities such as auditory working memory, switching attention, controlling attention and memory recall. The exercises stimulate the somatosensory system which is concerned with the conscious perception of touch and pressure, position, movement, and vibration, and which derive from muscles, joints and skin. The programmes also involve inner ear stimulation that involves balance and spatial orientation.

The programmes can be undertaken using a variety of platforms, including tablets, smartphones and computers. There are accompanying videos to explain the rationale and science behind the activities. Progress is monitored by coaches, who provide support to learners or to parents in the case of the Zing Performance Kids programme. Further support is offered through social media pages, additional exercises and a maintenance or extension programme for those who want more advanced exercises.

To date, there have been in excess of 5,000 learners undertaking the programmes. These learners have come primarily from the UK and increasingly from the USA. During the year to date, 763 learners have enrolled on the Zing Performance programme, including the parents of Zing Performance Kids. Most enrolled adults are female.

Learners complete a 30-minute online assessment at the start of the programme and improvement targets are set based on their initial assessment. The same assessment test takes place every 30 days.

3. Inspection process

The interim inspection was carried out over one day by one inspector. Interviews were held with the Managing Director, the Business Operations Consultant, the Executive Assistant, the Technology Consultant and one part-time and one full-time coach. The inspector was given access to data, company files, programme content, the Zing Performance programme manual and other documentation relating to the action points and recommended areas for improvement. The provider fully cooperated with the inspector and the inspection process.

4. Inspection History

Inspection Type	Date
First Inspection	18-19 September 2017
Supplementary	13 February 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 provider.

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The provider has moved to new appropriate and spacious accommodation in a business centre at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire. The move was due to financial reason and the fact that the building it occupied was to be developed into apartments.

The Managing Director has relinquished his day-to-day responsibilities to free him up to use his entrepreneurial skills on other projects. The General Manager and the Business Operations Consultant manage the staff and other operational aspects of the business. The Managing Director visits the company at least once a week for strategy meetings and operational updates and is in regular contact by telephone and email.

Zing Performance is no longer linked with Detox dig Smuk in Denmark and all the mentors have been replaced by English-speaking coaches based in the UK and the USA. Because of the effort to increase participation in the USA, there will be a recruitment drive to recruit coaches and salespeople in the USA.

Marketing will now be assigned to an agency in the USA to develop new branding for the American market.

The Mentor Code of Practice is now being re-written as a Coaching Practitioner Handbook as the MD considers the designation coaches to be more helpful to learners.

2. Response to actions points in last report

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and other key staff must undertake appropriate face-to-face and online safeguarding training courses to include cyber-bullying.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has undertaken suitable safeguarding training and has given safeguarding awareness training to other key staff, including coaches based in the UK. The full-time coach identified the training as being valuable in understanding her role and it was clear that the training was effective in her understanding of issues related to safeguarding.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

It is strongly recommended that mentors be required to have a minimum competence in English at CEFR level C1.

As all coaching is now carried out by English speaking staff in the UK and in the USA, this recommendation has been superseded. The recruitment process in the USA requires new coaches to be native English speakers.

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

There is effective management and the administration of the provider is good. The management and administrative staff have significant experience from working with other educational organisations. There is an excellent working relationship between the managers and other staff. The senior managers have a clear understanding of the vision and aims of the organisation and understand what they need to do to achieve these. They are also able to communicate future developments clearly to the staff who, therefore, understand how to contribute to the success of the organisation.

The new premises provide secure appropriate accommodation. Rooms are adequately ventilated, and all receive good natural light.

The website provides clear information on the programmes on offer.

The provider has effective processes to review performance and whole team meetings are held to communicate progress and changes.

All staff have Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks or equivalent checks in the USA and coaches in the USA will be given training to ensure that they are operating to UK standards.

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Achievement (spot check)

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

Comments

The use of data analysis of learner performance is used as evidence-based research to support the continued quality improvement of the programmes.

The UK coaches have received coaching training from the MD. They have found this very useful and it has helped them understand the intricacies of telephone coaching, for instance, to understand how tone of voice can communicate subtleties of meaning

There is now coaching support from the UK and American coaches across the time differences between the UK and the USA. Live communication is also available across both time zones by means of the website to enable prospective learners to ask questions about the programme.

4.3 Learner Support (spot check)

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

Comments

Video conferencing platforms are used by coaches to support learners who have difficulties in completing exercises or who may temporarily disengage from the programme. This has aided successful progress and completion of the programme. A moderated closed social media group helps learners to share experiences. Video recording software is used to send short videos to adult learners and parents as extra coaching support.

4.4 Management of Quality (spot check)

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

Comments

It is planned to record all telephone communications in order to support the continued quality improvement of the programmes. These recordings will be used for training and provide reassurance to managers, coaches and learners that appropriate conversations are taking place. By occasionally

monitoring these conversations it is intended to provide additional safeguarding measures for learners and evidence of appropriate communication by coaches.

4.5 Premises and Facilities – face-to-face component (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

The provider has secure tenure of its new premises. It is housed in a shared office unit on a business park. Access to the premises is through a shared reception desk and all visitors sign in at reception.

The premises are in a good state of repair, decoration and are clean. As the provider is an e-learning provider and provides no face-to-face provision, there are no rooms or facilities for participants.

Signage is adequate. There is clear signage covering fire evacuation procedures and assembly points.

The provider has dedicated office space in the business unit and can also use other rooms in the building for meetings if required. Staff have good office space. Most of the online work for the course takes place in one room. The coach has her own area in the room also. This is adequate for her needs. Senior managers have their own office that can be used for meetings and is also used for meeting with visitors.

There are adequate toilet facilities for the staff.

The rooms are adequately ventilated, and all receive good natural light.

There are food outlets on the business park which provide take away food and also a restaurant that provides good quality meals.

4.6 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

A good understanding of the range of skills and qualities of the senior team which allows for the effective demarcation of tasks and responsibilities ensuring staff work well to their strengths.

The development of the programmes is underpinned by continued scientific research on vestibular stimulation and cognitive development. This is intended to continually improve the programme, however, it also has a positive effect on all staff and strengthens their confidence and belief in the benefits of the programmes.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

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

It is recommended that the recording of telecommunications takes place as soon as possible.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS - FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE