

York Learning Self Assessment Report for Academic Year 16/17 High Level Summary

The service continues to see some growth in 16-18 foundation programmes, in High Needs Support Learners and in Advance Learner Loans funding. The growth seems set to continue into 2017/18 academic year and is part of a planned growth with significant benefits for young people and significant cost savings to the local authority.

The service continues to seek opportunities to diversify funding to ensure that it is not over-reliant on any one funding stream. This has led to a number of new contracts during 16/17, including two programmes to support those people who have been out of the workforce for some time. All new contracts come with significant audit and compliance requirements many of which are difficult to fulfil. Whilst the benefits of these contracts for learners are significant, the staffing requirements in order to comply can lead to disproportionate amount of time spent managing the contracts.

The service's Community Learning offer including Health and Leisure Learning, attracted the largest number of students for some years, with just over 4000 students and some 5228 enrolments. Just over 420 courses were run through the year, consisting of one day workshops, short 4 weeks courses and longer programmes over 11/12 weeks.

2016/17 was once again marked by a number of successful community arts programmes; Santa's Socks, a project to make and distribute Christmas stockings filled with sweets to disadvantaged families; an arts programme called Pollination, part of a digital making and design project, Telling the Bees, delivered in partnership with Explore York and Universities of York, Sheffield and Lancaster, which will be completed in for exhibit in November 2017 at York Explore; and finally the annual "Inspirations Art Exhibition" at York Explore, which had a private view for the first time this year, with artists and their families attending the opening.

GCSE English and maths has been highly successful, with over 86 people recruited and some 83.7% achieving the qualification. In maths 71% and 55% in English achieved a level 4 or above (grade C or above). Demand for GCSE has increased significantly over the last few years almost outstripping supply.

Achievement rates across the service have increased in all classroom based courses for 2016/17, which is pleasing after a slight drop in 2015/16. Overall achievement rates for 19+ learners have increased to 82.1% from 78% in 15/16. Most pleasing of all has been the increase in achievement rates for 16-18 year olds, up from 36.1% in 14/15 to 72.9% in 16/17. This followed a radical redesign of the programme and a significant focus on improving outcomes.

However the service is reporting a decline in achievement rates in Apprenticeship provision, both at intermediate and advanced level. Plans are in place to mitigate this in 2017/18 and progress will be reported at regular intervals.

Finally one of the key strengths of the service; the responsive nature of provision, was highlighted by the quick and professional response to supporting Syrian refugees

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coming into the city. This work is continuing into 17/18. This included both adults and young people and supporting their English Language Learning.

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Effectiveness of Leadership & Management

Grade: 2

Strengths:

1. Good continued development of new approaches and provision to support and engage new learners
2. Outstanding development of community based city wide Arts programmes
3. Outstanding development of full-time HNS programmes in a variety of settings to support some of the most vulnerable young people in the city
4. Good progression routes across a number of programme areas including particularly counselling and modern foreign languages
5. Good links with other services for 16-18 and functional skills provision ensuring good referrals and information about learners and support is provided in a timely manner

Areas for Improvement:

1. Whilst there continues to be improvements in the accuracy and timelessness of data, systems remain inefficient and ineffective in providing timely and useful data to managers without significant and disproportionate time and effort
2. Whilst there are a variety of mechanisms for tracking learner progress, these are unwieldy and inefficient and do not provide timely and easily accessible information
3. Compliance requirements and paperwork for some contracts mean managers are struggling to fulfil contract requirements
4. Managers carry out far too many routine admin tasks which are time consuming

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Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Grade: 2

Strength:

1. Good adjustments made to course content and materials to ensure that learners achieve and thrive
2. Good strategies used to support learners to achieve in a number of areas
3. Good differentiation in teaching to support learners to achieve
4. Good support and strategies for learners taking accreditation gives them confidence to achieve
5. In HNS learning, support, one to one teaching and good programme planning enables learners to thrive and succeed

Areas for Improvement:

1. The use of technology and the availability of equipment is still patchy, meaning good practice cannot be shared across the service
2. Inconsistent use of technology even where facilities and equipment are available
3. In too many classes attendance and retention information is not available in a timely manner meaning managers cannot identify and intervene in a timely manner.

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Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare of Learners

Grade: 2

Strengths:

1. Good integration of learners from varying backgrounds cultures and ages is well managed by tutors ensuring positive appreciation of different cultures and backgrounds
2. Learners regularly report that attending classes helps them to maintain and improve their confidence, health and well being
3. The caring aspect of the services culture is evident in the way learners are supported and their individual circumstances understood

Areas for Improvement:

1. The service is struggling to support individuals who are referred who have complex mental health issues
2. There is insufficient focus on the Prevent duty and the promotion of British values in lessons
3. There is insufficient evidence in some programmes of the perceived benefits of courses for learners
4. There is a lack of a consistent way to measure health and well being benefits of attending courses other than via feedback questionnaires

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Outcomes for Learners

Grade:2

Strengths:

1. Good improvement in overall success rates for 19+, an increase of just under 4% from 78.3% in 15/16 to 82.1%
2. Good achievement in GCSE English 87% and maths with over 82.5% and 71% and 55% at level 4 or above (grade c or above)
3. Outstanding achievement in counselling certificate programmes with at 91.6%
4. Good achievement in 16-18 full time programme with 30% improvement in 16/17 compared with 15/16
5. Good achievement at Award and Certificate level at 87.5% and 86.9%
6. Good retention on community learning programmes with a 2% improvement from 2015/16 to 96.5%

Areas for Improvement:

1. English Functional skills achievement for level 1 at 60.9% and level 2 at 62% requires improvement
2. Intermediate Apprenticeship requires improvement (59.1%) in all vocational areas with the exception of Business Admin (71.4%)
3. Advanced apprenticeships are inadequate (40.7%) with the exception of Business Admin (80%) and Marketing (66.7%)
4. Achievement at Diploma level requires improvement at 59.6%
5. Unrealistic expectations about learner achievement lead to learners being inappropriately placed on some programmes leading to poor achievement

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Overall Effectiveness

Grade: 2

Strengths:

1. Good growth of 19+ full time HNS provision responding to the development of a local offer allowing more young people to access educational provision in the local area
2. Good improvement in achievement in classroom based programmes for 16-18 and 19+ learners
3. Good support for vulnerable learners in a range of programmes ensuring good outcomes for learners
4. Outstanding growth and diversity of income ensures vibrancy and development of many areas across the service
5. Some outstanding achievement in areas where learners are disadvantaged
6. Good development of the services general programme offer ensures a vibrant, imaginative programme which is well received by learners

Areas for Improvement:

1. Achievement in functional skills maths and English at level 1 and 2
2. Whilst apprenticeship provision continues to be affected by legacy issues and learners on hold, achievement is inadequate and timeliness needs to be improved.
3. Number of reported incidents of failures of the booking system, results in a lack of confidence in booking courses online.
4. Systems and processes to input, record and provide data are inadequate and time consuming, with much duplication, leading to inefficiency and lack of useful data for managers
5. Too much time is spent by managers and support staff in developing and implementing systems to track and monitor learners as a result of poor MIS infrastructure