

HADDON TRAINING LIMITED



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Assessment Information

Assessment Type	Accreditation Review
Assessor's Decision	Standard Met
Assessor's Name	Sue Harding
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Accreditation Review onsite visit to be conducted by	14/01/2024

Organisation – Introduction, Aims, Objectives and Outcomes

Haddon Training Limited (referred to as Haddon Training or the Company in this Report), is a Training Provider that started in 1997 as a niche provider of Equine training. Since that time, the Company has expanded and current provision includes qualifications in Animal Care, Business Administration, Customer Service and Management, in addition to Equine qualifications such as Groom Apprenticeships at Levels 2 and 3. The latter remains at approximately 70% of provision, followed by Business Administration and Animal Care. Provision includes both Traineeships and Apprenticeships, the latter up to Higher levels 4 and 5, and delivery extends across England and Wales. Haddon Training was set up, and is owned by the current Managing Director, who is supported by three other members of the senior management team. There are currently around 700 learners and a staff of 53, plus some freelance associates. Haddon Training has always focused on quality of provision, and at the last Ofsted inspection achieved a Grade 1 – Outstanding.

The mission of Haddon Training is ‘*Developing Potential for Future Success*’; and the Company has defined its values as - Passion; Support; Quality and Integrity, all of which were well demonstrated throughout the Accreditation Review. Learners and employers are placed at the heart of provision, ensuring that the aims and objectives of both parties are identified from the start, and supported through to achievement. The Company also works with one sub-contractor, a small niche provider of Saddlery qualifications, who supported by Haddon, continues to offer quality provision that has in most years maintained achievement rates of 100%.

A robust quality model is in place, of which the Self-Assessment Reporting (SAR) process and resulting Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) are key parts, involving feedback from staff and external stakeholders. As the new strategic plan for 2021 onwards is still in draft form due to changes as a result of Covid-19, it is the QIP for 2021 that identifies the current key objectives, together with intent, impact, staff responsible and milestones for success. Broad objectives include those for improving bespoke planning for employers and learners; communication; and engagement with technology. Targets for retention and achievement are set at 80%, with first-time achievement pass of 95% at End Point Assessment (EPA), less than 5% error on provider data self-assessment toolkit (PDSAT), and to maintain a Grade 1 Ofsted rating. Although Covid-19 affected some achievement rates, particularly those in Equine, in part due to hold-ups in EPA and learners on furlough, Haddon Training continues to achieve well against target outcomes. For example, in 2020 on Traineeships 84% of learners completed all their aims and 81.25% of learners moved on to a positive outcome. For 2019/2020, achievement rate for learners on Level 3 in both Business Admin and Animal Care was 100%.

Information, advice and guidance (IAG) was described by senior management as critical to ensuring the right learner on the right programme with the right employer; to support learners to successful programme achievement, and to progress their aims and ambition. IAG is also provided to employers to support them about how to support their learners. One manager added – “*making sure everything we give employers is right for them*”. IAG is delivered initially by members of the frontline Business Development Team, and then by Trainer Coaches who support the learner through each stage of their journey with Haddon Training, involving their employer in the process. The IAG policy sets out Haddon Training’s commitment to creating an IAG experience for learners that is ‘*aspirational and designed to inspire and motivate*’; ‘*personalised to suit the learner*’; together with other areas such as ‘*designed to develop self-confidence*’, and ‘*supportive to coach them to be successful and progress on to their next steps*’. As well as contributing to retention and achievement outcomes, IAG aims to support learners in their personal development. In 2020 learner surveys recorded 91% of learners rating as good or outstanding the skills they were developing for career progression; 97% rated the IAG provided for career development as good or outstanding, and 94% gave the same

rating for feedback received from their Trainer Coach about how to develop their skills, knowledge and behaviour further.

Learners interviewed supported survey findings, with all those spoken to very satisfied with their experience of Haddon Training, and what they had gained. They identified the impact of learning with Haddon, and the experienced, knowledgeable and supportive Trainer Coaches, the resources for access, and the involvement of their employers in the process. Their comments included – *“I’m a lot more organised, and confident with the customers”*; *“Confidence has grown, I’m a lot more motivated – I want to get up in the mornings now”*; *“they were really good at making sure it was the right course for me”*; *“Asked me re my career plan, we did a career path and X helped me think of other possible paths”*; *“I’ve had everything I needed for support. It’s given me confidence - I wouldn’t have spoken on this session before. I’ve found the flexibility of virtual support really useful too”*; *“ILP clear about expectations and timelines. Communication very open, updates regular. This Apprenticeship has helped me with independence, dealing with money, life skills – I’ve gained confidence, it shows in my communication”*.

There is clear leadership and direction at Haddon, combined with an open and transparent culture that encourages views and opinions from staff, as well as from employers and learners. Meetings take place at all levels of the Company, as well as regular one to ones between members of staff and their line manager. Staff described their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), that are set and reviewed through annual appraisal and monthly one to ones. Examples include working to a target of 80% retention and achievement (apart from effect of Covid-19), and less than 5% of caseload behind with timescales. Area Managers and their Trainer Coaches work to the same KPIs, which one person commented *“does ensure consistency across the board”*. When Covid-19 struck last year, the Company was quick to respond, introducing virtual updates for staff, as well as investing in technologies to support virtual delivery, to ensure that service continued as far as was practicable, while taking into account demands on staff as well as on employers and learners. A learner spoken to commented that *“video conversations still feel like it’s face to face”*. Members of staff interviewed described how they feel able to, and comfortable in voicing opinions, and how they are always listened to. One person commented that *“Haddon is the most forward-thinking company”*, and described their involvement in the SAR process including a questionnaire to complete.

Since the previous Assessment, Haddon Training has had a restructure with the owner now also the Managing Director working with a small Senior Management Team; and the role of Internal Quality Advisor has changed to that of Area Manager, one for each sector who line manages their team of Trainer Coaches. Each manager is given a section of the QIP to lead on – mini projects for those areas identified for improvement. Projects currently being worked on include developing resources for Equine, with a second set for Racing; one on EPA of the learner journey, and another on better resources for Animal Care. Staff mentioned the library of digital resources that has built up since Covid-19 and ensuing lockdowns, the massive resources on SharePoint, and the use of Google Classrooms with learners. A new Marketing role was taken up a year ago by an existing member of staff, who has had an impact on reaching new audiences on social media – particularly with posts on Instagram and Facebook, as well as updating the website. What’s App groups are another example of technology utilised by Trainer Coaches with their learners.

Haddon Training has built strong relationships with partner organisations, including with employers in Equine and Animal Care industries, and with NHS Trusts as providers of Business Administration, Customer Service and Management Apprenticeships. Other partners include those that can bring added value to learners such as the British Grooms Association. In working to widen access to provision from under-represented groups, such as those from deprived backgrounds and Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups in Equine for example, Haddon is now engaging with organisations such as Ride Out Racism, and the Urban Equestrian Academy.

Partners spoken with during the Accreditation Review spoke highly of their relationship with Haddon Training, including the responsiveness, support and benefits to their own organisations. Comments included - *“It’s a brilliant relationship. They’ve been fantastic”*; *“would struggle to think of anything they could improve on”*; *“our relationship with Haddon is really key, they’re doing their part in shifting culture”*; *“I can’t fault them – very impressive”*; *“Support received for 1 Apprentice with challenging needs was second to none”*; *“they adapted quickly to Covid – quite seamless. Learners still getting the quality time they need”*. None of those spoken to could identify any areas for improvement.

As already mentioned, Haddon Training works to continuously improve, and to develop its provision. An example of the former is the work being done on standardisation to ensure consistency across the Company. Individual comments from learners that may be helpful to consider in this work were – how one would have liked information in bite sized chunks with more consideration of their preferred learning style from the start; another - more emphasis at the start on the importance of recording their off the job training, and a comment that *“when I started didn’t know where I wanted to go with it – exploring different pathways from the qualification – could have had more about that from the start”*. As another learner commented that *“they explained about the off the job training record, and to keep on top of it, not leave it until later”*, these individual comments are included purely for information. Ongoing developments, such as work being done to increase the racing pathway for Equine, building resources in support, and engaging with relevant contacts such as Careers in Racing and Racing with Pride; the links to encourage under-represented groups taking up opportunities, and the imminent introduction of the Aptem CRM system, are all evidence of how Haddon Training continues to move forward.

Comments from two learners and a member of staff that sum up some of the findings from this Accreditation Review were: *“I’ve learned so much over the past year – it’s been completely worth it”* and *“It’s my first Apprenticeship and they answered all my questions”*. *“They are developing everything I’d want to improve on. If I see something, it’s already on our agenda to develop it – that’s the beauty of Haddon”*.

Strengths

A number of strengths were identified during the assessment, which are detailed below. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the **matrix** Standard.

- The communication and open culture at all levels within Haddon Training includes a schedule of meetings from senior management team to individual area team meetings, plus regular one to ones for each member of staff. Level of communication was appreciated by members of staff spoken to. A particular plus was the introduction of regular virtual updates during the Covid-19 pandemic, that ensured staff were kept updated on the Company's objectives and progress; and reassured at a stressful time. There are plans among the Senior Management Team that these updates will continue. During interviews comments such as - *"they've given us all the support we needed"* (re Covid) *"support at Haddon is awesome, the best place I've ever worked"*; *"more cohesive as a company now we're remote – more communication than before Covid – which will continue. They've done very, very well with it"*; *"Company has really evolved for the better since Covid"*; were voiced by staff in different roles. (1.2, 2.1)
- Haddon Training pulled together well as a team to act quickly in response to Covid-19 restrictions, this included training staff in virtual technology and moving support online through MS Teams and Google Hangouts. Disruption was minimised as far as possible, with support for learners and employers continuing virtually or by phone. Flexibility to fit around the priorities of learners and employers working in the Equine and NHS sectors particularly, was also appreciated by those spoken to. (2.1, 2.3, 4.7)
- There is a robust staff development system at Haddon Training, that ensures staff are supported to gain their own professional qualifications in their industry sectors, which in turn ensures that information, advice, training and support is being delivered by quality industry professionals with up to date knowledge and skills. All staff have 30 hours CPD annually and can identify possible relevant courses/activities for their own development. (2.4)
- Haddon Training has an established procedure for prospective learners from enquiry through to enrolment, that includes their commitment pathway, initial assessment and knowledge, confidence, competence levels, to ensure they start on the right level for their employability skills. This, together with the learner induction, ensures learners are clear what to expect from the start, and comments such as *"I really like the organisation, they're so helpful. They asked me a lot of questions at the start to ensure I was on the right programme"*; and *"so far, a really good experience. Everything was explained very clearly – no nasty surprises"*, were typical of learners views expressed during interviews. The strength lies in the Company's commitment to ensuring this procedure as with others, is regularly evaluated to ensure effectiveness, and to identify any areas for improvement. (3.1, 4.8)
- Following on from programme start, levels of support provided by Trainer Coaches for individual learners were identified as a positive by all learners spoken to, as was the support for functional skills – identified through initial assessment. Extra support is provided to learners who need it on a one to one basis, and learners spoken to were positive about its value. For example, learners talking about functional skills commented – *"the advice has been brilliant, one to one's amazing – all I could have asked for, everything really well explained"*; *"I didn't want to do it, but English was beneficial, it has improved my email writing, better grammar and punctuation. It's really boosted my confidence in communication"*. Another learner talking about next steps mentioned that - *"they've also given me a lot of ideas and other potential career options after the Apprenticeship – e.g., Uni, Level 3"*. (3.4)

- A robust quality system is in place, to monitor consistency and effectiveness, and to identify areas for improvement. As well as peer observations carried out remotely, and regular standardisation activities, this includes an innovative approach to working towards identified improvements on the QIP – by establishing mini projects with a named manager responsible for each project area, and presentation of progress towards each area at Quality Forums, with an opportunity for others present to input any views and suggestions. The system gives ownership for each area, along with regular reviews of progress. (4.5)
- Linked to the point above, Haddon Training produces a very detailed SAR, that includes data and explanations on performance, plus results of surveys for both quality of learning and support and outcomes – such as in personal development. The detailed SAR demonstrates the robust measures the Company has in place to identify areas of strength and for improvement, as well as its commitment to gaining feedback from internal and external stakeholders as part of the process. All of which informs areas to go into the QIP, taking account views of staff, partners and learners. (1.7, 1.8, 4.5)
- Commitment to continuous quality improvement of provision was particularly well-evidenced at Haddon Training, including relevant resources. The introduction of the Aptem CRM system, which is currently at the end of its development phase, with managers and staff able to input their feedback on what could be useful to include is a prime example. Members of staff at all levels were very positive about Aptem, with comments such as “*Aptem – can’t wait, will streamline everything*” and “*hoping this system will make our dreams come true*” among the comments voiced. (4.7, 4.8)

Areas for Development

Areas for development are offered in the spirit of continuous improvement and a way for an Assessor to add value e.g. where the service is of a high quality, development areas are offered to help the service be even better than it already is, or to give insight into practices seen elsewhere. There is no correlation between the number of strengths and areas for development. Where development areas are greater in number this is not intended to indicate that the information, advice and guidance service is in any way lacking. These will form the basis for discussion at the Continuous Improvement Checks (CIC) conducted twelve and twenty-four months from the date of this Assessment, along with any other notable developments. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the **matrix** Standard.

A number of the areas identified for development during the Accreditation Review, had already been recognised by Haddon Training as needing improvement; and are included in plans for the new Aptem CRM system that is currently in the final stages of development prior to roll out.

- Information on achievement of individual outcomes is currently recorded on individual learning plans over time, as well as gathered to some extent through learner surveys. Increased confidence, communication skills and motivation were all identified by learners interviewed, as areas of impact resulting from their training programme with Haddon Training. However, more could be done to compile and report data on impact of the learner journey, as well as positive destinations, and the Company have identified this. Once the new Aptem CRM system is up and running this will be actioned. Progress will be reviewed at next year's first annual CIC. (1.5, 4.2)
- The website includes case studies and news stories of learners' success and employers' experiences. Linked to the area above, once headline data has been compiled this could be promoted on the website to provide 'at a glance' visual information for stakeholders. Such data could include retention and achievement percentages together with individual outcomes and positive destinations into employment or further training, to highlight results from the quality provision that all at Haddon Training are committed to supplying. (1.6, 2.2)
- Whilst it is appreciated that take-up in particularly Equine by ethnic minorities is small nationally, Haddon Training could consider how more could be done to encourage participation from low represented groups – such as through promotion and work with employers and external sector bodies. Some work has already started, including through links with the Urban Equestrian Academy and Ride Out Racism initiative. Progress and any positive impact will be reviewed at next year's first CIC. (1.3, 1.6, 2.2)
- Learners were positive about the amount of information provided digitally and in paper format at the start of their programme. However, they referred to folders of information, and a digital learner handbook could provide a better format for easy access of general Company information, relevant policies, procedures, and key contacts in one place for learners, alongside their folder of specific programme information and modules. This too is an area already being planned. (2.2, 3.1)
- Haddon Training have a close working relationship with the British Grooms Association, and learners are offered a discounted membership in their first year. The Association provides a range of services, courses and wellbeing support, and all learners interviewed were either members or thinking of joining. As the BGA is such a valuable referral resource, Haddon Training could consider introducing a virtual information session by the British Grooming Association for learners and possibly parents as part of induction. Such a session could

familiarise learners with all that membership offers from the start of their training, and how to access the website and relevant links. (3.5, 3.6)

- The Aptem CRM system soon to be introduced, is perceived by staff to be game-changing in having all information in one place for easy access and tracking, impacting on workloads, and enabling collation of data. How this has progressed, together with resulting impacts, will also be reviewed at next year's first CIC. (4.5, 4.7. 4.8)

The annual **matrix** Continuous Improvement Check will allow the organisation to demonstrate on an ongoing basis the developments they are continuing to make in order to support individuals. These may include the Areas for Development above. <https://matrixstandard.com/assessment-journey/continuous-improvement-checks/>

Please note that annual Continuous Improvement Checks are mandatory and non-completion within the required timescale will impact on your organisation's accreditation, please see the section Assessment Information for dates.

Methodology

The following methods were used to gather evidence against the **matrix** Standard during the assessment process.

During the 2.5 days of evidence gathering, a total of 40 people were interviewed remotely, due to Covid-19 restrictions. A mix of MS Teams and Google Hangouts was used for the majority of interviews, plus a few conducted by telephone. The breakdown is given below:

22 members of staff, including the Managing Director, Director of Education, other managers, delivery, sales and administration staff, were interviewed in a mix of one to ones and small groups

15 learners were interviewed in small groups, plus a few one to one

3 partner representatives – who included a sub-contractor, a referral/support partner and an employer were interviewed one to one – two virtually and one by telephone

The Company's website was visited prior to the Accreditation Review, and documents sent to the Assessor for review included the latest Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan, the previous Quality Improvement Plan, IAG policy, and existing strategic plan.

Conditions of Accreditation

Holders of the **matrix** Standard Accreditation must:

1. Maintain and continually improve upon their services.
2. Throughout the period of accreditation satisfy The Growth Company that the organisation continues to meet the requirements of the **matrix** Standard via the annual continuous improvement checks and the three-year accreditation review.
3. Complete annual continuous improvement checks in a timely way, it is expected these will be carried out annually by the accreditation anniversary date.
4. Inform The Growth Company or their Assessor if the key contact name/contact details change.
5. Submit their Booking Form for re-accreditation to the **matrix** Standard at least 3 months prior to the accreditation anniversary date ensuring all pre on-site activity is completed in a timely way including planning, payment and interview scheduling. Accreditation Reviews are due 3 years from the anniversary accreditation date; it is expected that organisations will be assessed by this date or will risk being de-accredited.
6. Inform The Growth Company of any significant changes made to the organisational structure, senior management or systems that may impact on their accreditation; email: matrixStandard@growthco.uk.
7. Inform The Growth Company immediately if they wish to extend or reduce the scope of their accreditation.
8. Inform The Growth Company of any serious complaint or rise in numbers of complaints received (within the scope of the accreditation).
9. Not undertake or omit to undertake any activity that may be misleading and/or may cause The Growth Company and/or the **matrix** Standard to be brought into disrepute.
10. Only use the **matrix** Standard Quality Mark for the areas within the scope of the accreditation and in accordance with the guidelines. For example, if a certain department is successfully **matrix** accredited, the Quality Mark can only be used on that department's letterhead or on that department's page on their internet homepage.
11. Ensure in cases where accreditation is withdrawn or where they do not come forward for accreditation review, remove from display any certificates or plaques issued by The Growth Company and do not display the **matrix** Standard Quality Mark nor refer to be a former holder of the **matrix** Standard.
12. Be aware that The Growth Company reserves the right to remove any accreditation and/or certification previously applied if payment is not received for services provided.