



## Buttercups Training Ltd



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## 1. Assessment Information

Assessment Type	ACCREDITATION REVIEW
Assessor's Decision	STANDARD MET
Assessor's Name	ROB BARLOW
Visit Date	25/9/2018-27/9/2018
Client ID	C10106
Assessment Reference	PN103892
Continuous Improvement Check Year 1 due by	15/9/2019
Continuous Improvement Check Year 2 due by	15/9/2020
Accreditation Review on-site visit to be conducted by	15/9/2021

## 2. Organisation – Introduction, Aims, Objectives & Outcomes

Buttercups Training continues to be at the forefront of training for pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, dispensing assistants and support staff working in hospitals, the community, dispensing doctors' practices and the Armed Forces. Celebrating their 30 year anniversary this year they have recently moved to extensive new office facilities close to the centre of Nottingham that has allowed them to support their growth and bring the operational teams together.

Their mission is *to help our learners, employed in the healthcare sector, achieve their potential, and make a rewarding contribution to the health and well-being of their local communities and success of their employers.* In their Strategy Review 2017 they describe within their Operational Strategy *providing the highest quality learning experience available to ensure learner success, safety and their progression into further learning, with enhanced career opportunities.*

Working closely with the General Pharmaceutical Council and a broad range of employers they are delivering a range of Level 2 and 3 qualifications including Apprenticeships, MCA and pre-registration training and most recently ILM Level 3 Diploma for managers. The organisation has further developed its blended learning approach to deliver government and employer funded training through improved on-line resources, increased use of webinars, and a range of telephone based assessor, review and welfare interventions. Study days are provided for those on the pre-registration training programme. They have been successful in moving to deliver Education and Skills Funding Agency funded contracts and are actively involved in facilitating the development of the new Level 3 Apprenticeship Standard for the sector. They work in a bespoke way with a number of employers in the sector to tailor programmes to their needs.

Across all of their training delivery they identify achievement rate, employer and learner satisfaction as key metrics that relate to IAG delivery and through their SMT Dashboard are monitoring these along with a number of other service standards and outcomes including withdrawal rates, enrolment rates, turnaround times, system down time and staff survey and attendance. Examples provided indicated funded success rates of 83% YTD (target 85%) and non-funded of 64% YTD (target 75%) and withdrawal rates below their target of 10%. Learner satisfaction is at 84% against their target of 95%; employer satisfaction is currently 74% against their 100% target.

The close attention paid to delivery performance has enabled them to identify changes to their assessment and tutor delivery structure that will enable assessors to manage caseloads and work more closely with their IQA lead in reducing backlogs and improving further their success rates. The introduction, for example, of a dedicated review call team, development of the client relationship team, the appointment of a qualified Careers Adviser, IAG training for front line staff, and the ongoing work of the welfare team will further support the achievement of these objectives and enable them to move closer to the higher targets they have set themselves.

Operating with an enhanced Senior Management Team and a Company Advisory Senior Executive Team they are focused on providing information, advice and guidance in the following way:

- Early contact through the website, PST, Client Relationship team, Enrolment and Funding teams, and Professional Development team to ensure that potential learners are signing up on the right course for their work and progression objectives.
- Ensuring that learners understand the nature of the learning programme, content and how it will operate and how to be safe. Support to successfully complete a qualification including signposting internally and externally to remove barriers to learning.
- Support in understanding where appropriate the next in their learning/qualification steps including access to qualified careers advice.

Individual outcomes for learners from the IAG service are defined in a number of ways and include working with the professional standards set by the General Pharmaceutical Council, learning outcomes established within courses and programmes around personal development, through the front-line enrolment and funding conversations, assessment for functional skills, assessor contact calls and ongoing review calls, and welfare visits and calls. The use of the website including Stay Safe, induction videos, welcome calls, a student handbook, welfare and review calls and the role of the assessor and tutor are all helping to outline the features and benefits of the IAG service and check learner understanding. In the main learners felt that they understood the range of support available.

Outcomes for learners are being positively evaluated through the end of programme feedback and this is helping the team to learn more about the impact of the training for learners in the work place, satisfaction with initial learner advice and guidance and ongoing contact and relevance to career development. The review calls and welfare interventions are also helping to identify areas for personal development; the Confidence Ladder is being used by the Welfare team. Although Buttercups Training has embedded a number of areas of development noted throughout this report they are keen to further develop their approach to the evaluation of outcomes, progression monitoring and assessing distance travelled.

Throughout this successful **matrix** Accreditation Review it was apparent that Buttercups Training has been working to develop its overall approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. The development of their on-line Stay Safe resources, staff training and development and working to engage staff through increased social activity including shaping the new offices with a refectory and outdoor area were seen to all be positive steps forwards. A new EDI Strategy 2019 is in place and an EDI Committee has been implemented and an EDI suggestions box is being used in the refectory. Staff reported on the positive nature of the working relationships and culture across the organisation.

### 3. Strengths

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

- The organisation continues to demonstrate being a strong guardian of the sector working with professional integrity and objectivity in the delivery of qualifications and CPD. They have developed their approaches to Safeguarding and EDI both for learners and their own staff and have started to implement regular review calls to support individual learner progression. Managers and staff are clear about the boundaries of their roles, both internally and externally and demonstrated the capacity to support the range of potential learners that they might work in the healthcare sector. (1.3, 3.3)
- There is depth of relationships with stakeholders across the sector that is being used successfully to facilitate contribution and enhance qualifications and service delivery. Positive examples were provided that included facilitation of the new Level 3 Apprenticeship Standard, understanding the range of needs of employers to shape individual delivery, and supporting the work of General Pharmaceutical Council in their work as the sector regulator. (1.8, 4.4)
- Over the last three years Buttercups Training has continued to successfully invest in a range of resources that support and enhance service delivery. In particular their move to contemporary office facilities in Nottingham is providing a positive experience for staff, telephony and IT systems are providing increased capability to connect staff and learners through blended learning, and investment in new staff roles and capabilities are strengthening their IAG offer to learners. (2.1)
- IAG delivery is strongly aligned to the overall ambitions of the organisation with measures of success defined and a broad range of metrics relating to outputs and outcomes in place. In particular, the regular process of the SMT weekly monitoring, review and action planning ensures that key actions are being taken to support improvements to IAG delivery such as the recent organisational changes and move to a new structure to improve success rates, turnaround times and support for progression. (1.1, 3.2, 4.1)

## 4. Areas for Development

A number of areas for development were identified during the assessment which may develop or enhance the service delivered. These are detailed below and for the organisation to consider as part of its ongoing continuous quality improvement actions. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the **matrix** Standard. 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 organisation has in place its own end of course evaluation as well as using FE Choices and feedback forms required to be completed by their previous prime contractors. Now with their own direct funding the teams are starting to explore how they might collect feedback in the future, in particular, using automated systems. As a part of this ongoing development it may help them to reflect on the Kirkpatrick model of training evaluation that looks at reaction, learning, behaviour change and impact.

This may help them in defining the nature of any feedback questions and also when and how they are asked. For example, learning achieved from the induction, satisfaction with an on-line information pages using a simple thumbs up/thumbs down symbol. Varying approaches across programmes, asking just key questions throughout a programme, and having a single 'feedback@' open email address may be appropriate. The development of an on-line moderated mentor forum may also facilitate a useful source of gathering feedback and discussion about service development. (4.5, 4.7)

- With the emerging change to the assessor/tutor delivery roles, the welfare calls and visits that are operating, and the recent introduction of reviewer calls it may be useful for the organisation to revisit the overall approach being taken to welcoming students to their programme to ensure that all learners are aware of the particular range of IAG services available as part of their programme and to check their understanding. Although there is range of welcome calls, a learner handbook, course resources and induction videos already in place these might be further developed and supplemented. The developing assessor role may provide an opportunity to further check understanding and the role of the mentor in the work place may in some way provide a source of supplementing and validating the induction process. (3.1)
- The team has developed an extensive Skills Scan document that they are planning to use as a distance travelled tool initially for funded programmes. In helping learners and employers to reflect on key areas of progressive individual development and to assess base line and distance travelled it may be helpful to prioritise and focus the document slightly more to allow ease of use. Enabling the employer to be part of the identification process, developing the tool for on-line use and aggregation, and being able to present and record a visual representation to support different learning styles may also add value. It may also be appropriate to reflect on how the tool can best support the 'spiral' learning approach being developed within the new Level 3 Apprenticeship Standard. (1.5, 4.4, 4.7)
- The organisation is currently gathering some information regarding learner progression through their end of course survey and course registration records.

As they try to reach out and connect with learners post qualification they may wish to explore how ongoing access to an on-line platform could particularly support Level 2, Level 3 and pre-registration evaluation of progression and provide ongoing connection including possible careers support. The pre-registration Twitter account is already being positively received and may indicate how learners value receiving ongoing information from Buttercups. (4.2, 4.7)

- Buttercups Training has in place an IAG policy and is planning to review this as well as possibly establishing an overall strategy document as part of their regular policy review process. They are also wanting to consider aspects of the Government's Careers Strategy published in December 2017. This will provide an opportunity to clearly define the organisational IAG system and range of roles within it as they are now and enable the key IAG moments on the learner journey to be clearly defined. The team has also been thinking about new delivery approaches such as careers webinars and drop-in services and these can potentially be included. Working in this way can also help in defining clear metrics of success and service standards, roles and responsibilities, training and delivery requirements and the language to be used to describe the range of service interventions as part of communications with learners and employers. For example, this might be about developing 'career management' skills for learners within an existing employer development system. (1.3, 3.1)
- As the organisation continues to develop its range of employer engagement it may wish to consider how metrics of success could be developed and added to the service level agreements. This might, for example, include measures of apprentice retention and ongoing progression within an organisation. (4.4)

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 <http://matrixstandard.com/continuous-improvement-checks/>. These may include the Areas for Development above.

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 Section 1 for dates.

## 5. Methodology

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

- Planning discussions with the Managing Director and the PA to MD/HR Support.
- A visit to Buttercups House in Nottingham.
- Face to face interviews held with the Managing Director, four senior managers and six members of staff.
- Group based interviews held with eleven members of staff
- Telephone interviews with three employer representatives, two members of staff and fourteen learners
- An opportunity to review a range of information and resources including their website and social media, promotional leaflets; Strategy Review May 2017, SAR 2017-18, SMT Dashboard; a range of enrolment process forms and information for learners including Safeguarding leaflets; Skills Scan; EDI Bulletins and on-line information for learners including signposting resources; feedback and evaluation reports; policies and procedures including their EDI Strategy and IAG Policy.
- A telephone based feedback discussion held with the Managing Director.

## Conditions of Accreditation

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

- Maintain and continually improve upon their services.
- Throughout the period of accreditation satisfy Assessment Services Ltd that the organisation continues to meet the requirements of the **matrix** Standard via the annual continuous improvement checks and the three-year accreditation review.
- Complete annual continuous improvement checks in a timely way, it is expected these will be carried out 3 weeks either side of the accreditation anniversary date.
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd or their Assessor if the key contact name/contact details change.
- 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.
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd of any significant changes made to the organisational structure, senior management or systems that may impact on their accreditation; email: [matrix@assessmentsservices.com](mailto:matrix@assessmentsservices.com) .
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd immediately if they wish to extend or reduce the scope of their accreditation.
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd of any serious complaint or rise in numbers of complaints received (within the scope of the accreditation).
- Not undertake or omit to undertake any activity that may be misleading and/or may cause Assessment Services Ltd and/or the **matrix** Standard to be brought into disrepute.
- 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.
- 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 Assessment Services Ltd and do not display the **matrix** Standard Quality Mark nor refer to being a former holder of the **matrix** Standard.
- Be aware that Assessment Services Ltd reserves the right to remove any accreditation and/or certification previously applied if payment is not received for services provided.

Whilst accredited the organisation will be signed up for IAGonline - a community website for all **matrix** holders. Once signed up, any employee of the organisation can join the community and access regular posts and join specialist interest groups for support and discussion.

	
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