



**EDUCATIONAL OVERSIGHT INSPECTION OF PRIVATE FURTHER
EDUCATION COLLEGES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS**

EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT

**AIRWAYS AVIATION ACADEMY LIMITED (FORMERLY ATLANTIC
FLIGHT TRAINING LIMITED)**

(Company Registration Number - 04025680)

Full Name **Airways Aviation Academy (formerly Atlantic Flight Training)**

Address Airways House, London Oxford Airport, Langford Lane, Kidlington, Oxfordshire OX5 1RA

Company name Airways Aviation Academy Ltd

Telephone Number 01865 587370

Email Address d.unwin@airwaysaviation.com

Website www.airwaysaviation.com

General Manager Mr Philip Moore

Proprietor Airways Aviation Academy Ltd

Age Range 18+

Total number of students 87

Numbers by age and type of study 18+: 87
FE only: 87

Inspection date **23 May 2017**

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Monitoring Visits and Extended Monitoring Visits of private further education colleges and English language schools. The focus of the visit is to confirm that the quality standards reported at the last full inspection are being maintained.

The ISI is an approved Educational Oversight body authorised by the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges and English language schools in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is designed to improve the quality of education on offer to international students who attend UK colleges through Tier 4 of the points-based system for student visas.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Educational Oversight Standards;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations outside the scope of the Standards to support continued improvement of quality.

Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of colleges, and by placing reports in the public domain, makes this information available to students, Government and the wider community. Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success.

The inspection of the college is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on students. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the college, its services or other physical features;
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the college or its accounting procedures;
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the college's compliance with employment law.

An extended monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the quality Standards for Educational Oversight. Inspectors will make judgements on progress against any action points and recommendations made at that time. The inspection will not examine all other Standards in detail but will sample to confirm that previous Standards have been maintained and that there are no contrary indicators to those quality judgements. Inspectors will also consider the impact of any material change reported since the last inspection.

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1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Airways Aviation Academy Limited is a private organisation which provides training for the aviation industry. It is registered with and approved by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Originally known as Atlantic Flight Training, it was formed in 2000 as a company limited by shares, and acquired in September 2014 by the Airways Aviation Group. The group is international and operates academies in Australia and Montenegro, with flying training also taking place in Spain.
- 1.2 The academy moved to the current premises at London Oxford Airport in April 2016. Governance is provided by the group's board of directors and is overseen by the chief executive officer. He is supported at Oxford by a general manager and a management team. The academy's aim is to deliver high quality teaching and learning outcomes in aviation theory and practical flight training. It offers a range of modular and full-time integrated courses leading to commercial pilot qualifications. It also offers a conversion course for military pilots seeking commercial pilot licences.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 87 cadets enrolled, of whom 20 are currently based at the Oxford premises and the remainder at the company's fair weather flying base in Spain or in their final phase of training in the Netherlands. A large majority of students are male. Most come from the Middle East with the largest numbers from Libya and Kuwait. The remainder are predominantly from the UK, with a small number from other European countries.
- 1.4 The academy enrolls students aged 18 years and over. Enrolment for the integrated course takes place bi-monthly, and monthly for the modular course. Cadets are selected following an internationally recognised assessment test and an interview. They must also pass an English language test at a specified level, and a medical assessment. There are no students with language and learning difficulties or disabilities.
- 1.5 This monitoring visit has been extended due to a change of general manager. For this reason, Section 5 of the Educational Oversight Framework will be inspected in detail.
- 1.6 The academy was last inspected on the 10 May 2016 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to meet expectations. The main recommendations from the previous report are:
- Provide written developmental feedback to all cadets in ground and flight schools to highlight weaknesses and set targets for improvement.
 - Ensure that regular lesson observations and appraisals identify staff development needs and set targets to improve student learning.
 - Plan and implement a structured system for collecting and responding to views from all students.
 - Formalise the recording of all structured management and instructors' meetings to identify actions allocated and addressed.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The academy meets expectations.** At the previous inspection of 10 May 2016 the academy was found to meet expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been maintained.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. Course provision is good. It is very well planned and clearly meets the requirements of the CAA. It prepares students effectively to become commercial airline pilots, meeting their career aspirations. Courses on offer to Tier 4 visa students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Teaching is good. Instructors are experienced and have very good subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned and clearly structured. In most ground school lessons, the range of teaching strategies used is limited; students are attentive and motivated but they are not sufficiently involved in learning for periods during lessons. The testing and assessment of students is systematic. All assessments are recorded in detail and students have access to regular verbal and written feedback on their progress. Student achievement is satisfactory. The tracking of individual achievements is good, and students make good progress in lessons. However, overall student achievement rates are not clear as appropriate data is not available.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. Arrangements for managing health and safety are excellent. There is a very high priority placed on safety, with comprehensive policies and procedures which are thoroughly implemented. Systematic checks are made of all necessary health, safety, fire and emergency issues, and any actions identified are rapidly addressed. The premises are of a high quality. They are very well maintained and fit for purpose. Security of the premises is excellent. Admission and attendance records are accurate and well managed. Pastoral support is excellent. Very good welfare systems are in place, and students value the support they receive.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. Oversight by the board of the Airways Aviation group, and by academy's managers, is good. This is well supported by systematic monitoring against a wide range of performance indicators and targets. An appropriate range of comprehensive policies and procedures are in place; these are regularly reviewed. Leadership and management are good. There is a well-developed management structure, and communication between managers and staff is very good. Regular meetings involve all staff. The outcomes of these are formally recorded along with any actions arising. In most meetings progress made against actions is followed up effectively. There are well-planned procedures for staff appraisals and lesson observations. These contribute well to the identification of staff development needs. However, in a minority of lesson observations resulting targets do not relate to improvements in teaching and learning. Quality assurance is satisfactory. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement and an audit process which meets the CAA's regulations. This results in the identification of actions which are managed and monitored well. However, data from student feedback and student achievements are not collected,

analysed or used sufficiently. Consequently, the academy's ability to evaluate its performance fully is limited. Staff selection and recruitment are excellent, with all appropriate suitability checks made before the appointment of new staff.

3. THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Provide written developmental feedback to all cadets in ground and flight schools to highlight weaknesses and set targets for improvement.
- 3.3 Good progress has been made against this recommendation. All students have individual learning plans which are reviewed frequently and verbal and written developmental feedback is provided regularly. Students have continuous access to their progress records and can check feedback on tests and the progress they are making. In the flight school individual tuition is followed up by immediate feedback after each flying lesson. In the ground school progress boards have been introduced at two points in the course where each student receives feedback on their progress and agrees learning targets. These are a recent development and are not fully implemented.
- 3.4 Course provision is good. It is very well organised and highly structured in line with the curriculum requirements of the CAA. As an approved training organisation licensed by the CAA, the academy's course provision is monitored closely to ensure that it is delivering a programme that fully prepares students to become licensed commercial pilots. This ensures that students have a recognised qualification providing appropriate progression routes into their chosen careers.
- 3.5 Students value their course provision and the qualifications are appropriately matched to their needs. Courses on offer to Tier 4 visa students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance.
- 3.6 Teaching is good. Instructors are experienced in the aviation industry and have very good subject knowledge. This is used effectively to encourage and respond to questions from students. Lessons are well paced and clearly structured. However, in most ground school lessons the range of teaching strategies used is limited. Students are attentive and interested, but they are not always sufficiently involved in learning.
- 3.7 Instructors demonstrate a clear enthusiasm for their subjects. This motivates students to learn. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to undertake independent study in preparation for future lessons or tests. Students value the instruction they receive and are positive about the support they have from instructors. Students are taught in small groups in ground school and usually on a one to one basis in flight school. Consequently, instructors understand their students' needs well. The relationships and rapport they have with their students are excellent. They understand both their learning requirements and their personal support needs. Students are given frequent advice and guidance on how

to organise their work. Effective note taking is expected and students are encouraged to develop their writing skills.

- 3.8 Systematic testing and assessment takes place and students are prepared well for external examinations. Progress and attainment are satisfactory. The tracking of individual students' achievements is good, and in lessons students make good progress. Students state that they believe they are making good progress. However, overall student achievement rates are not clear and data is not available which compares achievement rates to national averages in the CAA examinations. Attendance and punctuality is very good in all lessons.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 Arrangements for managing health and safety are excellent. Appropriate policies are in place; these are comprehensive and implemented thoroughly. Health and safety has a high priority within the academy. Health and safety procedures are very thorough, with comprehensive risk assessments, and clear fire and emergency procedures. Staff and students are aware of the key health and safety procedures through their initial induction, and safety is emphasised throughout training, particularly in the flight school. Checks of all appropriate safety issues and equipment are undertaken regularly and recorded systematically. As a result, the academy is a safe place for students and staff to study and work.
- 4.3 The premises are of a high quality and fit for purpose. Accommodation is very well maintained. It is well-furnished, light and spacious and provides well-equipped teaching and briefing rooms. Security arrangements are excellent.
- 4.4 Admission and attendance records are accurate and well managed. Attendance is carefully monitored and any unexplained absences are investigated immediately. There are clear procedures for informing the Home Office of any concerns regarding attendance by Tier 4 students.
- 4.5 Pastoral support is excellent. It is highly valued by students who confirm that staff are very accessible and they can easily find a member of staff if they have any kind of problem or concern. Advice and help is always available from both instructors and welfare staff. Support systems are well developed and appropriate for students living independently in residential accommodation.
- 4.6 Relationships between staff and students are very good. Social events for students are organised monthly. These are well attended and appreciated. They reinforce the close relationships which exist amongst students. Good careers advice and guidance is available from staff who have significant aviation industry experience.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Ensure that regular lesson observations and appraisals identify staff development needs and set targets to improve student learning.
 - Plan and implement a structured system for collecting and responding to views from all students.
 - Formalise the recording of all structured management and instructors' meetings to identify actions allocated and addressed.
- 5.3 Good progress has been made against the first recommendation. There are clear and well-planned systems for staff appraisals and lesson observations. These both contribute effectively to the identification of staff development needs. Lesson observations are now being carried out systematically and result in detailed, constructive feedback. However, the targets resulting from a minority of lesson observations do not related specifically to strategies for improving learning.
- 5.4 Satisfactory progress has been made against the second recommendation. Student feedback is collected systematically after students' initial induction, a few days after a course has started. This is used effectively by customer services to respond to early issues identified by students. However, further feedback is limited. It is only collected at the end of a course, the response rate is low, and it is not used formally to inform self-evaluation and identify areas for improvement.
- 5.5 There has been good progress made against the third recommendation. The majority of management and instructor meetings are recorded appropriately and, where necessary, actions are identified. In management meetings this is carried out very effectively, with progress reporting on the implementation of actions undertaken systematically. The key instructor's meetings are now recorded well, with actions identified but not formally followed up at subsequent meetings.
- 5.6 Oversight by the board of the Airways Aviation group and by the academy's leadership is good. This is supported by regular reporting of the academy's performance against an extensive set of performance indicators and targets. This is used effectively to identify actions and the monitoring of progress against these is strong. Leaders ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place. These are comprehensive and reviewed regularly.
- 5.7 There is a well-developed management structure; staff have clear roles and responsibilities which are well understood. Communication between staff is very good. There is an appropriate meetings structure and most staff regularly attend meetings. Staff are well informed about operational issues, discuss developments

and identify actions. The academy's mission and educational purpose is understood by all staff. The open style of management helps to ensure that relationships between the management team and staff are very good.

- 5.8 Quality assurance is satisfactory. There is a commitment to continuous improvement and to meeting the needs of each student. Managers are aware of many of the academy's strengths and areas for development. There is a well-developed auditing process in order to meet the need to comply with the detailed requirements of the CAA, the regulatory body, and many actions arise from this. However, key data from student feedback and student achievement are not analysed sufficiently or used to contribute to improvement plans. Student achievement data for groups of students, or the academy overall, are not readily available. This limits the academy's ability to assess its effectiveness and the progress students are making.
- 5.9 The complaints policy is clear. It is available on the website and in the students' handbook, and offers access to independent external adjudication if a complaint is not resolved satisfactorily.
- 5.10 The selection of new staff is excellent. It is managed very thoroughly. There are clear recruitment procedures in place which ensure that all appropriate identity and suitability checks are made and recorded before staff are appointed.
- 5.11 The provision of information is very good. The website and all other information on courses and facilities provide realistic and accurate information. The academy was very responsive in providing all requested information to inspectors prior to and during the inspection.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The academy has maintained the good quality found at the last inspection.

Recommendations for further improvement

In order to further improve the good quality provided, the academy should:

- Develop a systematic approach to the analysis and reporting of student achievements, and use this data to inform self-evaluation and organisational target setting.
- Strengthen the collection, analysis and use of student feedback so that it provides systematic information about the students' experience.
- Plan ground school lessons which include a variety of teaching strategies to ensure that students are actively involved in learning.
- Ensure that lesson observation feedback includes developmental targets aimed at improving teaching and learning.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with students. They held discussions with senior members of staff. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the academy.

Inspectors

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Mr Neil Haynes | Lead Inspector |
| Mr Peter Casey | Team Inspector |