



Pearson



Case study: HIT Training

The customer

HIT Training is the leading specialist training and apprenticeship provider for the UK's hospitality and catering industry.

It has a positive vision of what Apprenticeships can do: improve individual's skills and therefore their life chances; make businesses more efficient; and improve the economy.

HIT offers hotel and catering apprenticeships at all levels and in all sectors – not just chefs, bar staff and waiters, but in sales and marketing roles, banqueting and conferencing, events, functions and outside catering. Its extensive industry experience gives it a great understanding of the needs of both the employer and the learner.

Since 2006, HIT has supported 90,000 learners at thousands of sites across the country.

The challenge

As a Work Based Learning Provider, HIT's main objectives are to help employers increase the effectiveness and profitability of their staff; to develop learners' personal, economic and social status; and to enhance the level of service given to customers and clients.

It works with an extremely diverse set of employers, in terms of location, make-up and breadth of jobs, and one of the key challenges is firstly to ensure that those employers are being provided with the training interventions that suit their businesses, and secondly to support them in gaining access to public-sector funding that is available for training delivery.

Linda Martin, Quality and Development Director at HIT, says:

"Our customers range from a single independent fish and chip shop to a multinational organisation such as Aramark and include the licensed trade, hotels and restaurants of all sizes and hue. At any given time, we will be working with 10,000 apprentices and it is crucial that we are able to offer every one of them, as well as their employers, the bespoke training and qualifications they require."

The solution

In the current WBL climate, Apprenticeships are providing an ideal route for SMEs that require bespoke training solutions and want to develop varying skills sets without having their learners off site too often.

The funding streams available for Apprenticeship programmes are also such that HIT is able to deliver on its objective of connecting its customers with monies that can be extremely valuable to their business development strategy.

The flexibility of the HIT offer is designed to meet the needs of the industry on which it is focused. So Apprenticeships are offered on a roll-on-roll-off basis, rather than fitting into academic years. Apprentices are starting and finishing all of the time, which means that the opportunity to register, train and learn, take tests, be certificated and every other step of the Apprenticeship journey must be available on a year-round basis.

This is where Pearson WBL comes in. HIT is working with Pearson as its principle Awarding Organisation, and utilises Pearson's entire suite of hospitality qualifications and the full range of its qualification components and resources across a range of course options for learners, from Apprenticeship levels 2 to 5. Pearson also offers other services, including an extended quality assurance provision that sees it assess HIT's own quality verifiers and also underpin the standards by which HIT delivers its Apprenticeships. A dedicated account manager at Pearson is on-hand to answer any questions and provide support as and when required.



The outcomes

HIT's effectiveness and operational excellence is reflected in it holding two Grade 2 'Good' OFSTED inspections.

More than 70% of HIT apprentices complete their Apprenticeships and obtain either a BTEC or City & Guilds diploma. Overall, in the 10 years since it began delivering training to the sector, more than 45,000 hotel and catering staff have completed an Apprenticeship with HIT.

Linda estimates that 30,000 of those will have completed a course for which Pearson was the awarding organisation and that has, of course, made a sizeable contribution to an industry that continues to grow in the UK. "The success of our learners is reflected in quantifiable improvements and benefits for their employers," says Linda. "Well trained, competent staff are a valuable asset and can help a business perform well by delivering improved efficiency, better customer service and reduced staff turnover.

She adds: "The relationship with Pearson has been a key part of the solution for us. As well as the infrastructure and systems the relationship gives us, Pearson is also able to give us a wider insight into the world of education and qualification development.

"Pearson is large, but accessible – it is also very competitive on price and not as bureaucratic as some awarding organisations can be. We have a good relationship with our account manager and I know I will get an answer from our account manager within 24 hours of any query, which I think makes the Pearson offer very good value for money.

"The fact that Pearson is also able to offer its suite of products and services to suit our roll-on-roll-off model is one of the core elements of our own success in delivering the right solutions to our customers."