



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

EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT

OXFORD AVIATION ACADEMY (OXFORD) LTD

(Company number – 6277278)

Full Name **Oxford Aviation Academy (Oxford) Ltd**

Address CAE (Oxford), Oxford Airport, Kidlington, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX5 1QX
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Principal Mr Derek Wood

Proprietor CAE inc

Age Range 18+

Total number of students 268

Numbers by age and type of study 18+: 268
FE only: 268

Inspection date **27 – 28 June 2023**

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 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 CAE Oxford Aviation Academy (Oxford) is part of a worldwide group of aviation training organisations owned by the CAE group. CAE trains aspiring pilots through its network of aviation academies in nine global locations. With more than 50 training sites worldwide, CAE provide the widest civil aviation training network, providing training on the widest coverage of in-production and in-service types of aircraft. The Academy is located at London Oxford Airport with a second site at Crawley, near Gatwick Airport in West Sussex. The academy was established at its Oxford base in 1964 and became part of CAE in 2012.
- 1.2 The principal is based at Oxford and is assisted in the day to day running of the academy by a small team of senior managers. The aim of the academy is to combine high quality ground school courses with flying instruction to train high quality commercial airline pilots.
- 1.3 CAE Oxford Aviation Academy is a commercial pilot training organisation, regulated under the Danish Transport Authority (DTA) trading since 1964. The curriculum offered is accredited by the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority (UKCAA) and by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). The academy offers a range of training courses leading to Commercial Pilot's Licence (CPL). Enrolment is monthly for the integrated Air Transport Pilot's licence (ATPL) and enrolment for other courses are timed to meet individual requirements or those of airline sponsors. Training is carried out at Oxford, Madrid, Brussels and Gatwick centres; initial flight training takes place at the academy's fair weather base at Phoenix, United States of America (USA). The bases outside the UK were not inspected during this inspection. Ground School of theoretic knowledge is taught at Gatwick with more advanced flight training taking place at the Oxford site.
- 1.4 The selection process involves aptitude testing, mathematics and physics skills tests, personal interview incorporating previous qualifications and experience. Trainees from outside the UK are required to provide a secure English language test further tested during personal interview. Trainees may be self-sponsored or supported by an airline or government. Increasingly, courses are delivered in blended format through in-class training and virtual media; trainees are provided with a tablet computer and supported in the use of the technical programmes.
- 1.5 At the time of the inspection 268 trainees were enrolled in pilot training. Trainees under the age of 18 are not accepted. Most trainees are between the ages of 19–27. The vast majority of trainees are from the UK or other European countries. The vast majority of trainees are male. No trainees have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.6 This monitoring visit has been extended due to a change of principal and a change of 20 per cent or more of the permanent teaching staff. For this reason, Sections 3 and 5 of the Educational Oversight Framework will be looked at in detail.

1.7 The academy was previously inspected on the 18 – 20 May 2021 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to exceed expectations. The recommendations from the previous report are:

- Monitor the use of the VLE to ensure it is used appropriately and remains effective as a delivery strategy.
- Ensure sufficient data from all areas of the academy is used to support the self-evaluation process.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The academy exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of 18 – 20 May 2021 the academy was found to exceed 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 excellent. The academy has clear educational aims and objectives and offers a range of high-quality courses that fully meet the requirements of the UKCAA, DTA and EASA. Consequently, the courses on offer meet the needs of the trainees and provide clear progression routes into the aviation industry. Courses on offer to trainees on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Initial assessment prior to, and on arrival, is excellent and is highly effective in ensuring trainees have the ability to successfully complete their course and move into employment within the aviation industry. Trainees are well-supported by excellent teaching and a carefully planned curriculum. Instructors have excellent subject knowledge, relevant experience in the aviation industry and use highly effective teaching methods to motivate and involve the trainees in their learning. Regular and detailed assessments are used very effectively to check trainees' progress and to provide instructors with up-to-date information to ensure that they effectively plan to meet trainee' needs. Examination and test results are excellent, with the vast majority of students passing their exams on the first attempt and successfully completing their course.
- 2.3 Arrangements for the health, safety and welfare of staff and trainees across both centres are excellent. Health and safety is extremely well managed, with highly effective monitoring and oversight ensuring that any issues are quickly addressed. Buildings are well maintained and provide high quality facilities that effectively support learning. Comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures are implemented effectively to ensure a safe and secure learning environment for trainees and staff. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all trainees and staff. Trainee registration and attendance records are excellent. They are accurate, very well managed and are highly effective in monitoring attendance and taking necessary action. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are secure. The academy's pastoral structure provides excellent support and guidance for the trainees in accordance with its aims. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Trainees report that they feel safe and well supported.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Comprehensive oversight ensures that high levels of education, welfare, health and safety are maintained. A clear vision for the academy is shared by senior leaders and staff, who work very well together for the good of the trainees. A detailed management structure, with well-defined roles and responsibilities, ensures that the academy is well run, meets all its legal obligations and quality assurance is prioritised. A comprehensive process of self-assessment and evaluation effectively informs improvement planning, with a well-developed audit strategy to comply with

the requirements of the UKCAA, DTA and EASA. The academy successfully attracts highly qualified and experienced administrators, instructors and managers. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are excellent, in accordance with legal requirements, with all appropriate checks undertaken. As a result, all required employment and suitability checks are completed on staff before their employment is confirmed.

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

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 This monitoring visit has been extended due to a change of 20 per cent or more of the permanent teaching staff. As such, section 3 of the Educational Oversight Framework has been reviewed in detail.
- 3.3 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Monitor the use of the VLE to ensure it is used appropriately and remains effective as a delivery strategy.
- 3.4 Good progress has been made against the first recommendation. A review of the use of the VLE has led to changes to the way resources are presented on the academy's online environments; with cadets now having a clear system which displays all of the documents which are relevant to their individual active courses.
- 3.5 The quality of course provision and curriculum is excellent. The academy has clear educational aims and objectives and offers a range of high-quality courses that fully meet the requirements of the UKCAA, DTA and EASA. The curriculum is based on a clear policy statement, is well planned and provides a comprehensive range of courses that meet the needs of the trainees and provide clear progression routes into the aviation industry.
- 3.6 Testing of students prior to and on arrival is excellent. The process is accurate and is highly effective in ensuring trainees have the ability to successfully complete their course and move into employment within the aviation industry. As a result, trainees are very satisfied with their course and the provision offered. The courses on offer to trainees on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in Home Office guidance. Courses are aligned to the framework of reference for gaining qualifications which will allow for a Commercial Pilots Licence or Multi-Pilot's Licence regulated through the UKCAA and DTA for UK and EASA.
- 3.7 Teaching is excellent and results in high levels of trainee progress. Detailed planning and an excellent understanding of the needs and prior attainment of their trainees, allow instructors to successfully adapt lessons to meet individual learning needs and effectively challenge each of their trainees. Instructors have excellent subject knowledge, appropriate experience in the aviation industry and use highly effective teaching methods to motivate and involve the trainees in their learning. In the vast majority of classes, a wide range of teaching and learning methods are used to deliver highly engaging lessons. The importance of theory is successfully emphasised through illustration of practical examples and reinforced in practical instruction in the Flight Simulators (SIMs) and in flying practice. Trainees work very well in small groups, showing excellent co-operative learning and independence.

Classroom and other resources are of a very high quality, quantity and range and are used effectively by instructors to support learning.

- 3.8 Teaching does not undermine fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It encourages respect for other people including those with the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.9 Assessment is excellent. There are clearly defined processes in place to monitor trainees' progress to ensure that they are successfully progressing towards their learning aim and final qualification. As a result, the progress of each trainee is carefully tracked and allows managers, instructors and trainees to monitor their progress effectively and ensure that they are meeting the stringent European Union, Danish and UK CAA requirements.
- 3.10 Overall, trainees make excellent progress and achievement and attendance rates are high. Examination and test results are excellent, with the vast majority of students passing their exams on the first attempt and successfully completing their course.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met. A comprehensive range of detailed policies and procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of trainees and staff, and that the premises are highly secure. The premises at both centres are fit for purpose, very well maintained and enhance the students learning experience. Classrooms and flight simulators are tidy, clean, with appropriate lighting, heating, sound insulation and ventilation. Detailed health and safety, first aid and fire safety policies and procedures are consistently implemented. All necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards have been taken. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all trainees and staff. An appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid are in place. Free drinking water is readily available at both premises. Staff and trainees report that they are aware of their responsibilities and have received appropriate health and safety training. Proper provision is made for trainees who are ill or injured. Due to the medical requirements of the course, no trainees with physical disabilities are recruited.
- 4.2 Systems for recording registration and attendance are very well managed. Admission procedures are highly detailed and strictly observed. Staff at each centre work very closely together, and with senior managers, to maintain clear and accurate admission registers and records. Trainee files are accurately maintained and provide a clear record of checks on identification, previous academic experience, and visa status. Attendance records are accurate and daily attendance is very closely monitored. Staff have a clear understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment and attendance requirements for trainees on Student visas.
- 4.3 Pastoral support for trainees is excellent. Trainee welfare is a key priority for the academy and detailed policies and procedures ensure that they provide a very safe and supportive environment where trainees can progress quickly. On arrival trainees receive a comprehensive induction which is effective in helping them settle quickly in their course, their centre and the local area. Relationships between staff and trainees, and amongst the trainees themselves, are excellent with a strong culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance. A wide range of policies and procedures reinforce this culture and the expectations of appropriate behaviour and conduct. Replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and meetings with trainees, show that they feel that the academy is providing them with a very safe and comfortable environment which is highly effective in meeting their learning needs and future aspirations of becoming an airline pilot. As a result, they would recommend the academy to others.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 This monitoring visit has been extended due to a change of principal at the Oxford centre. As such, section 5 of the Educational Oversight Framework was looked at in detail.
- 5.3 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Ensure sufficient data from all areas of the academy is used to support the self-evaluation process.
- 5.4 Good progress has been made against the first recommendation. The self-assessment process has been reviewed, with managers from all areas now activity involved in the process. As a result, the self-assessment report contains information and data from all areas of the academy.
- 5.5 The quality of governance is excellent. The group provides excellent oversight and discharge their responsibilities well for financial planning and investment in the future of the academy. Senior managers from the group are fully engaged in the strategic development of the academy and are highly active in providing support and guidance when required. A clear vision for the future is shared by the group, senior leaders, managers, instructors and staff, who work very well together to ensure the very best learning experience for the trainees.
- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management is excellent. An appropriate management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities, ensures that the academy is well run and that they meet all its legal obligations. Policies and procedures are well defined, appropriate and regularly reviewed. Relationships and communication between the group and the leadership team of the academy are excellent.
- 5.7 The academy is highly successful in securing and retaining well-qualified staff. A comprehensive system of staff review is in place and is used to ensure staff are well qualified for the work they do, and appropriately supported by the management team. An excellent programme of staff development is in place to ensure they are appropriately trained for their roles.
- 5.8 Arrangements for quality assurance and the tracking of student progress are excellent. Managers are highly effective in monitoring procedures and evaluating outcomes to ensure high standards are maintained. Self-evaluation is well developed, resulting in a clear and realistic analysis of strengths and areas for development. Trainee feedback is regularly and systematically collected. This feedback is effectively analysed, shared with staff and managers, and used regularly to inform instructor development, academic action planning and the identification of

academy priorities. Trainee performance data is available and effectively summarised to ensure key issues are highlighted for leaders and managers.

- 5.9 Arrangements to check the suitability of staff are excellent. Staff files are very well maintained. All required employment and suitability checks are completed on staff before their employment is confirmed. A comprehensive central record of appointments is in place and effectively monitored by senior staff.
- 5.10 The complaints policy and procedure are clear and appropriate, and includes provision for outside adjudication if necessary. However, a small minority of trainees are not aware of how to access the complaints policy.
- 5.11 The provision of information is excellent. The group's website is clear and user-friendly. Prospective trainees are able to access accurate and highly relevant information to inform their study choices. The academy was highly responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Ensure that the academy's complaints policy is clearly sign posted on the website.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Ms Jane Beeson	Team Inspector
Ms Jacqueline Lawrence	Team Inspector
Mr David Scott	Team Inspector