



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

EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT

**L3HARRIS CTS AIRLINE AND ACADEMY TRAINING LIMITED
(FORMERLY L3 CTS AIRLINE AND ACADEMY TRAINING LTD**

(Company registration no. – 09592088)

Full Name	L3Harris CTS Airline and Academy Training Limited
Addresses	2-3 Gatwick Road, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 9BG Cranfield Training Centre, Hanger 1, Cranfield Airport, Cranfield, Bedfordshire, MK43 0AL
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Website	www.l3harrisairlineacademy.com
Principal	Mr David Coward
Proprietor	L3Harris CTS Airline and Academy Training Limited
Age Range	18+
Total number of students	287
Numbers by age and type of study	18+: 287 FE only: 287
Inspection dates	10 and 11 September 2024

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 L3Harris Commercial Training Solutions Limited, formerly L3 CTS Airline and Academy Training Limited, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of L3Harris Technologies, Inc. The academy is a division within L3Harris Commercial Training Solutions Limited. It provides training to pilots at all stages of their career, from ab initio (Airline Academy) to the post-qualification training (Airline Training) of pilots and examiners on behalf of the United Kingdom (UK) Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and other regulators globally. L3Harris is an accredited recruitment partner of British Airways, easyJet, Wizz Air UK and TUI, allowing airlines to select trainees from the graduate placement pool or tag high-performing trainees in the training system.
- 1.2 The company operates two training centres within the UK at Crawley, next to London Gatwick Airport, and Cranfield, and an additional fair-weather flight training centre in Sanford, Florida USA which did not form part of this inspection. The aim of the company is to provide airline-ready, well-trained pilots of the highest calibre.
- 1.3 The overall governance of the academy is led by the vice president and general manager for training services, who acts as the principal. He is responsible for the safety and operational management of the academy, which includes all aspects of pilot training and instructor management. He is supported by a management team of training and compliance managers. The individual sites in Cranfield and Crawley are led daily by site managers who follow the directives of the leaders based in Crawley and are answerable to them.
- 1.4 All programmes provided by L3Harris for the regulatory training of commercial pilots are based upon and comply with the legislative requirements of the UK CAA, European Union, and EASA, as well as numerous other regulatory bodies globally. The course contents and structures are approved and inspected by the UK CAA, EASA, and other international civil aviation authorities. The content cannot be reduced or amended in any way without the prior approval of the relevant authority. A small minority of trainees are completing the BSc Aviation Pilot Programme honours degree programme.
- 1.5 The selection process assesses trainees' aptitude for pilot training. Applicants with English as an additional language are required to have English at the required level. There are no trainees with learning difficulties or disabilities. Enrolment normally takes place monthly. Groups of trainees begin training together, but individual finish dates can vary widely due to variations in their progress rates in the flight and simulator phases, inclement weather and aircraft and simulator serviceability and availability.
- 1.6 At the time of inspection there were 287 full-time trainees undertaking pilot training. All trainees are aged 18 years or over. The majority are male and come from the UK. A minority come from other European countries, Japan and the Gulf States, and speak English as an additional language. Seventy-nine trainees were studying on a Student

Visa. Trainee accommodation is arranged by the academy and provided through external residences managed by third-party agents.

1.7 The academy was previously inspected on the 12 September 2023 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to exceed expectations. This monitoring visit has been extended due to a change of principal. For this reason, Section 5 of the Educational Oversight Framework will be looked at in detail.

1.8 The recommendation from the previous report is:

- Ensure that a risk assessment is devised and made available to relevant staff for all external visits from the Gatwick site once it is operational again.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The academy exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of 12 September 2023, 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. Courses are very well matched to trainees' needs, aptitudes and career goals. The curriculum is very well planned and logically organised, fully meeting the requirements of the civil airline authorities. Trainees make excellent progress in developing their theoretical aviation knowledge and practical flying skills. Most trainees complete the training phase they register for. Courses on offer to trainees on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Overall, teaching is excellent. Instructors are highly knowledgeable experts in the aviation sector. They use their subject knowledge and expertise very well to plan and deliver engaging lessons that challenge and interest trainees. Trainees benefit from detailed and personalised feedback that helps them to understand how to improve further. Attainment rates are high and most trainees progress to employment in the aviation sector.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. The academy's premises are clean, modern and very well maintained, providing an excellent environment for both learning and work. Trainees benefit from high-quality training facilities which support their progress and achievement very well, including a range of full flight simulators. Trainee registration and attendance recording are excellent. The academy keeps highly accurate admissions and attendance registers. Attendance rates are consistently excellent, with very few absences. Staff clearly understand Home Office requirements regarding enrolment, attendance and reporting arrangements relating to trainees on Student visas. Residential accommodation is good. Leaders and managers carry out effective monitoring checks to ensure the accommodation is safe, secure and clean. Most trainees are satisfied with the standard of accommodation.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Directors and senior leaders ensure there is very effective oversight of educational standards, as well as compliance with legal and regulatory permissions and health and safety requirements. Management structures and responsibilities are excellent. Quality assurance arrangements are good. Academic managers systematically collect and analyse achievement data to ensure trainees are well supported to achieve and progress. Trainee feedback received is effectively reviewed and responded to by managers where necessary. However, leaders and managers do not proactively collect feedback from all trainees at each stage of their training to secure further improvements to the quality of provision. Recent changes to customer service procedures mean that responses to trainees' queries is not always as prompt as trainees would like. Arrangements to check the suitability of staff are excellent. Managers ensure that all the necessary checks to confirm the identity of staff and their right to work in the UK are completed promptly. The provision of information is excellent.

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 The quality of course provision and curriculum is excellent. Courses are very well matched to trainees' needs, aptitudes and career goals. The curriculum is very well planned and logically organised, fully meeting the requirements of the civil aviation authorities. Trainees make excellent progress in developing their theoretical aviation knowledge and practical flying skills. As a result, courses prepare trainees very effectively for work as commercial pilots. Most trainees complete the training phase they register for.
- 3.3 Courses on offer to trainees on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Trainees complete a full-time course of study that involves a minimum of 15 hours a week of classroom-based, daytime study. Trainees completing the ground school phase of their training study for 35 hours per week. Courses on offer match those listed on the website and in other marketing materials.
- 3.4 Overall, teaching is excellent. Instructors are highly knowledgeable experts in the aviation sector. They use their subject knowledge and expertise very well to plan and deliver engaging lessons that challenge and interest trainees. Instructors use well-selected case studies and practical scenarios, which help trainees apply their theoretical knowledge and develop their independent learning skills very effectively. Instructors use engaging learning technologies and flight simulators well to help trainees understand the functions of flight controls and instruments in different aircraft types.
- 3.5 Instructors communicate technical information well, clearly modelling difficult concepts to help trainees develop and consolidate their theoretical knowledge and understanding. Instructors use questioning effectively to check trainees' understanding and correct any misconceptions. Instructors make effective links between the curriculum and formal assessments to help trainees develop the confidence and skills needed for their examinations. Trainees benefit from detailed and personalised feedback that allows them to understand how to improve further.
- 3.6 Training does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Instructors and managers encourage respect for other people, including those with the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.7 Progress and attainment are excellent. Instructors and managers use rigorous and robust systems to track and monitor trainees' progress over time. They provide effective support and guidance where required to help trainees stay on track. As a

result, attainment levels are high and most trainees progress to employment in the aviation sector.

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 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Ensure that a risk assessment is devised and made available to relevant staff for all external visits from the Gatwick site once they start again.
- 4.3 Good progress has been made against the recommendation. Leaders and managers have devised a detailed risk assessment process for external visits, considering a broad range of relevant hazards and risks and possible mitigations. The risk assessment is available to all relevant staff; however, at the time of inspection, there had been no recent external visits from the site in Crawley, located next to London Gatwick Airport.
- 4.4 The standard of the premises is excellent. The premises are clean, modern and very well maintained and decorated, providing an excellent environment for learning and work. Trainees benefit from high-quality training facilities that support their progress and achievement very well, including a range of full-flight simulators. Classrooms are light, well equipped and suitably furnished. Washrooms are clean and sufficient in numbers. Free drinking water is available. Security arrangements are very effective.
- 4.5 Student registration and attendance records are excellent. Leaders and managers have implemented very effective systems to ensure admission registers and attendance records are highly accurate and well maintained. Attendance is monitored very closely, and staff members know the whereabouts of trainees. Any trainees who are absent are contacted very promptly. As a result, attendance rates are consistently excellent, with very few absences. Attendance rates for trainees on Student visas are almost 100 per cent. The academy has clear published policies and procedures for the collection and refunding of fees and deposits. Staff have a very secure understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment, attendance and reporting arrangements relating to trainees on Student visas.
- 4.6 Residential accommodation is good. Trainees benefit from a good standard of accommodation provided and effectively managed by third-party agents. Leaders and managers conduct appropriate monitoring checks to ensure the accommodation is safe, secure and clean. Most trainees are satisfied with the standard of accommodation.

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 Governance and oversight are excellent. The vice president and general manager for training services sets a clear educational direction in line with the academy's aims. He works very effectively with directors and senior leaders to ensure effective oversight of academic standards, compliance with legal and regulatory permissions, and health and safety requirements. Senior leaders ensure effective financial planning and investment in high-quality staff, premises and resources. This oversight ensures that trainees benefit from a consistently high standard of education that supports their attainment and progression into employment in the aviation sector. Relationships between senior leaders and staff are excellent.
- 5.3 Management structures and responsibilities are excellent. A clearly defined and logical management structure ensures detailed policies and procedures are well developed, implemented and regularly reviewed. Leaders and managers are effective in self-evaluation and quality improvement planning. They have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the provision and take action when required to enhance the standard of education and care that trainees receive.
- 5.4 Leaders and managers appoint excellent staff who are well qualified and experienced in the aviation sector. They ensure that staff complete high-quality ongoing professional development and training, so they can carry out their roles to a high standard. Staff performance is reviewed regularly through appraisals and observations of training. New instructors benefit from helpful feedback, mentoring and support from academic managers, which helps them improve their training standards.
- 5.5 Quality assurance arrangements are good. Academic managers systematically collect and analyse achievement data to enhance the quality of provision and ensure trainees are well supported to achieve and progress. Trainees provide feedback to managers in a variety of ways, including through focus groups at the end of the ground school training phase. Feedback received is effectively reviewed and responded to by managers where necessary. However, leaders and managers do not proactively collect feedback from all trainees at each stage of their training to secure further improvements to the quality of provision. Recent changes to customer service procedures mean that responses to trainees' queries are not always as prompt as trainees would like. The academy has an appropriate complaints procedure that is clear and transparent, and formal complaints are handled and reported effectively. There are appropriate systems for independent adjudication of complaints.
- 5.6 Arrangements to check the suitability of staff are excellent. Leaders and managers ensure that all the necessary checks to confirm the identity of staff and their right to work in the UK are completed promptly. Managers ensure that references are taken up and appropriate verification checks are carried out to confirm previous

employment history. Staff files are systematically organised and maintained to a high standard.

- 5.7 The provision of information is excellent. The academy website provides trainees with clear, detailed and helpful information to inform their study choices, as well as links to key policies and guides. Information provided for inspectors was of high quality and very well organised.

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:

- Implement mechanisms to systemically collect feedback from all trainees to secure further improvements to the quality of provision.
- Implement improvements to the customer service procedures to ensure that all trainees consistently receive a prompt response to their queries.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with trainees and examined samples of trainees' work. They held discussions with the principal, directors and other senior members of staff. Inspectors attended registration sessions and visited residential accommodation. 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

Mr Steve Ingle	Lead Inspector
Mr Saul Hyman	Team Inspector
Ms Ann O'Toole	Team Inspector
Mr John Rooney	Team Inspector
Mr Benjamin Llewelyn	Team Inspector