BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION AND SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION
CHANGE OF MANAGEMENT/STAFFING
(Short Course Provider)

PROVIDER: Skyborne Aviation Training Limited

ADDRESS: Skypark Flight Centre
Gloucestershire Airport
Staverton
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL51 6SR

HEAD OF PROVIDER: Lee Woodward

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF INSPECTION: 6–7 February 2024

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation, 27 June 2024

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1.   Background to the provider

Skyborne Aviation Training Limited (Skyborne/the Provider) is a private limited company that provides flight training. The training is for aspiring pilots with no experience through to military pilots who wish to acquire United Kingdom (UK) commercial pilot qualifications. Skyborne began offering courses in August 2018, when it gained its licence from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Skyborne is regulated by a number of other aviation authorities, including the European Authority for Aviation Safety (EASA).

Skyborne operates out of a purposely designed building at Gloucestershire Airport that has three flight simulators and six aircraft. The building also includes a maintenance hangar, six classrooms, briefing rooms and administrative offices.

Skyborne's goals are to be recognised as the most respected and trusted airline training academy in the industry through the consistent delivery of better trained, more competent and more resilient pilots.

Skyborne is overseen by a Board comprising three Directors. On a day-to-day basis, Skyborne is co-ordinated by the Managing Director, who reports monthly to the Board. The Managing Director is supported by a number of managers, including the Safety and Compliance Monitoring Manager, the Head of Operational Delivery and the Head of Training.

In 2021, Skyborne began running flying courses in Florida in the United States of America (USA). For some courses, participants study in both the UK and the USA. British Accreditation Council (BAC) accreditation is for the UK-based courses only.

2.   Brief description of the current provision

The training courses provided by Skyborne are offered on a full time basis. Participants can enrol for the full, integrated course or enrol on a modular basis. The courses include the Air Transport Pilot Licence (ATPL) Theoretical Knowledge, Commercial Pilot Licence and Instrument Rating (CPL/IR), Advanced Upset Prevention and Recovery Training (AUPRT) and Airline Pilot Standards Multi-Crew Co-operation (APS MCC).

All the courses are conducted in person at the Provider's premises with some Computer-Based Training (CBT) supporting theoretical knowledge training.

The ATPL qualification is a theoretical pilot course and does not include flight time, while all other courses include flight training. Classroom-based training is delivered to groups of up to 20 participants, and flight training is conducted on a one-to-one basis with instructor-led briefings before and after flights.

At the time of the inspection, there were 83 participants enrolled on courses. All were from the UK and aged 18 years or over. The majority of the participants were male.

Courses commence every month or every other month, totalling ten planned start dates for 2024. Enrolment takes place one month before the start of the course, but late enrolments are also supported.

Participants must meet entry requirements, which vary for the different courses offered. General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) passes in Maths and Science and English language proficiency for speakers of English as an additional language are examples of such requirements.

3.   Inspection process

The inspection was carried out over one and a half days by one inspector on site at Skyborne's premises at Gloucester Airport. Meetings took place with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Managing Director, Safety and Compliance Monitoring Manager, Head of Operational Delivery, Head of Training, Chief Theoretical Knowledge

Instructor, Chief Flight Instructor, Customer Support Manager, Training Administrator and Group Head of Airline Business. Further meetings were held with representative groups of training managers, instructors, support staff and participants. A range of classes, briefings and debriefings were observed. The premises were inspected, and documentation was scrutinised. The Provider provided its full support and co-operation throughout the inspection and ensured that the requirements of the inspection process were fulfilled.

4.   Background to the supplementary inspection

Following the resignation of its Chief Operating Officer in November 2023, the Provider made the decision to review and restructure the senior management team. It introduced the role of Managing Director in September 2023.

The responsibilities and remit of the senior management roles have been reallocated to align with emerging business needs. The Managing Director role is accountable for the wider business needs, including sales and marketing and recruitment.

The operational management of the business regarding curricula and participant experience now lies within the remit of the Head of Operational Delivery. Job descriptions and the organisation chart have been updated to reflect these changes, which have also been effectively communicated across the Provider.

5.   Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	2 & 4–5 August 2022

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider.

1.   Significant changes since the last inspection

The Provider has introduced a revised senior management structure, which has required a review of job roles and responsibilities. The role of Chief Operating Officer has been replaced with a Managing Director position.

There has been investment in the premises, facilities and updated systems to enhance provision and trainee experience.

2.   Response to action points in last report

7.5 The Provider must put a mechanism in place for reporting to participants what has been done in response to their feedback.

This action point has been met. There is now a very clear feedback cycle that includes a mechanism for reporting back to participants on their feedback. Evidence of the cycle and examples of feedback given to participants demonstrate that this action point is now met well.

10.2 The Provider must offer more support to instructors in developing their pedagogic techniques.

This action point has been met. Mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that all instructors complete a thorough teaching and learning course that supports and develops their pedagogic techniques.

10.4 Instructors' questioning strategies must ensure the involvement of all participants.

This action point has been met. Questioning strategies are highlighted in standardisation checks and class observations. All instructors are reminded of the importance of effective questioning strategies and are given guidance on this. This ensures that questioning strategies will involve the participation of all participants.

23.3 The Provider must ensure that appropriate health and safety information is made available to staff and visitors who are entering the hangar space.

This action point has been met. Safety posters and information in safety briefings now ensure that sufficient health and safety information is now made available to staff, participants and visitors entering the hangar.

3.   Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

Recommendations following the previous full inspection have subsequently been addressed.

It is recommended that the Provider develops appropriate formal recorded means for staff to provide their feedback.

This recommendation has been appropriately addressed. The Provider has enhanced its processes for staff to provide feedback. Examples include regular team meetings and a staff survey that allows matters arising to be identified and responded to. Staff across the Provider speak favourably of the opportunities to provide feedback and how their input is both valued and acted on.

It is recommended that the Provider increases the response rate of participant feedback.

This recommendation has been appropriately addressed. The Provider has strengthened the emphasis on the importance of participant feedback, which is captured both informally during training sessions and more formally through end-of-course questionnaires. The purpose and value of feedback are discussed at the

induction as well as during training sessions. Participants have been able to learn how the Provider has responded to their feedback through regular updates, and this has also contributed to their engagement with the feedback mechanisms.

4.	**Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements**
4.1	Management, Staffing and Administration (supplementary inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the short course provider scheme document and main full inspection report

1.	**The provider is effectively managed**		
1.1	The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, trustees or governing body.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.2	The head of the provider and other senior managers are suitably qualified and/or experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.3	There are clear channels of communication between the management and staff, including those working at the delivery venue or remotely.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.4	The provider has a written statement of its mission and goals that effectively guides its activities, is communicated to all stakeholders and is effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.5	The provider has a written risk management strategy, which includes financial planning and is effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met
Comments

The Provider is managed effectively. Skyborne has a clearly defined management structure that is documented in an organisation chart. This is communicated to staff at induction and referenced within a staff handbook and ensures that the roles of the Board of Directors are clear and accessible to all.

The CEO has a comprehensive knowledge of both the strategic and operational aspects of the business. The CEO has extensive experience of working across the aviation sector and brings this currency and a network of contacts to the business to provide informed leadership and direction. The CEO is supported by the senior management team, whose members also demonstrate an extensive and sound knowledge of the operational management of the business.

The senior management team brings a wealth of experience of working within the aviation sector, with specific expertise in flight training. It is a requirement that the Skyborne teams have appropriate experience and qualifications to fulfil the CAA standards to enable them to undertake their roles.

Job descriptions are clearly documented and identify the level of authority and the interconnection with other members of the team. A meeting governance protocol ensures that formal, weekly departmental meetings are scheduled, and minutes are documented and disseminated appropriately. The Provider also makes effective use of informal conversations to provide a responsive approach to decision-making. Consequently, there are clear channels of communication across the Provider that are effective.

The Provider clearly articulates its mission and goals, which are communicated through induction, training events and departmental team meetings. Skyborne is committed to further development, with plans shared and discussed with the senior management team and stakeholders to gather feedback before implementation and at the review stage.

Skyborne maintains a business risk register that is regularly reviewed at Board meetings and updated accordingly, along with appropriate plans for risk mitigation. The Provider also maintains an operational risk register that is regularly updated to review risks associated with the operation of the business.

2. The administration of the provider is effective

2.1	Administrators are suitably qualified and/or experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and duties and are effective in carrying them out.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.2	The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the provider.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.3	The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.4	Administrative policies, procedures and systems are well documented and effectively disseminated across the provider.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.5	Data collection and collation systems are effective in supporting the administration of the provider.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.6	Participants' and trainers' personal records are sufficiently detailed and regularly updated.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.7	The provider has a robust security system with policies in place for protecting the data of its participants and trainers.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

Skyborne is effective in supporting the operational administration of the Provider with an experienced and suitably qualified team of administrators. Detailed job descriptions provide clear information on duties, responsibilities and reporting lines that align with the needs of the organisation and the regulatory requirements of the CAA.

All administrators participate in a formal review biannually to identify and support their development needs. Appropriate supervision and support ensure that staff are able to carry out their duties efficiently. The Provider is committed to a recruitment strategy for its administration team to ensure that it can expand as the business grows. This ensures that the size of the team is sufficient to respond effectively to the administrative needs placed on the team.

The administrative structure is clearly communicated to staff through an administration manual, handbooks and regular team meetings. This is further supported by documented administrative policies, procedures and systems that are held centrally within the Skyborne operational software programme and available in the staff handbook. A procedures manual is in place to further support the dissemination of key policies. There is an effective working relationship between the administration team and the training managers. This ensures the effective administration of Skyborne and ongoing monitoring of its performance and compliance with regulatory requirements.

The data collection and storage systems at Skyborne are well developed and highly effective in managing the data needed to support its operation. Staff and participant data is stored and maintained in a suite of secure databases, which are password protected and can only be accessed by authorised staff.

Data is collected from a number of sources, including recruitment enquiries, participant surveys and achievement data. Staff records, which include Curricula Vitae (CVs), personal information, contracts, and appraisal and disciplinary outcomes, are sufficiently detailed, well maintained and regularly updated by the Human Resources (HR) team.

The administrative team ensures that all records are organised and stored effectively, along with appropriate archive arrangements for both participant and staff records. These systems are effective in providing a wealth of data to inform the Provider's performance metrics.

The system is secure and robust, and appropriate policies are in place regarding data protection. These are the responsibility of the Safety and Compliance Monitoring Manager.

3. The provider employs appropriate staff

3.1	There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment of suitably qualified and experienced staff which include, for self-employed staff, the development of a signed performance service level agreement.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
3.2	Experience and qualifications are appropriately checked and verified before recruitment and records are accurately maintained.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
3.3	The recruitment process for trainers working remotely includes a face-to-face online interview.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA	
3.4	There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of all staff, which, for trainers, includes regular, scheduled course delivery observations.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
3.5	Managerial and administrative staff are appropriately supported in their continuing professional development.	☒ Yes ☐ No	

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

Appropriate recruitment policies and procedures are in place. These are documented in the recruitment handbook to support the engagement of new staff, who are suitably qualified and experienced and meet CAA regulatory requirements. This is evidenced across the CVs of staff employed at the Provider. Up-to-date records of signed service-level agreements are in place for self-employed trainers. These provide details of the job role and its associated responsibilities.

Pre-employment checks are carried out by the HR team to verify an applicant's experience and qualifications. These checks are documented centrally in the staff database. All new employees undertake an induction, are issued with an induction handbook, and have an opportunity to meet with key personnel across the Provider. The employee handbook is comprehensive and provides all relevant information to both support their role and as an introduction to the wider institution.

At induction, staff are also issued with the employee safety handbook. Clear and appropriate job descriptions are in place for all staff and clearly articulate the responsibilities aligned with their job role. Staff feel that the handbooks support them to undertake their role at Skyborne effectively.

Skyborne does not recruit trainers to work remotely, with all interviews taking place in person.

All managerial and administrative staff undergo an annual performance appraisal, conducted by the relevant manager. The appraisal process is used to discuss performance as well as to identify Continuing Professional Development (CPD) needs.

The Provider is committed to supporting staff with their CPD and arranges both in-house training and external courses. For example, to support learning and teaching, there is an opportunity to attend an internal teaching and learning course or a peer-support programme as part of trainers' development as an instructor. Staff feedback confirms that they feel well supported in developing their knowledge and skills, which enables them to meet the responsibilities of their role successfully. Inspection findings confirm this view.

The Head of Training, supported by the Chief Theoretical Knowledge Instructor and the Chief Flight Instructor, undertakes regular course delivery observations of teaching staff, when any CPD needs are identified and appropriately supported. All instructors are required to shadow and observe a colleague teaching before they are authorised by their line manager to deliver that specific course. Regular meetings provide an effective

	means of monitoring staff performance and ensuring that teaching methods are appropriate to maintain consistency in delivery.

4. Publicity material, both printed and online, provide a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the provider and its courses

4.1	Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the provider's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.	☒ Yes ☐ No
4.2	Information on the courses available is comprehensive, accurate and up to date.	☒ Yes ☐ No
4.3	The provider's key policies are accessible through the website.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the Provider's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered. The publicity material is visually appealing and informative. The website is well presented and provides an accurate representation of the Skyborne vision and its partnerships with the wider aviation industry. The Information provided on the Provider's premises, facilities and training programmes is clear and accurate. Participant testimonials and alumni success stories are particularly effective. Additional publicity material, the prospectus and flyers supplement the details provided. These are reviewed and updated on the website, which helps prospective applicants to make an informed choice. The Provider has recently undertaken a comprehensive review of its policies and procedures, with key policies being accessible through its website.

5. The provider takes reasonable care to recruit and register suitable participants for its courses

5.1	The provider ensures that the specific courses on which participants are registered are likely to meet the participants' expectations and needs.	☒ Yes ☐ No
5.2	Entry requirements for each course, including those relating to language ability, where applicable, are set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the course descriptions read by prospective participants.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
5.3	A formal application and selection process ensures that participants meet the entry requirements.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
5.4	Applicants are provided with sufficient information to enable them to make a judgement on the suitability of the courses and their delivery methods and can discuss any concerns before registration.	☒ Yes ☐ No
5.5	The provider replies to all application enquiries in line with its appropriate target response times, and all stakeholders are briefed properly on the nature and requirements of its programmes.	☒ Yes ☐ No
5.6	Overseas recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
5.7	The provider has effective systems to identify participants who have special educational needs and/or disabilities requiring additional learning support or other assistance.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

The Provider offers courses that are fully aligned with the regulatory and recognised qualifications across the aviation industry. During the registration process, participants' needs and expectations are matched to the appropriate course. The customer support team supports the registration stage with a comprehensive schedule of communication with participants to ensure that they have all the relevant information on their course, as well as to address any queries.

The Provider's website clearly articulates the entry requirements for each course, which are reiterated during the registration process by the customer support team. Course descriptions are available on the website, with further information available on request. The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section on the website is particularly useful in providing answers to common application queries.

Applicants are guided through the application process by the customer support team, which provides comprehensive help and support. Open days and individual visits are accommodated, as well as opportunities to speak with instructors and current participants. Participants comment on the high standard of personalised support they received when applying for a course.

The Managing Director and Head of Recruitment have oversight of the application process, which is formalised and clearly documented to capture the relevant applicant information and check eligibility and entry requirements before enrolment.

The application and enrolment process continues with the communication of detailed programme brochures and information leaflets to prospective participants and, where relevant, their parents. The customer support team manages application enquiries, which are responded to within the 24-hour target response time. Participants are particularly complimentary regarding the personalised advice and prompt response and support they received during both the application and enrolment processes.

Skyborne does not employ the services of overseas recruitment agents.

Participants are asked to declare any additional needs and/or disabilities during the application process, which are reviewed by the Managing Director and Head of Recruitment. Where these are disclosed, appropriate adjustments and support arrangements are put in place and communicated to the training team. This enables participants to benefit from an inclusive and supported study experience.

---

6. There is an appropriate policy on participant attendance and effective procedures and systems to enforce it

6.1	There is a clear policy on participant attendance and punctuality, which is communicated to all participants and other stakeholders.	☒ Yes ☐ No
6.2	Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality at each session are kept for all participants, collated centrally and reviewed.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
6.3	Participant absences are followed up promptly, and appropriate action is taken.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

Skyborne publishes a clear policy for attendance and punctuality, which is communicated to participants in the trainee handbook and also during induction.

Attendance is recorded for each session and stored accurately and centrally on the online Information Management System (IMS).

Owing to the professional nature of the programmes offered by Skyborne, good attendance and punctuality are a key priority, and this expectation is reinforced continuously. Participant absences are identified by the instructor. These are then referred to the Head of Training for subsequent follow-up and

action. Cases where a participant does not attend or is late for a class are rare. As a result, attendance and punctuality are excellent.

---

7. **The provider has effective systems to monitor its own standards and assess its own performance with a view to continuous improvement**

7.1	There are effective systems for monitoring and periodically reviewing all aspects of the provider's performance.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.2	The provider has effective mechanisms for obtaining feedback from participants and other stakeholders, such as staff, partner providers and employers, on all aspects of the provider's provision, including formal participant representation where appropriate.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.3	Feedback is obtained, recorded and analysed on a regular basis.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.4	The feedback is reviewed by management, and appropriate action is taken.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.5	There is a mechanism for reporting to the participants what the provider has done in response to their feedback.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.6	Reports are compiled at least annually, which include the results of the provider's performance reviews, an analysis of appropriate data, including participant feedback, and action plans.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.7	Action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed, with outcomes reported to management.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

The Provider's performance is monitored and reviewed through management and training review board meetings and discussed and recorded at Director and shareholder meetings. Reports are produced and cover all aspects of performance. The Provider captures quantitative and qualitative data at every level of operation via established and documented processes, which are used to review the Provider's performance. This provides a detailed overview of Skyborne's performance.

The Provider complies with the requirements of external organisations, including the regulatory framework of the CAA, in undertaking and evaluating examination results through regular audits and reviews.

Skyborne has developed effective mechanisms to capture feedback from its staff, participants and other stakeholders. Participants' views are captured through surveys, course feedback reports and informal conversations between the participant and the training team. Participants were complimentary about the productivity of their instructors and the management team in responding to their feedback in a timely manner.

The Provider has enhanced its process of analysing participant feedback, with key emerging themes discussed at training review board meetings allowing senior managers time to evaluate performance and identify areas for development.

A staff survey has been introduced to elicit feedback, which is then discussed by senior management, and actions are identified. Analysis of the impact of the actions will be monitored and reviewed and used as part of its performance review process. This ensures that Skyborne remains committed to meeting the needs of its staff, participants and stakeholders.

All feedback data is collated into a series of annual reports, analysed by the Managing Director and used to inform action-planning.

The Board of Directors receives an annual report that documents the Provider's performance and influences key decision-making. This report includes the results of the Provider's performance reviews and a number of datasets, such as on recruitment, financial position and participant feedback. Detailed action plans are developed to capture the strategic key priorities going forward, which are then monitored and evaluated to measure their impact.

Minutes of meetings record the actions taken following feedback, with sufficient analysis undertaken. Financial data and performance are discussed and reviewed at formal Director meetings. The Provider is committed to a consistent approach to gathering feedback, action-planning and the subsequent communication process to close the loop.

4.2   Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met
Comments

The responsibility for teaching, learning and assessment lies with the Head of Training, Chief Flight Instructor and Chief Theoretical Knowledge Instructor. This structure is effectively supported by the operational administration team to ensure that the courses are well planned, deliver the professional requirements and provide appropriate opportunities for assessment that reflect the needs of the aviation industry.

Courses are well planned, with clear details of timetabling communicated to instructors and participants. Timetables are appropriately structured to clearly identify the delivery and assessment sessions and to provide contingency time for participants who may need to retake an assessment.

Instructors are appropriately qualified and have a high standard of professional experience and pedagogic knowledge and skills and industry currency. The course structures are well planned to facilitate effective teaching and the development of the knowledge and skills needed to fulfil the assessment requirements. Course delivery makes good use of a variety of resources and activities to promote participant engagement.

Course materials are standardised and provided to participants prior to starting the course. Instructors can supplement these materials with additional resources to respond to the specific needs of cohorts. The content and learning outcomes of all training courses are underpinned by CAA standards. The delivery team is expert in the relevant fields and makes effective reference to CAA requirements throughout its planning and teaching. This clearly aligns with sector requirements and enhances participants' employment opportunities.

Skyborne provides an excellent standard of teaching, learning and assessment. Comprehensive planning is undertaken to fulfil the learning objectives and the external regulatory requirements. Observations of taught sessions confirmed that the participants had achieved the learning objectives and felt comfortable asking questions for clarification.

Effective working relationships exist between the instructors and the participants. Instructors have regular observations of their teaching sessions, and the results of these feed into the appraisal process. There is also the opportunity to observe another instructor to support development and confidence. Skyborne is committed to employing highly experienced pilots and instructors. This is supported by an effective induction and monitoring of new instructors.

Participants are well supported by their instructors, who draw on their own experience and knowledge to communicate key information. Teaching sessions make good use of a teacher-led delivery approach, with effective open and direct questioning techniques to check for understanding. Skyborne has access to a teaching and learning course that provides an introduction to effective pedagogical approaches to training. Owing to staff changes, the lead for this initiative is no longer at the Provider, so the provision of training and development in learning, teaching and assessment strategies and techniques has been limited.

Skyborne is very well resourced, providing high-quality facilities and materials for instructors and participants to fulfil the requirements of the course. Participants have access to materials across the whole course from the outset and so are able to draw on the connections between topics. Participant feedback compliments Skyborne on the quality and organisation of the course materials.

Assessments are comprehensively planned and documented in a schedule that is updated at each stage of the process. The course has been designed to provide additional assessment opportunities in the event of a participant failing a component. Skyborne encourages a range of assessment approaches, including peer- and self-assessment.

Informal, spoken feedback is provided to participants on a regular basis so that they have individual updates on their progress. The participants identified this as a particular strength of the course. High-quality, written feedback is formalised at the end of a section of the course. This provides clarity on the positive aspects of the participants' work and identifies areas for improvement.

Assessment outcomes are recorded on an online platform that is accessible to managers, instructors and participants. Participant progress is reviewed on a weekly basis to identify participants who require additional support or who are not making satisfactory progress. Effective intervention processes are in place to support knowledge and skills development or to review the deadline of assessments, if appropriate.

Staff are available after classes to provide additional support. Participants confirm that this support is beneficial and appreciate the opportunity to meet with staff to discuss their learning outside the teaching sessions.

The assessment process is rigorous and subject to strict examination conditions to align with CAA guidelines. Skyborne has a dedicated and secure room where examinations take place. The Provider is a CAA centre, and all courses lead to accredited awards granted by the CAA.

Invigilation is carried out and monitored by the instructors and the Safety and Compliance Monitoring Manager. This is further supported by a CAA invigilator on a two-year cycle to audit the process. Participants are made aware of the code of conduct and plagiarism policy, and this is reiterated in both the trainee handbook and before any assessment.

Skyborne retains currency with the aviation industry through regular visits by industry experts. Career guidance and support are well established and benefit from the extensive network of professional connections across the sector that are maintained by staff. As a result, Skyborne provides a high standard of teaching, learning and assessment opportunities to support graduate employability.

4.3   Participant Welfare (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met
Comments

Skyborne provides an effective infrastructure of support and care for the participants. The management and administration teams are committed to ensuring high standards of delivery and participant experience, supported by established support systems from initial application through to progression into employment.

A designated welfare team takes responsibility for participant welfare, including for mental health and well-being. Participants also have access to instructors outside class hours at the start and end of each day. Participants report that they feel very well looked after by the welfare team and by their instructors.

Pre-course information is comprehensive and communicated to participants before they join Skyborne. This provides them with specific information, such as the course and assessment structure, attendance and

punctuality requirements, points of contact, and information regarding accommodation for those needing a place to stay. Participants are also able to contact Skyborne directly with specific questions. Participants confirm that pre-course information and preparation are strengths of Skyborne.

All participants undertake a comprehensive induction on the first day of the course, which is appropriately planned to ensure that key information is disseminated. Late arrivals to the course receive the same induction from a member of the team.

Participants are issued with a trainee handbook, which is informative and provides details of the relevant policies and procedures as well as an out-of-hours emergency contact number. The handbook clearly documents Skyborne's expectations with regard to participant behaviour, social media usage and technology, along with a code of conduct. All participants sign a detailed training agreement that reinforces the terms and conditions. The Provider's complaints process is described in the terms and conditions in this agreement and on its website.

Skyborne invites parents of participants to attend the induction event. This acts as an effective opportunity to respond to queries raised by parents and supports the transition of these participants to Skyborne. During the onboarding process, participants' next-of-kin details are collected by the Provider and stored securely on an online database. Relevant staff have access to the database, which is also accessible remotely.

Skyborne has a policy and associated risk assessment process in place to prevent radicalisation and extremism. Training is provided to staff during their induction, with subsequent refresher sessions also scheduled.

The Provider does not enrol any participants from overseas.

Residential accommodation is clean, safe and comfortable. Information regarding safety and security, including fire safety measures, is clearly documented on notice boards and reiterated during meetings with participants. There is an appropriate supervision arrangement in place to support participants during the day, and access to emergency support at all other times.

Feedback from participants confirms that they feel well supported by Skyborne. The Provider offers an organised social programme for participants to take part in a range of local events and leisure activities.

4.4   Premises and Facilities (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met
Comments

Skyborne is based in purpose-built premises with a secure, long-term lease arrangement. The premises are well maintained and provide a professional working and learning environment. The premises comprise office space, designated meeting rooms, well-resourced training and briefing areas, plus a large hangar that is used to house aviation vehicles and equipment that support the teaching of the curriculum.

The premises are of a high standard and provide a professional environment in which to work and study. Noticeboards, digital screens and artwork throughout the premises provide key information on Skyborne and its operation. Access to the building is security controlled for staff and participants.

The premises have appropriate signage outside. There is clear guidance regarding health and safety that is communicated to staff and participants during induction. Visitors receive a health and safety briefing on arrival, with appropriate signage available throughout the main building and hangar spaces regarding fire and health and safety procedures.

Toilet facilities are adequate and appropriate for the number of people on the premises. They are maintained to an excellent standard of cleanliness. Heating and ventilation are appropriate for the size of the building and the number of staff on the premises at any one time.

Skyborne provides excellent facilities to support training. These include industry-standard flight simulators. The classrooms and training areas are very well equipped and regularly maintained and inspected. One room is specifically designated for assessment activities and examinations and complies with the regulatory requirements for technology, facilities and security specified by the awarding bodies.

Staff and participants have access to appropriate communal areas in which to work and relax, such as the kitchen area and additional outside space to socialise. Participants are also able to access classrooms, when not in use, to undertake private study. Skyborne issues all participants with their own tablet device, which stores the course-related resources and materials they will require.

Administrative facilities are sufficient and of an appropriate standard to support the smooth operation of the business, and there is adequate circulation space. The premises provide a conducive environment in which to work and study.

4.6   Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.   ☒ Yes   ☐ No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

Skyborne offers high standards of training, delivered by a well-qualified team with significant expertise in the field of aviation.

Skyborne is invested in its staff and actively explores and promotes CPD opportunities that are well supported by their peers and management.

The training environment, teaching and the wraparound support provided by Skyborne from pre-course through to graduation result in positive feedback from participants.

Skyborne promotes a collaborative environment that provides highly effective communication channels and the capacity to make decisions in a timely manner.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

None	☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT *(to be reviewed at the next inspection)*

It is recommended that the Provider considers how the teaching and learning course, that provides an introduction to effective pedagogical approaches to training, can be fully integrated into the instructor training programme.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE

THE INSPECTION WAS CARRIED OUT BY:

Melanie Smith	Lead Inspector