

# Qdos Training Limited

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		<b>10 – 13 February 2015</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Inadequate-4</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Inadequate-4

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider is inadequate because:

- it does not meet its safeguarding requirements; two staff with regular, unsupervised access to learners aged up to 18 have not had appropriate disclosure checks. Arrangements to demonstrate that appropriate checks have been carried out are weak.

#### This provider has the following strengths:

- success rates are good for the majority of learners
- information and learning technology (ILT) is used well to help learners on administration programmes develop independent study skills
- the information, advice and guidance offered to learners are good so that they know how they can progress to their next steps in education, training or work
- senior managers have a clear strategic vision. They plan well for the development of the organisation and extend opportunities for learners
- senior managers have developed a wide range of networks and partnerships, and have extensive links with employers that secure work opportunities for learners and develop programmes which meet local and national priorities.

## Full report

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure, as a matter of the highest priority, that learners are safe by carrying out appropriate disclosure checks on all staff who work unsupervised with learners aged 16 to 18. Systematically train staff in order to develop their understanding of safeguarding in order to keep learners safe.
- Implement planned formal observations of teaching, learning and assessment and ensure that through performance management and support, trainers and assessors improve their practice so that all learners experience provision of high quality.
- Ensure that trainers and assessors have access to the results of initial assessment so that they plan lessons that take account of learners' different abilities.
- Develop self-assessment and a full range of quality assurance processes and use these to evaluate effectively all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment. Make full use of this information to produce detailed action plans to secure improvements for learners.
- Ensure that trainers and assessors create opportunities to develop learners' skills in English and mathematics in the classroom and in the workplace.
- Ensure that trainers and assessors promote equality and diversity themes that take into account learners' work and vocational contexts.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- Qdos provides apprenticeships, classroom-based programmes and traineeships. The majority of learners are intermediate apprenticeships on administration and customer service programmes, and information and communication technology (ICT) learners, mostly aged over 19, on classroom-based programmes. A small proportion of learners are on traineeship programmes; around half of are aged 16 to 18.
- Outcomes for learners are good. Apprenticeship framework success rates increased significantly in 2013/14 and are high. The success rate for apprentices completing within planned timescales also improved significantly from a low base and are now high. The high classroom-based learning success rates have been sustained over two years.
- Trainees develop good interview techniques, team working, communication and office skills that prepare them well for their high quality work placements. ICT learners confidently use office-based software applications that they apply well in the workplace.
- Apprentices develop good employability and social skills. They demonstrate high levels of competence in web page development and customer service skills. Employers value these skills and a large majority of apprentices achieve positions of responsibility in their employment. For example, one learner was involved in the expansion of their company into the care industry.
- The quality of work produced by learners and apprentices in the classroom and in the workplace is good. The integration of English and mathematics in classroom activities and within the workplace to develop learners' skills is good in administration but less well developed in ICT.
- Most learners have a good understanding of career and progression opportunities and are on learning programmes that meet local and national priorities. Progression rates to apprenticeships and employment for trainees are good. Progression rates from intermediate to advanced level apprenticeships for administration apprentices are low.
- Managers carefully analyse data to monitor the performance of different groups of learners and no significant gaps exist.

**The quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Requires improvement

- Although outcomes for learners are good, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet good for the majority of learners. In ICT, trainers do not take account of individual needs, the progress learners make is not routinely checked and learners are not encouraged to think and work independently. Too many tasks and exercises do not sufficiently challenge the more able learners and as a result, they become bored and do not make the progress that they are capable of.
- Administration apprentices and trainees make good progress and benefit from a variety of teaching strategies that promote learning and develop their confidence well. Trainers use interactive presentation packages and video clips well to stimulate discussion and enhance learning. Carefully crafted and targeted questioning effectively checks learners' understanding. Administration trainers regularly set tasks for learners to complete outside the classroom and provide learners with access to high quality web-based learning materials that enhance their knowledge and skills.
- Apprentices in administration benefit from good coaching in the workplace. Assessors inspire apprentices and are able to use their highly relevant commercial experience to motivate and challenge them to extend their skills and knowledge. They communicate well with employers, who provide good skills development opportunities in the workplace and have a positive impact on apprentices' progress and performance. The vast majority of learners enjoy their courses, feel safe and have a good understanding of safeguarding.
- Initial assessment is timely and effective at determining prior skills and knowledge. However, trainers do not always receive the results of initial assessment to enable them to plan their lessons in order to meet learners' differing abilities, especially in ICT. Assessment planning in administration is good. Assessor's record results on an electronic assessment package that learners and employers use well to record progress, provide feedback and plan workplace assessment visits.
- Learners benefit from high levels of pastoral care and support. Additional learning support arrangements are good. Learners who are identified with specific learning needs are given, for example, a dedicated support mentor in the workplace and more their progress is reviewed more frequently.
- Learners receive good verbal feedback to enable them to improve their performance. The monitoring of learners' progress is good. However, written feedback and short-term target setting in a minority of progress reviews lack detail, resulting in slow progress.
- The planning, promotion and development of English and mathematics skills is good in administration. Apprentices and trainees develop and demonstrate good skills in English and mathematics in the classroom and the workplace. However, in ICT trainers do not fully integrate these skills in their teaching and assessment practice and as a consequence, learners' progress in improving their skills is slow.
- Learners receive good information, advice and guidance. Good pre-course materials enable learners to understand the requirements of their course and the progression routes and career opportunities available to them. High quality publicity materials support advice sessions and open day events attended by employers and parents.
- The planning, promotion and development of equality and diversity requires improvement. Few trainers and assessors plan and integrate equality and diversity well within the curriculum. Trainers discuss equality and diversity briefly at induction but they do not always develop this further in teaching and learning sessions. Apprentices' progress reviews make reference to equality and diversity but assessors do not promote these themes systematically in the context of the workplace.

**ICT for users****19+ learning programmes  
Apprenticeships**

Requires improvement

**Teaching, learning and assessment in ICT require improvement because:**

- not all learners make sufficiently good progress
- tutors do not use learners' initial assessment information to plan learning and as a result, they are not able to ensure that learners are making good progress compared with their starting points
- tutors use an insufficient variety of teaching strategies to ensure that all learners are well motivated and fully engaged in learning; learners do not develop sufficient independent learning skills to benefit them in their future employment
- assessors do not make sufficient use of work-based evidence to assess apprentices' competence; assessors and trainers do not emphasise links between classroom work and competence in the workplace sufficiently, which limits apprentices' progress
- learners do not have a good understanding of the progress they are making or how to improve, because their short and long-term targets are not sufficiently clear
- English and mathematics are not integrated sufficiently into teaching or assessment sessions; most feedback is given verbally, which reduces the opportunities for learners to improve their spelling and grammar, especially in their use of technical vocabulary
- trainers and assessors do not draw on the cultural diversity of learners to promote explicitly equality and diversity within teaching or learning to prepare them better for the workplace.

**The provider has the following strengths:**

- trainers provide good care and support for learners and extend learners' technical knowledge and ICT skills well; learners receive good information and support on how to keep safe when using the internet
- the information, advice and guidance given to learners supports their learning effectively; learners on the entry into employment programme receive good advice and guidance on how the programme can support their next steps towards employment and longer term goals.

**Administration****Apprenticeships  
Traineeships**

Good

**Teaching, learning and assessment in administration are good because:**

- the large majority of apprentices complete their qualifications successfully, demonstrate high standards of practical, personal and social skills including research, problem solving and

teamwork and apply them well in the workplace; trainees gain in confidence and their progression into apprenticeships or to employment is good

- assessors are experienced and communicate industry knowledge and expertise well; apprentices acquire good administration skills and assume additional responsibilities such as managing team meetings and processing financial transactions
- trainers use a range of interesting and interactive activities well that motivate and interest learners; assessors are highly effective in engaging apprentices in coaching and professional discussion so that they are able to link theory to their work practices well
- assessors promote independent working well; apprentices research legislation and guidance very effectively to prepare training and workbook materials
- learning resources are good and are used well to enhance learning; apprentices and trainees have good access to information technology and paper-based learning materials that they use to create a high standard of work
- apprentices and trainees benefit from frequent and accurate guidance and feedback on their work and develop a good understanding of what they need to do to improve
- information, advice and guidance are good; the training units selected match apprentices' job roles well and trainees are matched well to high quality workplaces that meet their interests and offer good progression opportunities
- care and support are good; apprentices' progress is monitored well so that they are clear about the progress made and what they need to do next
- trainees and apprentices develop good mathematical and English skills; apprentices use industry-related terminology very effectively and produce good quality written work.

### **Teaching, learning and assessment in administration are not yet outstanding because:**

- initial assessment outcomes are not used systematically to plan learning to meet individual needs; a small minority of trainees are not sufficiently challenged and are not encouraged to work independently
- trainers do not sufficiently promote equality and diversity or integrate these themes within teaching and learning activities; apprentices and trainees are broadly aware of the concept of discrimination and the importance of treating others fairly, but they are unable to explain the impact of these in the work environment.

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management</b>	Inadequate
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- Safeguarding arrangements are inadequate. Two trainers who have regular unsupervised access to learners aged up to 18, have not had appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. Arrangements to demonstrate that DBS checks have been carried out are weak. The designated safeguarding officer's DBS record has been lost and managers have not taken effective steps to retrieve this information or to arrange for another check.
- Staff emphasise the importance of safeguarding with learners at induction and learners also have access to a good range of additional information and resources on safeguarding on the Qdos website. Attention to e-safety is good and learners feel safe. Training for staff in safeguarding, in order to refresh and to extend their knowledge and understanding, is insufficient.
- The systematic monitoring and quality assurance of all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment and of the learners' experience is insufficient. The company aims to observe

formally all trainers at least once a year but has not met this aim. Staff are not sufficiently aware of the key strengths and areas for improvement across all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment or about the key areas they need to work on to secure improvements in the quality of their work with learners. Consequently, action planning to secure timely improvements for learners is not sufficiently effective.

- Staff maintain a strong focus on the achievement of learners. They make good use of bespoke databases and the careful auditing of learners' files to ensure full compliance with funding and awarding body requirements. Internal verification processes are appropriate.
- Leaders and managers have a clear strategic vision and plan well for the future development of the organisation. This is strongly focused on business development and on realigning the strategic objectives and programmes for learners with local and national priorities. The majority of staff understand and fully support this strategy. However, the strategic objectives do not take sufficient account of the key national priority relating to the development of learners' skills in English and mathematics.
- Managers make good use of a wide range of local networks and partnerships and their links with employers to secure work opportunities for learners and to develop programmes that meet local and national priorities. Managers are implementing well-considered plans to engage parents in the recruitment of young people to traineeships and in the development of traineeships. This includes the provision of impartial information, advice and guidance.
- All staff work to clearly defined performance objectives that managers review regularly. An annual appraisal process is in place, but it is not fully complete and up-to-date for all staff. Improvement actions arising from appraisals are not always sufficiently measurable. Managers have not prioritised the need for further improvements in trainers' skills to enable them to develop effectively learners' English and mathematics skills.
- Learners and staff represent well the diverse communities in Leicester. Appropriate equality and diversity policies and procedures are in place. However, training and development for staff is insufficient and they do not confidently promote equality and diversity to learners in relation to their work and vocational contexts.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Qdos Training Limited

<p>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</p> <p>1: Outstanding                  2: Good                  3: Requires improvement                  4: Inadequate</p>	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	4				4	4	4		
Outcomes for learners	2				2	2	2		
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3				2	3	2		
The effectiveness of leadership and management	4				4	4	4		

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>ICT for users</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Administration</b>	<b>2</b>

## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Independent learning provider							
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16+							
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	917							
<b>Managing director</b>	Elena Chapman (Ryabusha)							
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	October 2011							
<b>Website address</b>	www.qdostraining.com							
<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>								
<b>Main course or learning programme level</b>	<b>Level 1 or below</b>		<b>Level 2</b>		<b>Level 3</b>		<b>Level 4 and above</b>	
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	0	56	0	21	0	1	0	0
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	39	30	0	1	0	0		
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	22		14		36			
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	0							
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Part-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lifecare</li> </ul>							



## Contextual information

Qdos Training Limited is an independent learning provider established in 2006 and based in Leicester. The managing director has overall responsibility for the company's performance. She receives support from the general manager and a manager with specific responsibility for training programmes. The company employs three information technology trainers, two functional skills and employability trainers, three administration and customer service assessors, five employer engagement executives and three administrators. Apprentices work in small to medium sized enterprises in Leicester. Classroom-based learners are generally jobseekers referred to Qdos by Jobcentres, work programme providers and other partners. In 2012, the percentage of pupils gaining five or more A\*- C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and mathematics in Leicester was 51.5% compared with 59.4% nationally.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Robert Hamp HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the managing director as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's position statement and development plans and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last two years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions and assessments. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012, Part 2*:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012)

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