

# ProCo NW Limited

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		27 April-01 May 2015
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

## Summary of key findings for learners

### This provider requires improvement because:

- the proportion of learners following 16–19 study programmes who attend regularly, complete their courses and gain qualifications is not sufficiently high
- weaknesses in the coordination and delivery of English and mathematics lessons result in learners on study programmes making slow progress in improving their skills in these subjects
- assessment requires improvement on study programmes; feedback on learners' work is brief and does not sufficiently identify how they can improve
- leaders and managers have made slow progress in addressing a few of the areas for improvement from the previous inspection; for example, tutors still do not plan lessons well enough to meet all learners' individual needs
- observations of teaching and learning do not focus sufficiently on the quality of learning and insufficiently detailed actions are set for tutors to improve their practice
- although strengthened since the previous inspection, quality improvement arrangements are not sufficiently underpinned by good quality management information; self-assessment and improvement targets do not make sufficient reference to apprentices' and learners' outcomes.

### This provider has the following strengths:

- a large majority of apprentices make good progress towards achieving their learning goals
- good teaching and assessment enable apprentices to gain good practical and work-related skills on training programmes that meet their and their employers' skills development needs well
- leaders and managers are committed to bringing about further improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for learners; for example, decisive action through the performance management process has resulted in staff not willing or able to improve, leaving the organisation
- equality of opportunity is promoted well and through well-planned activities learners develop a good understanding about living in a diverse society
- leaders and managers respond well to the skills development and education needs of the local community and partners and have continued to broaden and develop the curriculum well to meet these.

## Full report

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

- Leaders and managers must ensure that all tutors insist on and reinforce high expectations of attendance and punctuality with learners so that the proportion that complete their study programme in the planned timescale improves significantly.
- Leaders and managers must implement staff development and training to enable all tutors to plan learning activities that meet learners' individual needs and abilities so that the proportion that gain their qualification improves significantly.
- Leaders and managers must take action to improve the coordination and quality of teaching delivered in foundation English and mathematics across all programmes but in particular for 16–19 study programmes.
- Provide training and development for tutors so that they improve the impact of their assessment feedback by providing clear and developmental written feedback for learners that makes it clear what they need to do to improve.
- Leaders and managers must continue the recent work they have started to strengthen the process for observing and making judgements about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This should include training for observers so that they focus more critically on the quality of learning taking place and the impact this has on learners' progress over time.
- Ensure that actions and development targets set for tutors and assessors following observations of teaching, learning and assessment provide clear guidance on the steps they should take to improve their practice.
- Leaders and managers should continue to strengthen quality improvement arrangements by improving the access they have to accurate and up-to-date management information about learners' progress and outcomes. They must ensure they use data to inform their judgements about the quality of provision and to take timely action when learners are at risk of falling behind target or not achieving.

### Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Around two thirds of learners with ProCo NW Limited (ProCo) are apprentices. The majority of the remaining learners are following 16–19 study programmes, mainly at level 1 although an increasing proportion now study at level 2. A few learners are enrolled on employability programmes. A small number of adults follow level 3 courses in animal care and veterinary science. Just under two thirds of apprentices are following programmes at intermediate level with the rest studying advanced programmes. The majority of intermediate apprentices are aged 16-18 while the majority of advanced apprentices are adults. Most apprentices follow programmes in animal care and veterinary science, motor vehicle, sports or administration. ProCo uses subcontractors to deliver all of their sports apprenticeships, around half of the motor vehicle apprenticeships and a small number of apprenticeships in other occupational areas.</li> <li>▪ Outcomes for apprentices are good. A good proportion successfully achieved in 2013/14. The large majority of apprentices who follow programmes in subjects, such as early years and playwork, animal care and veterinary science, and accountancy make good progress towards achieving their learning goals. Apprentices in motor vehicle, including those who follow programmes with a subcontractor, make good progress. A good proportion of apprentices following sport, leisure and recreation programmes with subcontractors achieve their qualification. A minority of apprentices in subjects, such as administration, hairdressing and construction make slow progress.</li> </ul>	

- The proportion of learners who progress to further study at a higher level or to apprenticeships when they complete their study programme has improved markedly from the low level identified at the previous inspection. However, too many learners following 16–19 study programmes at level 1 or below do not complete their courses or gain relevant qualifications. Managers recognise that this requires further improvement. Recent and good action taken by managers, such as appointing a work-experience coordinator and careers advisor has resulted in more learners who are still on their courses applying to and being offered places on higher-level courses with ProCo and other providers; an improving and good proportion begin apprenticeships.
- The only significant difference in the achievement of groups of learners is between males and females with females achieving better than males. Managers correctly recognise that differences in the performance of subjects that have a gender bias are the reason for this. A high proportion of females follow programmes in areas, such as animal care and veterinary science, accounting and administration. Success rates in these subjects are higher than in subjects, such as engineering and construction where almost all learners are male. The difference in achievement is narrowing because of actions taken by managers; however, the gap has not been successfully eliminated.
- The proportion of learners on study programmes who improve their work-related skills through work experience has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The majority of learners gain good basic vocational skills on their study programmes in subjects, such as construction trades, hairdressing, animal care and veterinary science. This is not the case in all subjects; in motor vehicle, learners make slow progress in improving their vocational skills.
- Learners' attendance at training sessions requires improvement. This is the case for all areas of learners' study programmes, but particularly so for English and mathematics classes. The progress that learners make in improving their English and mathematical skills requires improvement.
- Apprentices gain very good practical and work-related skills. Good initial assessment of apprentices' prior attainment places them on programmes that meet their and their employers' skill development needs well. Employers value the skills apprentices gain. Apprentices gain the necessary English and mathematics skills to achieve the functional skills elements of their apprenticeship frameworks. However, they rarely follow higher-level qualifications to improve these skills further.
- A good proportion of apprentices who complete level 2 apprenticeships progress to level 3. A high proportion of apprentices who successfully complete their programmes remain in employment in jobs that are well matched to local priorities. A few learners who left school with limited confidence and few qualifications have progressed from foundation level programmes with ProCo and are now working to high standards and achieving well on advanced apprenticeships.

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

### **Requires improvement**

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, reflecting outcomes for learners. Although good teaching and assessment on apprenticeships result in good outcomes for apprentices, too many learners on 16–19 study programmes do not complete their courses or achieve well due to unresolved areas for improvement in the delivery of these programmes.
- Although there are many examples of good and a few of outstanding teaching, the quality varies too much. In the better lessons, tutors and assessors use their expertise well to link theory to practical work and to industrial situations. For example, apprentices and learners have good opportunities to develop their customer care skills and social and oral confidence during administration and hairdressing lessons. In animal care and veterinary science, learners enjoy investigating the make-up of animal cells using objects, such as sweets and jellies to create models. Assessors rigorously test motor vehicle apprentices' knowledge and skills during practical work with their employers.

- Too many lessons, particularly on 16–19 study programmes, require improvement. In these lessons, tutors plan insufficiently well to cater for learners' individual abilities and needs. As a result, teaching is insufficiently challenging; a narrow range of learning activities and slow pace fails to engage and maintain the interest of all the learners. Too frequently, learners complete the same tasks irrespective of their ability.
- Learners and apprentices, including those following programmes with subcontractors, have access to good practical workshops and specialist accommodation. However, materials to support learning that tutors use on study programmes are of variable quality with an over-reliance in a significant minority of lessons on unstimulating worksheets. Learners have insufficient access to good quality information and learning technology (ILT). Managers have recognised this and are investing in improved ILT resources as well as piloting an educational management system that will hold resources and provide access to online learning and assessment materials.
- The quality of assessment requires improvement. Tutors' and assessors' practice is variable. It ranges from excellent for the majority of apprentices and in veterinary science study programmes, to weak on the majority of study programmes and in foundation English and mathematics. In the best examples, challenging oral feedback and marked work clearly identifies what apprentices and learners need to do to improve. Tutors provide insufficient detailed written feedback to ensure learners in the majority of English, mathematics and vocational study programme lessons are clear about how to improve their work.
- The quality of delivery of English and mathematics requires improvement. Tutors have not done enough to encourage learners to see the relevance of improving their skills in these subjects both in vocational lessons and in specialist classes. English and mathematics lessons do not link sufficiently to the vocational context of learners' programmes. As a result, learners do not find the lessons sufficiently stimulating and attendance at English and mathematics lessons is lower than for vocational subject lessons.
- Care and support for learners are good. Tutors and support staff assess apprentices' and learners' abilities thoroughly when they come to ProCo and place them on appropriate programmes. Learners who require support receive good practical help to overcome barriers to learning, for example, bursaries to help them with travel arrangements.
- Staff provide good support to learners with behavioural and emotional difficulties and set them clear targets to maintain their engagement in learning. However, the same rigour in target-setting and monitoring is not applied to all learners on study programmes. Attendance remains too low, particularly in English and mathematics lessons.
- Staff provide a good range of enrichment activities for learners on study programmes. Attendance is good for the regular talks by external speakers on a range of subjects. Visiting speakers deliver sessions that challenge learners very effectively to consider their role and behaviours in a diverse society. Learners have improved their understanding of the current issues relating to radicalisation and extremism through Prevent training, delivered by Greater Manchester Police.
- Apprentices and learners are clear on their future progression and employment opportunities because of good, well-planned advice and guidance sessions delivered by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Since the appointment of a work-experience coordinator, the vast majority of learners on study programmes have or will be undertaking good quality and relevant work experience.
- Tutors and assessors give learners' health and safety high priority. Learners and apprentices understand how to keep themselves safe in lessons and in their workplaces.
- An improvement since the previous inspection, staff now challenge learners and apprentices well to improve their understanding of diversity and how this affects them in their personal lives and employment situations.

**Animal care and veterinary science****Apprenticeships****16-19 study programmes****19+ learning programmes****Good****Teaching, learning and assessment in animal care and veterinary science are good because:**

- good teaching, effective assessment and detailed monitoring of progress result in a high proportion of apprentices successfully completing their qualifications; staff use strong links with employers to support apprentices to achieve in the planned timescale
- tutors use a good range of imaginative activities to develop learners' understanding and critical thinking skills; learners are challenged effectively to explore veterinary concepts through detailed investigations and use advanced terminology well to demonstrate their knowledge
- tutors incorporate equality and diversity in lessons and work-based reviews very well; learners explore and apply equality and diversity issues relating to the care of animals and the views and beliefs of their owners with confidence
- regular and detailed feedback from tutors on how to improve their work enables learners and apprentices in veterinary nursing to produce very high standards of work; advanced assessments contain excellent examples of tutors encouraging learners to reference clinical articles and improve their research skills
- tutors plan well to develop apprentices' and learners' English skills; in a lesson in animal care, level 2 learners demonstrated confidence with biological terms and could apply these terms accurately to the structure of a cell
- learners and apprentices receive very good support from a highly enthusiastic and committed team of staff; apprentices and adult learners returning to education speak highly of the support they have received to make the transition back into education
- tutors expose learners to a wide range of vocational specialisms through well-planned visits, input from guest speakers, meaningful work placements and excellent opportunities to work with animals abroad; learners are given excellent opportunities to undertake work placements in Malta and Aruba working with cats and donkeys.

**Teaching, learning and assessment in animal care and veterinary science are not yet outstanding because:**

- not enough teaching is outstanding across the subject area; this is particularly the case in animal care where not enough learners on level 2 study programmes successfully achieve their qualifications
- tutors do not plan sufficiently well to improve apprentices' and learners' mathematical skills
- the teaching in animal care does not help learners to improve their practical skills; learners do not have sufficient opportunities to develop skills working with the wide range of animals available to them.

**Motor vehicle****Apprenticeships  
16-19 study programmes****Requires improvement****Teaching, learning and assessment in motor vehicle require improvement because:**

- teaching on the 16–19 study programme is not good enough, resulting in a low proportion of learners successfully completing their qualification; learners' attendance and punctuality are often poor
- due to changes in tutors, learners on study programmes have experienced an incoherent and poorly planned learning programme; as a result, learners' progress is slow and the quality of their work is not good enough
- tutors on the study programme plan insufficiently varied activities to maintain learners' interest; learners are not guided to make notes for reflection and tutors' questions are not challenging or probing enough to test learners' knowledge
- feedback on learners' written work following their practical assignments is not detailed enough to help them to improve
- the development of apprentices' and learners' use of English is not challenging enough; apprentices often undertake the level of functional skills required for the framework and are not challenged to move to higher levels quickly enough and learners who produce a poor standard of written work are not challenged to improve or correct it
- although apprentices and learners attend discrete lessons which promote equality and diversity well, many progress reviews treat it superficially, and the promotion is not planned sufficiently in motor vehicle teaching sessions.

**In motor vehicle the provider has the following strengths:**

- teaching and learning are good on the apprenticeship programme; apprentices make good progress, develop high levels of skill and knowledge, a high proportion successfully achieve and success rates are particularly high at advanced level
- assessment on apprenticeship programmes is good; the observation process used by assessors rigorously assesses apprentices' knowledge, practical skills and safe working practices
- assessors carry out good progress reviews that track apprentices' progress closely and ensure that they and their employers are prepared well for future work; for example, in one review the apprentice was set a target to study in his own time the topic of diesel particulates
- tutors and assessors encourage apprentices to maintain good portfolios of evidence which clearly demonstrate their improving competence
- well-structured apprenticeships enable a high proportion of apprentices to make good progress in developing their careers; a high proportion of apprentices obtain permanent work with their employers and several apprentices who commenced as young apprentices or foundation-level learners are now nearing completion on advanced apprenticeships
- study programme learners undertake good and relevant work experience; they often substitute for apprentices in garages when they attend ProCo for off-the-job training
- committed and supportive employers provide a good range of work and training opportunities for apprentices in their workplaces.

**Foundation English and mathematics****16-19 study programmes****Requires improvement****Teaching, learning and assessment in foundation English and mathematics require improvement because:**

- tutors' expectations are not sufficiently high for all learners; attendance and punctuality are erratic; learners too often make slow progress in improving their English and mathematical skills and success rates in functional English and mathematics require improvement
- learners who have previously achieved a grade D in English and/or mathematics do not receive top-up tuition specifically targeted at GCSE English and/or mathematics to enable them to resit the examination with the aim of obtaining a grade C or above
- tutors make insufficient use of learners' diagnostic assessment results in English and mathematics to plan learning activities that build on their strengths or address weaker areas; tutors too frequently teach all learners the same things at the same level rather than adapting activities to learners' individual abilities and needs
- learning resources are limited and too much time is spent completing hand-outs or exercises in workbooks; learners do not have access to sufficiently varied resources to enliven lessons with the result that a few become bored and disengaged
- specialist English and mathematics tutors do not link their lessons sufficiently to the learners' vocational subject areas
- marking and assessment of learners' work requires improvement; spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors are not identified and corrected by vocational tutors and learners do not receive enough detailed written feedback on the accuracy and quality of their work to know how to improve their English and mathematics.

**In foundation English and mathematics the provider has the following strengths:**

- tutors provide good support for learners to complete job applications and prepare for interviews; an increasing proportion of learners progress to higher-level qualifications, apprenticeships and employment as a result of improving their English and mathematical competencies and their personal effectiveness
- ProCo has a good and inclusive approach to recruitment; learners, many with significant barriers to learning, are enrolled on appropriate programmes in foundation English and mathematics
- tutors have a very good awareness of learners' personal, social and emotional difficulties; appropriate timetable adjustments are made to enable them to attend classes on convenient days and at appropriate times to fit around their personal and domestic commitments
- managers plan for small class sizes that enable learners to obtain quickly the tutor's assistance when they are having difficulties with their learning; learners particularly enjoy practical lessons when, for example, they calculate the perimeter and area of a room to be converted into a hairdressing salon
- senior managers have a good awareness of the weaknesses in foundation English and mathematics; decisive action is being taken to eliminate these weaknesses and to improve the overall quality of the provision.

**Administration****Apprenticeships****Requires improvement****Teaching, learning and assessment in administration require improvement because:**

- a lack of challenge for intermediate apprentices has resulted in the number who successfully complete their programmes falling recently from the previously high level; the duration of intermediate apprenticeships for the minority of very able apprentices is too long at 18 months or more, resulting in them making slow progress
- assessors' visits to apprentices' workplaces are not sufficiently frequent to challenge them to make good progress; assessors often delay their first visit to recently recruited apprentices resulting in apprentices making a slow start to their learning even though they are developing good administration skills during this period
- assessors carry out insufficiently detailed reviews of apprentices' work and progress; reviews focus on summarising the achievement of units in apprentices' programmes rather than checking their progress in developing skills in the workplace and setting them targets to improve these further
- written feedback on apprentices' work lacks detail; comments focus on meeting competencies and do not support apprentices sufficiently to make improvements in their work and challenge them to achieve a higher standard
- assessors do not plan for the development of apprentices' English and mathematics skills effectively; results from apprentices' initial diagnostic assessments are not used sufficiently well to set targets for English and mathematics and the delivery of functional skills does not start early enough in apprentices programmes resulting in them making slow progress in improving their English and mathematical skills.

**In administration the provider has the following strengths:**

- assessors work proactively with employers to enable apprentices to undertake a good range of work; they plan assessment activities that are linked to apprentices' job roles, helping them develop relevant skills including good telephone techniques and use of appropriate software systems
- assessors check apprentices' understanding well during assessment visits; they use thorough oral questioning to reinforce and extend apprentices' understanding and identify areas to improve
- assessors embed effectively equality and diversity topics well into training and assessment, and help apprentices to develop their knowledge and understanding of these areas in relation to their employment situation; apprentices are able to demonstrate their improved understanding in work situations, for example, by dealing sensitively and appropriately with customers from diverse backgrounds
- assessors support apprentices well to develop a good understanding of how to stay safe in their work and personal lives; apprentices demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of protecting personal information and the impact of it being compromised and are very knowledgeable about how to keep safe when using social media.

**The effectiveness of leadership and management****Requires improvement**

- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) supported by a strong board of directors is ambitious to improve the reputation of the company and the quality of provision. Together, they have set well-defined strategic objectives for the company that reflect their high expectations. They have

successfully steered the company through a difficult period of change, including making significant changes to improve the management structure.

- Leaders and managers are very committed to continuous improvement. They have successfully improved outcomes and the quality of teaching and assessment on apprenticeships. However, changes introduced to improve both staffing and systems have not yet had sufficient impact on outcomes or the quality of teaching and learning on study programmes or in English and mathematics.
- Governance, through a board of directors led by a strong and proactive Chair, is good. Directors have increased their involvement in the company and challenge leaders well. Directors are members of the finance and quality sub-groups and work directly with managers to monitor performance and to improve the quality of provision. They help learners to prepare well for and obtain employment by participating in mock interviews.
- Leaders have introduced a more rigorous performance management system since the previous inspection. It takes good account of observations of teaching and learning. However, the revised system is still in the early stages of implementation. Although managers have set all staff specific performance objectives, not all have had their performance reviewed against these. As a result, managers have not yet identified and dealt with all staff underperformance. Nevertheless, with the support of directors, the CEO is decisive about managing out of the company any staff that do not demonstrate the capacity or will to improve.
- Arrangements to observe teaching, learning and assessment have improved since the last inspection. Appropriately trained observers make accurate judgements about the quality of teaching in lessons, including those delivered by subcontractors. However, the quality and level of detail in their written reports are variable and often not sufficiently evaluative. Reports do not focus sufficiently on the quality of learning or set tutors appropriately detailed actions to improve their practice.
- Management of the subcontractors that ProCo uses to deliver aspects of its apprenticeships is good. Managers consider well the performance of subcontractors, feedback from subcontractor staff and apprentices in self-assessment processes.
- The senior leadership team has a good general awareness of the company's strengths and areas for improvement. However, quality improvement arrangements that inform leaders' judgements are not sufficiently underpinned by good quality management information. Several of the areas for improvement from the last inspection remain; a significant example being that tutors still do not plan lessons well enough to meet all learners' individual needs. Self-assessment and improvement plans do not make sufficient reference to learners' outcomes. As a result, some self-assessment judgements are too generous.
- Identified as a strength at the previous inspection, directors, leaders and managers have continued to develop successful partnerships with schools, the local authority, employers and local professional rugby league and football clubs. These partnerships are used well by ProCo to develop and deliver a curriculum that meets the education needs of the local community and partners. For example, in response to a growing need to provide programmes for an increasing number of learners with learning difficulties, leaders have appointed an experienced coordinator with specific responsibility for learners with additional needs.
- Leaders work closely with other education and training providers and have responded well to gaps in the local provision. They have increased successfully the subject areas in which ProCo delivers apprenticeships and level 1 study programmes. However, leaders have not done enough to ensure good quality teaching and good outcomes are achieved for all learners in 16–19 study programmes and foundation English and mathematics.
- Leaders and managers have responded well to the recommendation from the previous inspection to improve learners' understanding of equality and diversity. Staff, subcontractor staff and learners now receive regular training in equality and diversity. Tutors and assessors promote equality and diversity well in the majority of lessons and apprentices' progress reviews. Managers take swift action to deal with any complaints about bullying or discrimination.

Apprentices and learners feel confident that managers will deal fairly with any problems they have.

- Safeguarding arrangements are good. A designated safeguarding officer is a member of the local safeguarding board and actively promotes understanding of safeguarding and personal safety with directors, staff and learners. For example, recent training has raised learners' awareness of the impact of domestic abuse. An appropriate Prevent strategy is in place at ProCo and both tutors and learners have received Prevent training delivered by the Greater Manchester Police.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### ProCo NW Limited

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	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	3	NA	NA	3	NA	2	2	NA	NA
Outcomes for learners	3	NA	NA	3	NA	2	2	NA	NA
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	NA	NA	3	NA	2	2	NA	NA
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	NA	NA	3	NA	2	2	NA	NA

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Animal care and veterinary science	2
Motor vehicle	3
Foundation English and mathematics	3
Administration	3

<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>CEO</b>	Carol Halford								
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	November 2013								
<b>Website address</b>	www.proconw.co.uk								
<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+	
	97	N/A	45	13	5	19	N/A	N/A	
<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+			
	128	84	57	85	N/A	N/A			
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total				
	N/A		N/A		N/A				
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	N/A								
<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>	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency								
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coaching Connexions</li> <li>Leigh Centurions Community Foundation</li> <li>Prestige Training Limited</li> <li>St Helens College</li> <li>Stockport College</li> <li>The Manchester College</li> <li>Wigan and Leigh College</li> <li>Wigan Athletic Community Trust</li> <li>Wigan Warriors</li> </ul>								

## Contextual information

ProCo NW Limited is an independent learning provider based in Wigan. The majority of learners live in Wigan and surrounding boroughs of Greater Manchester. The unemployment rate in Wigan is similar to that across the North West of England. The proportion of young people in Wigan who achieve five or more GCSEs at A\* to C, including English and mathematics is above both the national and North West averages. According to the 2011 census, approximately 4.5% of the population of Wigan are from minority ethnic groups.

## Information about this inspection

<b>Lead inspector</b>	Malcolm Fraser HMI
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One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the Chief Executive as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three 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, assessments and progress reviews. 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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