

# The Intraining Group Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates Overall effectiveness	9–12 May 2016 <b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for learners	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Traineeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good provider

- Governors and leaders have created a culture of high expectation that has resulted in an accelerated pace of improvement and good outcomes for learners.
- Very good links with a wide range of employers provide learners with good opportunities to develop meaningful skills that meet their employers' needs well and prepare them for their future employment and progression.
- Well-managed programmes, rigorous assessment and highly effective target-setting enable learners to make good progress in their learning and into higher level qualifications and work.
- Well-gualified and vocationally experienced staff provide good support that builds learners' confidence, and enables them to overcome barriers and achieve well.
- A high proportion of apprentices achieve their qualifications and continue in sustained employment.
- The large majority of apprentices develop good skills based on their starting points and work to a high standard.
- Adult trainees improve their confidence to engage in learning; they improve their skills in English and mathematics and through well-planned work experience, the majority gain the skills they need to progress to employment or further education.

### It is not yet an outstanding provider

- The strategies introduced to improve the quality of Assessors do not guide or encourage all teaching, learning and assessment have not eradicated all instances of underperformance.
- A minority of assessors do not always plan sufficiently challenging learning activities, particularly for the most-able apprentices.
- apprentices to improve their mathematical skills or apply these in their work.
- Assessors do not do enough to encourage apprentices to consider how the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism could affect them in their work and lives beyond a superficial level.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- The Intraining Group Limited (Intraining) is an independent learning provider that delivers training in all regions in England. It is a wholly owned subsidiary company of The Corporation of NCG (NCG). Since August 2015, Intraining has held its own funding contract from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to deliver apprenticeships and traineeships for adults on a national basis. Previously, it delivered the same provision, but as part of NCG's funding contract with the SFA. When Intraining was combined within NCG's much larger contract, it received funding from the SFA to deliver apprenticeship training for one large employer. The managing director of Intraining is also the managing director of Rathbone Training, a training provider that is also a wholly owned subsidiary of NCG. The provision delivered by Rathbone Training was not in scope for this inspection.
- Almost all of Intraining's learners are apprentices who are employed by companies ranging from smalland medium-sized enterprises to very large public limited companies and healthcare trusts. Intraining uses 40 subcontractors to deliver around a third of its apprenticeships. The provider also delivers a small number of traineeships for adults aged 19 to 24 from its centres in Blackpool, Hull, Leicester and Scunthorpe.

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

- Governors and leaders should ensure that Intraining's pace of rapid improvement continues and eradicates remaining variations in performance by identifying, sharing and applying the best practice that exists across the provision.
- Leaders and managers should provide support for staff, so that they are better able to plan learning activities and tasks to extend apprentices' learning and understanding beyond the requirements of their apprenticeship, particularly for those that are most able. Staff should involve employers fully in reviewing apprentices' progress and planning further learning.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that all staff plan and integrate learning and assessment activities that enable apprentices to improve and apply their mathematical skills at work.
- Leaders and managers should provide training and support for assessors, so that through their activities with apprentices and trainees, all learners are made fully aware of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism and how these affect their lives at work and in modern British society.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- As part of the NCG structure, Intraining benefits in a positive way from the group's shared services and expertise. The NCG group's executive team oversees Intraining's strategic direction, business plans, budgets and structure very effectively to sustain the quality of provision and support improvements. The recent restructure of the management team was initiated to focus on people management and the quality of provision. This has been very effective in creating a culture of high expectation that has resulted in an accelerated pace of improvement and good outcomes for learners, although leaders and managers are fully aware that not all areas of underperformance have been addressed.
- Intraining's managing director and a number of senior managers are shared with another member of the NCG group, which results in effective collaboration and the sharing of good practice between the two providers. Leaders and managers effectively reinforce the vision and values of Intraining and NCG through clear and regular communications. Staff respond to this well. They are motivated, involved and included in decision making and feel that they influence how they are managed. This has a positive impact on improving the quality of provision for trainees, apprentices, employers and partners. The high ambitions for performance within the business are matched by high expectations for trainees and apprentices.
- Performance management arrangements are very effective. All staff understand their performance targets, and know how these contribute to the performance of the business and how they will be supported to deliver them and held to account if they do not. Improved performance management has led to increased retention and improved in-year success rates through providing a clearer focus on the quality of learning.
- Staff receive regular and relevant training to help them to improve their practice. All training is extended to subcontractor staff. Training includes assessor training days and targeted sessions informed by areas for improvement identified through observation, appraisal and assessment standardisation. Mandatory training covering a number of topics, including equality and diversity, the Prevent duty, modern British values, and health and safety, is refreshed every two years. However, although modern British values, including the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism, are encompassed and reflected within the organisation's core values and behaviour of staff, assessors do not develop these as themes within their teaching, learning and assessment sufficiently.
- Performance management of the subcontracted provision has been strengthened and is now strong. Procedures for selecting subcontractors are rigorous. Good-quality control of this provision is effective in ensuring that the experiences and outcomes of apprentices vary very little between those delivered by subcontractors and those delivered directly by Intraining.
- Intraining leaders and managers have established very good links with a wide range of employers. They are very effective in providing employers with apprenticeship programmes that are relevant to business needs and work patterns, taking equally good account of the needs and interests of apprentices. For example, apprentices employed by a national power company have access to a good range apprenticeship options that are relevant to their work role. These allow apprentices to make significant contributions to their employer's business and to progress to positions of greater responsibility.
- Leaders, managers and staff promote fair treatment of individuals and respect for differences well. Consequently, apprentices and trainees feel safe and develop their skills in tolerant and mutually respectful environments.
- The self-assessment process is highly inclusive. Feedback from forums and surveys from employers, staff, apprentices and trainees is used effectively to inform the self-assessment report. The current self-assessment report provides a generally accurate representation of the provision. Leaders and managers use the resulting quality improvement plans effectively to drive improvement.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the quality of information, advice and guidance is good. These prepare apprentices and trainees well for their next steps. Apprentices and employers use the information to plan suitable progression opportunities that meet the needs of both apprentices and the business.
- Managers take appropriate steps to improve the effectiveness of the teaching and assessment of English and mathematics, but recognise that more work, particularly for mathematics, is required before this can be judged as good. A high proportion of apprentices now successfully achieve their functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics at their first attempt and are more confident in applying their English skills in the workplace. However, assessors do not guide or encourage all apprentices to improve their mathematical skills or apply these in their work sufficiently well.

### The governance of the provider

- Intraining has a strong board of directors that has a clear oversight of all activities and is highly effective when holding leaders and managers to account for improving the effectiveness and impact of provision. Governance focuses well on Intraining's core business and the values and purpose set, and behaviours expected by its overseeing NCG executive board and NCG Corporation. The board ensure that the curriculum continues to evolve to meet the needs of learners and employers, and regional and local priorities, well.
- NCG has appointed the managing director to a leadership structure that unites two strategically related businesses. The newly created leadership team takes forward improvements to quality and standards within and between the businesses. Intraining utilises specialist support from the wider group effectively to add value to its operation and to ensure quality for all its stakeholders.

### • The arrangements for safeguarding are effective

- Staff undergo appropriate vetting when they are recruited and managers maintain up-to-date and detailed records of all employees who work with learners. Suitable safeguarding policies and procedures are applied appropriately. The designated safeguarding officer is appropriately trained and experienced. Assessors promote safe working practices very well. Consequently, learners' understanding of health and safety is good. Staff carry out comprehensive assessments of health and safety for its work placements. Learners feel safe and have a sound awareness of what to do if they need to report any concerns. Managers and staff take effective action when incidents of bullying and harassment or complaints are reported.
- Learners understand how to protect themselves while online from the dangers of cyber-bullying, online grooming and access to inappropriate materials.
- Managers have completed a comprehensive action plan and risk assessment to meet the company's
  responsibilities to prevent extremism and radicalisation. Staff are aware of the need to protect learners
  against radicalisation and have received training in the Prevent duty, but have yet to embed these
  themes thoroughly into their teaching, learning and assessment activities.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good in both directly delivered and subcontracted provision. Staff are enthusiastic, well qualified and vocationally experienced. They use their expertise well to plan training and assessment activities that help trainees and apprentices to improve their skills and understanding and confirm the progress they are making compared with their starting points. Trainees gain in confidence and develop the work-related skills they need to obtain a job. Assessors very effectively support and guide apprentices to ensure that they meet their learning goals and enjoy their learning. Assessors accurately track progress so that apprentices know where they are in relation to the completion of their qualification. This motivates them to apply themselves well towards achieving their goals. As a result, a high proportion of apprentices achieve their qualifications, remain in sustained employment and often progress to higher levels of learning and work. Apprentices improve their skills and knowledge well through their work with high-quality employers. Intraining's good links with employers provide trainees with good access to meaningful work experience.
- Intraining has established assessor working groups as part of its strategy to improve teaching, learning and assessment further and eradicate the few weaknesses that remain across the provision. The groups, which include qualified teachers, have begun to produce learning activities and interactive materials to support assessors to deliver better and more interesting learning activities and to enable apprentices and trainees to engage in more independent learning. A presentation on medication for healthcare apprentices includes laminated slides for the apprentices to use interactively, such as finding missing words. Apprentices enjoy this approach to learning. A bank of interactive learning activities enables apprentices to practise and improve their English and mathematical skills. This is made available through the electronic portfolio or on a CD. However, not all apprentices have access to these resources.
- Assessors are highly flexible in their approach. They accommodate apprentices' different shift patterns, making themselves readily available to adapt arrangements if required. This flexible approach means that apprentices can progress at a pace that meets their and their employers' needs. Assessors identify those with additional support needs appropriately and provide the support they need to succeed.
- Assessment practice is good. Apprentices' assessments and reviews are timely, well planned and documented and involve apprentices fully. Assessment methods are fair and reliable. Staff use trainees' and apprentices' starting points and progress made in their learning so far very effectively to plan further learning and assessment and to help them to overcome barriers to learning and progress. Target-setting is strong, giving learners a clear and specific focus as they work towards their learning goals.

- Apprentices and trainees receive clear and constructive feedback that enables them to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Oral and written feedback to apprentices and trainees highlights any spelling or grammatical errors and staff reinforce the importance of good English skills.
- Although assessors enable apprentices to improve their skills in English through training and assessment activities and through good feedback, they do this less effectively for mathematics. Apprentices value their mathematical skills as a way of passing tests to achieve their apprenticeship rather than a way of developing their confidence in applying these skills in their work.
- Staff ensure that learners understand their rights and responsibilities at work. Through their behaviour, they promote with learners an expectation that they should be tolerant and respectful of other people's backgrounds, religions and beliefs. However, they rarely integrate the promotion of modern British values into their teaching, learning and assessment activities unless these are integral to qualification units. Although staff ensure that learners know how to keep themselves safe, they do not raise learners' awareness about the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism beyond a superficial level.
- For a minority of apprentices, particularly the most able, assessors do not plan activities that extend their skills, knowledge and understanding sufficiently. For these apprentices, there is an over-reliance on self-directed learning and research.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

- Apprentices and trainees increase significantly their confidence through their learning. Apprentices improve their performance at work and develop a greater understanding of the importance of the skills they acquire in helping them to be successful in their careers and lives. Many learners have returned to learning after years away from study and staff ensure that they recognise their achievements. This helps to instil a sense of pride in what they do.
- Apprentices understand what they need to achieve to be successful. As a result, they make good progress towards achieving qualification units and produce high standards of work. They develop a good awareness of the need to demonstrate the attitudes that employers require, such as good attendance and punctuality.
- Trainees enjoy the range of learning and enrichment activities staff plan for them. Their attendance is good. They increase their confidence to engage in and contribute to discussions that include topics relevant to their lives in British society. Trainees benefit from specialist support services that include counselling to help them overcome personal barriers that hinder their learning and progress.
- Apprentices and trainees receive very useful information and advice about qualification and career options at the start of and during their programmes. As a result, apprentices understand the requirements of their qualification and how their training and achievements will enable them to progress in the workplace. Trainees increase their understanding about what they need to achieve to obtain work.
- Apprentices take pride in their work. They frequently take the initiative, contribute ideas and suggest improvements to work processes based on what they have learned. Apprentices, many of who have not been in formal education or training for some time, quickly develop skills of self-directed learning and research.
- Apprentices and trainees feel safe and have a good understanding of how to stay safe at work and how to take forward any concerns they might have with regard to issues such as bullying or harassment. Apprentices and trainees have a sound grasp of risks when using the internet, for example how to protect themselves from financial fraud or online grooming. Learners demonstrate mutual respect for their peers and other members of society
- Not all assessors encourage apprentices to use the online portfolio and tracking system sufficiently. This detracts from them being able to take greater responsibility for their own learning and progress.

### **Outcomes for learners**

#### are good

- A high proportion of apprentices achieve their qualifications. In doing so, the large majority make good progress based on their starting points. They develop a range of vocationally specific and employment-related skills that their employers value. Apprentices produce work to a high standard, including in their written work. An apprentice in the public sector wrote a very substantial and reflective account of her work experiences, demonstrating that she has a very thorough understanding of her organisation's processes.
- Almost all apprentices continue in sustained employment when they complete their programmes, with many gaining promotion at work or willingly taking on higher levels of responsibility. The proportion of apprentices who achieve within the planned timescale is improving, although around a third of apprentices still take longer than expected.
- In 2013, Intraining took over the contract to deliver apprenticeship training for a large employer after the training provider who had been delivering this went into liquidation. Since it took on this provision, a high proportion of apprentices have left the programme without successfully completing. Many of these apprentices left when they were made redundant, or their jobs were changed through restructures. Intraining leaders have terminated this contract and no new apprentices have started on the programme since November 2015. Managers and assessors continue to provide training, assessment and support to enable as many as possible of the few remaining apprentices to achieve. Apprentices following programmes in retail with other employers achieve well, as do apprentices following programmes in business management, administration and customer services; health, care and public services; manufacturing; and information communication technology (ICT).
- Managers effectively analyse the performance of different groups of learners on the various programmes they follow. They also take good account of the progress and achievements of apprentices and trainees by age, gender and ethnicity and for those with a learning difficulty or disability. Few differences exist in the performance of different groups. Other than for apprentices following retail programmes with one employer, there are no significant pockets of underperformance of apprentices of different ages, or those studying apprenticeships at levels 2, 3 or higher. Apprentices who follow programmes with subcontractors achieve as well as those whose programmes are delivered directly by Intraining.
- Almost all apprentices who do not have sufficiently good skills in English and mathematics when they start their programmes gain the skills that they need in these subjects to achieve the functional skills qualifications required. Apprentices receive good support through teaching, learning and assessment activities to enable them to improve their English skills further. However, they do not receive the same support to enable them to improve their mathematical skills or apply these in their work.
- Adult trainees, many with low starting points, gain a good range of skills through their traineeships. The majority improve their skills in English and mathematics and learn how to research the skills and knowledge they will need in the jobs to which they would like to progress.
- The majority of trainees gain in confidence and, through structured work experience, gain the basic work-related skills they need to obtain a job. A good proportion of trainees progress to paid employment when they leave their traineeship, although only a few progress to apprenticeships.

### Types of provision

### **Apprenticeships**

are good

- Intraining delivers apprenticeships to over 6,800 apprentices. Just under a third of apprenticeships are provided through 40 subcontractors. Most apprentices are aged over 19. Slightly less than half of all apprentices are following programmes in business management, administration and customer services. Just over a quarter follow apprenticeships in health, public services and care. Around 1,000 apprentices follow programmes in retail. The remainder of apprentices follow programmes in ICT and engineering and manufacturing technology.
- Apprentices' programmes are managed well so that all aspects of the apprenticeships are met effectively. Assessors at Intraining and the subcontractors have highly relevant industry experience and are well qualified in their specialist fields, and most have teaching qualifications. They use their sector experience well to plan and provide relevant learning and assessment to meet the needs of both apprentices and employers. The majority of assessors set high expectations for learners, so that they have a strong commitment to learn and progress quickly.

- Intraining develops successful relationships with a diverse range of small to very large employers. Many of these arrangements are very well established and apprenticeships are integral to the employers' workforce planning. Employers provide many relevant opportunities for apprentices to acquire high-quality employability and technical skills. Many apprentices progress to higher levels of apprenticeships, such as team leading or management, in line with their promotion at work or additional responsibilities.
- Apprentices' managers help to plan their learning and provide any required support such as opportunities for relevant work experience. Assessors are not yet, however, sufficiently involving employers in reviewing apprentices' progress and setting new targets.
- Apprentices gain highly relevant technical knowledge and skills at work, which are reinforced through well-planned written tasks. They undertake much valuable independent research, for example by using the internet to gain knowledge about legislation relevant to their employer. Assessors in the majority of one-to-one sessions focus mostly on the assessment of learners' work and progress. Assessors do not always sufficiently extend and enrich apprentices' vocational knowledge and skills beyond the requirements of the qualifications. This is particularly the case for the most-able apprentices. Intraining is developing additional learning resources for assessors; stretch and challenge, through teaching, learning and assessment, are one of the focuses of ongoing staff development.
- Intraining and the subcontractors provide effective teaching and support to enable apprentices to pass English, mathematics and computing examinations. Their development of apprentices' English and ICT skills is strong and is integrated with learners' work responsibilities. For example, a manager in a care home improved greatly his coordination of management information through learning about spreadsheets. However, Intraining has not yet sufficiently integrated mathematics learning into the vocational aspects of the apprenticeship so that apprentices are able to appreciate fully the relevance of these to the workplace.
- All apprentices improve their levels of self-confidence, their commitment to learning and their communication skills. This helps them to make significant and valued contributions to their employers' businesses. In particular, adult apprentices who often have returned to learning are assisted very ably by Intraining and the subcontractors to overcome their fears about mathematics, English and computers.

### Traineeships

### are good

- Intraining provides individual programmes for 58 adult trainees based in four centres. Trainees undertake an intensive four-week programme which develops their employability skills, including English and mathematics. Trainees are then placed with employers to gain work experience. If trainees do not progress into paid employment, apprenticeships or education at a higher level, they continue their learning at the centres where job coaches provide support to enable them to access further work experience.
- Leaders and staff have high expectations of trainees, which are reflected in the very good facilities they provide to support their learning. Teaching, learning and assessment are well planned to meet the needs of individual trainees and this prepares them well for employment or further training. As a result, most trainees progress to full-time work or education, although only a few progress into apprenticeships.
- Very effective procedures are in place to ensure that trainees' starting points are established when staff plan their programmes. All trainees undertake comprehensive initial assessments of their English and mathematical skills that inform their learning activities. Job coaches meet with trainees during the first few days of learning to discuss how their previous experience and job aspirations can be best matched to planned work experience. Barriers to learning are identified at an early stage and any additional support required is put in place.
- Trainees develop good employability skills. They also improve their skills in English and mathematics, recognising that this will improve their chances of finding employment. Trainees understand and demonstrate the importance of mutual respect and self-discipline both at the training centres and in the workplace. Through research, trainees increase their knowledge of the requirements of jobs they hope to progress to and with the help of staff, use this to prepare for interviews. Trainees attend training and work regularly and punctually.
- Managers use their excellent links with local employers to provide a good range of work-experience opportunities. Emphasis is placed on trainees experiencing work as other employees would do. For example, in a well-known retail outlet, the adult trainees work weekend and evening shifts.

- Job coaches provide good support for trainees. Each trainee is allocated a job coach, who supports and advises them throughout their programme, including liaising with work-experience providers and prospective employers. Weekly meetings celebrate new skills learned and provide encouragement and guidance as well as resolving job-related concerns employers or trainees have. Job coaches also provide good support for trainees to prepare for job interviews and to support further those who are not successful to find alternative employment or training.
- Trainees receive very effective information and advice at all points of their programme. Staff attend local Jobcentres to explain the programme to prospective trainees and then host pre-course days at the training centres so that trainees are fully aware of all aspects of the programme.

### **Provider details**

Type of provider	Independent learning provider	
Age range of learners	16+	
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	1,222	
Principal/CEO	Linda Dean	
Website address	www.intraining.co.uk	

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above		
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		te	Advanced			Higher		
	16-18 19+		€+	16-18 19+		16-	16-18 1		
	295	3,5	594	101	2,642	1	250		
Number of traineeships	16-19			19+			Total		
	N/A			58			58		
Number of learners aged 14–16	N/A								
Funding received from At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul> <li>Skills Funding Agency (SFA)</li> <li>Global Skills Training Ltd</li> <li>Network Learning Centres UK Ltd</li> <li>Encompass Consultancy Limited</li> <li>Alpha Care Agency Limited</li> <li>Nextstep Training Limited</li> <li>Prospect Training (Yorkshire)</li> <li>Right Track Social Enterprise</li> <li>Step Up Training Associates</li> <li>Acorn Training Ltd</li> <li>TRS Training Ltd</li> <li>Nova Payroll Management Services</li> <li>Regis UK Limited.</li> </ul>								

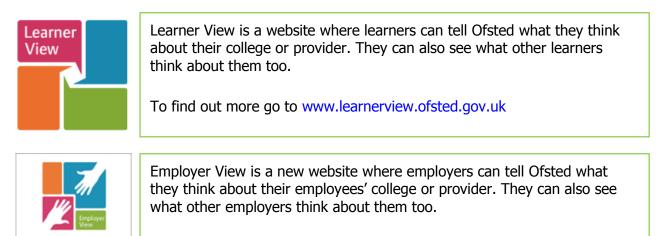
## Information about this inspection

### **Inspection team**

Malcolm Fraser, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Bob Hamp	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jean Webb	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Sharpe	Ofsted Inspector
Allan Shaw	Ofsted Inspector
Ian Goodwin	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the performance director, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls, online questionnaires and webinars to gather the views of apprentices, trainees and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

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