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Mr Steve Grant
Managing Director
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Dear Mr Grant

Short inspection of The TTE Technical Training Group

Following the short inspection on 13 and 14 February 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since the provider was judged to be good in August 2013.

This provider continues to be good.

Since your previous inspection, you, your staff and board members have continued to provide high-quality apprenticeships and provide a good standard of training and education. Your apprenticeship programme provides valuable opportunities for young people to pursue a career in the science and engineering sectors.

You and your team have created a well-structured programme that enables apprentices to develop the specialist skills and knowledge and the personal attributes that they need to be successful in their jobs. Your staff take great care to recruit young people who can demonstrate clearly the potential to develop the skills and qualities that employers need and who have a very high level of commitment to their chosen career. This contributes significantly to ensuring that a very high proportion of apprentices remain on their apprenticeships and complete the programme successfully within the planned time. Apprentices make good progress on their programmes, have very good personal and work-related skills, and enjoy their learning.

You, your management team and board members ensure that the apprenticeship programmes that you provide are very responsive to local and national needs. Engagement with employers is particularly effective; employers value highly their partnerships with TTE Technical Training Group. You and your managers work successfully to meet the skills needs of large employers such as British Steel and British Sugar. You are also rapidly increasing the volume of apprenticeships

delivered in partnership with local small and medium-sized enterprises. Standards-based apprenticeships are in place for science manufacturing and maintenance technician roles; over a third of apprentices are on standards-based programmes.

Safeguarding is effective.

Board members, leaders and managers, and other members of staff ensure that safeguarding is a high priority in all aspects of the provider's work. Apprentices have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe from all risks, including those of radicalisation and extremism. Leaders and managers successfully promote high standards of health and safety, and apprentices have a very thorough understanding of health and safety in the workplace. All apprentices report that they feel safe.

Managers record and respond effectively to any safeguarding concerns. They maintain comprehensive records of all cases and make appropriate referrals, when necessary, to other agencies. The process for ensuring safe recruitment of staff is particularly thorough. Leaders and managers work closely and effectively with employers and with parents and carers to raise awareness of the importance of keeping apprentices safe.

Staff complete relevant training on safeguarding. However, a significant minority of staff have not completed the 'Prevent' duty training required by managers, even though most have done other training relating to radicalisation and extremism. Managers had not identified that this was the case.

Inspection findings

- Trainers provide good support for apprentices to develop practical skills to an industry standard. They also develop apprentices' theoretical understanding to the required standard and successfully encourage apprentices to apply their knowledge when carrying out work-related tasks such as developing and updating risk assessments for use in the workplace. Employers contribute significantly to the planning and delivery of provision. They participate fully in reviews of apprentices' progress and, as a result, are able to provide effective support to apprentices to enable them to develop their skills further. Apprentices benefit from high-quality industry-standard resources at the provider's centre.
- Trainers assess the development of apprentices' skills accurately and comprehensively; they monitor apprentices' progress closely in partnership with employers. The feedback that trainers provide following completion of specific tasks ensures that apprentices are clear about what they need to do to enhance their skills further. However, planning and delivery of learning to meet apprentices' individual needs is not consistently effective. Trainers often take insufficient account of information about what apprentices have already achieved when planning learning. They do not identify specifically enough in a few progress reviews and on apprentices' written work what apprentices need to do to improve.
- Most apprentices join the programme having already achieved GCSE

qualifications in English and mathematics at legacy grades A* to C (reformed grades 4 to 9). Those that have not yet achieved at this level follow either functional skills courses or retake their GCSEs. All apprentices who started the programme in 2016/17 without the required GCSE grades in English and mathematics achieved at the required level by the end of the year.

- Trainers successfully develop apprentices' mathematics skills when teaching most engineering topics. Additional learning resources enable apprentices to develop their mathematics skills through independent study, and plans are in place to extend the range of available materials. Apprentices develop their mathematics skills beyond the minimum requirements of the programme through completing advanced mathematics units of their vocational qualifications. The development of apprentices' English skills is less effective; trainers give insufficient attention to ensuring that apprentices develop their skills in writing accurately.
- Apprentices are enthusiastic and keen to learn. They arrive on time and ready to work, and demonstrate high standards of behaviour. They quickly develop their confidence and take on increasing levels of responsibility at work. They participate in a wide range of community and voluntary activities that enhance their personal skills further and enable them to contribute to their local communities. Apprentices feel proud to have secured their roles and are determined to make the necessary efforts to succeed in their chosen career.
- Apprentices increase their understanding of fundamental British values and of the risks of radicalisation and extremism through a range of activities, including daily tutorial sessions at the provider's main site. In a few instances, however, trainers demonstrate limited skills in discussing sensitive and challenging topics with apprentices.
- Leaders and managers set challenging targets for the organisation, including targets for apprentices' achievement. They monitor progress closely and take appropriate action when they identify that a target that they have set may not be achieved. Self-assessment is broadly accurate, and actions for improvement are implemented and monitored carefully.
- Board members have a good understanding of the provider's strengths and areas for improvement, and its current performance. They receive comprehensive and helpful reports that include information about apprentices' progress and achievement. They use this information well to hold leaders and managers to account for performance at frequent board meetings.
- Management of the performance of training staff is not rigorous enough. Managers successfully identify any staff who are underperforming and take appropriate action to improve their practice. However, in too many instances, annual reviews of staff performance are too superficial. They take insufficient account of strengths and areas for improvement identified through observations, and do not identify precise targets to help staff to enhance their practice further.
- Very effective pre-programme advice and guidance ensure that young people who join programmes fully understand and are committed to their chosen career, and have the potential to develop the skills and personal attributes that will help them to succeed. This contributes significantly to the high proportion of apprentices who complete their programmes successfully. During their

programme, apprentices receive good support to develop the skills that they need to apply for jobs, including writing job applications and interview skills. Many apprentices follow additional courses in, for example, health and safety, to enhance their career opportunities. Leaders and managers recognise, however, that apprentices do not receive effective advice about the broad range of career opportunities in the sector, in addition to those relating to their current job role.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- staff carry out further training to enhance their skills in discussing with apprentices topics relating both to radicalisation and extremism and to the promotion of fundamental British values
- trainers identify accurately and consistently what apprentices need to do to improve their skills, and plan and deliver training that meets individual needs
- trainers develop apprentices' skills in writing accurately and without errors
- managers evaluate fully the performance of staff, identify accurately aspects of practice that staff need to improve, and monitor improvements closely
- apprentices receive effective impartial advice during their programme about the full range of career opportunities in the sector in which they are working.

I am copying this letter to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Steve Hailstone
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Three inspectors visited the provider for two days. The employer engagement coordinator, as nominee, assisted the team. Inspectors met with board members, leaders and managers, and trainers and assessors. They also met with apprentices and employers, and visited several employers in the Middlesbrough area. They observed teaching, learning and assessment and reviewed apprentices' work and progress records. They also reviewed documents, including those related to self-assessment, quality improvement, performance management, and safeguarding. They considered the views of apprentices and employers.