

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



15 March 2018

Ms Amy Harris
Operations Director
QDOS Training Limited
Byron House
Commercial Street
Mansfield
Nottinghamshire
NG18 1EE

Dear Ms Harris

Short inspection of QDOS Training Limited

Following the short inspection on 15 February 2018 and 16 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 good in July 2015.

This provider continues to be good.

Despite significant organisational changes, you continue to provide good-quality training provision. Senior leaders have managed well the major increase in the number of adult learners and apprentices that has occurred since the previous inspection. A successful programme for young people at risk of exclusion from education, training or employment is now in place. You have conducted internal reviews that have led to improvements and raised standards further for all learners.

Leaders and managers have rightly prioritised the participation of staff in a wide range of development opportunities that enhances their professional competence. Well-qualified tutors and assessors have very high expectations and aspirations for adult learners and apprentices. This ambitious vision contributes to a learning culture that expects all learners to progress rapidly and achieve their potential.

The senior leadership team has a good understanding of the provision's strengths and weaknesses. They are realistic about current and future challenges. For example, they have identified effective actions to maintain a high quality-training offer across a wide geographical area. Leaders and managers have made good progress in maintaining the strengths and addressing the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. However, they recognise that the pace of development, particularly within health and social care, needs to be swifter.

Leaders and managers have carefully selected partners to offer good-quality

apprenticeships and adult learning. Joint working has led to improvements that successfully enhance individuals' future employment potential. For example, the introduction of an accredited digital employability course for adult learners effectively equips them to identify and apply for job vacancies advertised online. Managers evaluate well the quality of the small subcontracted provision and its outcomes. Through recent improvements in monitoring arrangements, they now assess subcontractors' work more effectively in relation to key performance indicators.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All staff are subject to safe recruitment and vetting procedures. The leadership team have made sure that learners and apprentices properly consider personal safety and welfare during their training. Adult learners and apprentices report feeling safe when attending their workplace and training. They generally have a good or better understanding of what to do should they feel unsafe or threatened. In addition, staff routinely identify potential safeguarding issues. The designated safeguarding officer enacts swift and appropriate action to address any concerns raised. Monitoring arrangements, to ensure subcontractors' compliance with safeguarding procedures, are effective. During practical training sessions, inspectors observed adult learners and apprentices good adherence to safe working practices. For example, during a forklift training session adult learners demonstrated safe working practices, including mounting and dismounting the vehicle while checking leverage and traction so it remained stable.

All staff attend appropriate safeguarding training. In addition, they participate in initial and update training to raise their professional practice as it relates to the 'Prevent' duty. Adult learners and apprentices usually have an appropriate awareness of fundamental British values. However, not all apprentices demonstrate a good enough understanding of the dangers posed by extremism and radicalisation.

Managers and staff implement a suitably current 'e-policy' to protect adult learners and apprentices when using online learning resources. All learners exhibit a good understanding of how to use the internet and social media safely. Computers are subject to appropriate guards against inappropriate use.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and managers have developed good partnership working with Jobcentre Plus, charities and further education and skills providers. As a result, the provision continues to make a valuable contribution to meeting local and regional skills shortages. Noteworthy in this regard is the delivery of adult learning to employees within a wide range and variety of workplaces. These successful programmes include very flexible delivery methods planned around different shift patterns to maximise learners' participation. Apprentices benefit from participating in programmes they can adjust to enhance their employment

prospects. For example, hairdressing apprentices can study optional beauty therapy units. Successful completion helps them prepare to enter for careers that are more diverse or higher-level training.

- The quality of taught sessions and individual coaching are good. Consequently, most adult learners and apprentices make good progress in their learning. When employed, learners' completed training often allows them to become more effective in the workplace. For example, a learner studying a leadership programme received individual coaching to improve her budget and personnel management skills. She was subsequently able to apply this learning to extend both her work roles and responsibilities.
- Senior managers have invested significant resources in a Mansfield-based hairdressing and beauty therapy salon that offers very good training facilities. Apprentices receive very effective teaching and assessment at the salon. Consequently, they acquire a high level of hairdressing skills and associated knowledge. Apprentices work with paying customers allows them to practise and become proficient in dealing with a broad range of customers. As a result, apprentices quickly meet or exceed the relevant industry standards and complete their programme within the planned timescale.
- Assessors exploit the in-house training provided by employers well to promote apprentices' development and avoid unnecessary duplication. For example, assessors use this training to extend health and social care apprentices' confidence in meeting the needs of their job roles. As a result, apprentices are able to identify how they can use their resuscitation and catheter care skills to meet service users' needs.
- Assessment practice is generally good. Assessors visit apprentices regularly and frequently at the workplace to carry out assessments. Relationships between assessors and apprentices are particularly good. This, along with effective communication outside of visit periods, ensures that apprentices feel well supported during their programme.
- Both trainers and assessors give adult learners and apprentices useful feedback that helps them improve. The use of questioning techniques by assessors and trainers allows all learners to attain quickly and move to more demanding tasks. Assessors regularly use professional discussions very effectively to check and raise apprentices' skills and knowledge.
- Adult learners and apprentices are set relevant short-term learning targets. These are subject to an appropriate review as part of a monitoring process that supports programme achievement. The targets usually challenge each adult learner or apprentice to develop to the expected standard. The very large majority of learners have a good understanding of the progress they have made and what actions they need to undertake to improve further. However, assessors do not consistently set detailed targets for health and social care apprentices. This slows apprentices' progress and their appreciation of how well they are achieving. Too often, the short-term targets relate to programme unit completion rather than the skills and knowledge apprentices should acquire. Not all apprentices fully understand how to achieve the targets or by when.
- Employers are appropriately involved in apprentices' programmes. Regular

oversight by employers in the workplace effectively monitors the quality of on- and off-the-job training received by adult learners and apprentices. Progress reviews include relevant input from employers. However, in a small minority of cases, assessors have not followed up quickly enough delays in receiving employer feedback and evaluation.

- Adult learners and apprentices develop good personal, social and employability skills. For example, inspectors observed adult learners developing good industry-relevant skills, including those related to first aid, manual handling and forklift operation. Each skill area was accredited, allowing the learners to gain appropriate qualifications. Both adult learners and apprentices reported significant improvements in personal confidence and self-esteem because of their participation in training.
- The large majority of adult learners and apprentices make the expected or better progress in developing their English and mathematics skills when compared to their starting points. For example, a business administration apprentice significantly improved her skills and successfully mail-merged letters and produced spreadsheet analyses and graphs that her employer prized greatly. Assessors ensure that all learners develop and use industry-specific technical language well.
- Staff provide good specialist support that removes barriers to adult learners' and apprentices' development of English and mathematical skills. Tutor explanations of complex terms and the use of problem-solving techniques are very effective in preparing adult learners and apprentices' for functional skills examinations. However, staff do not consistently provide effective support to improve the English and mathematical skills of health and social care apprentices. In a few cases, apprentices receive this support too late in their programme. In addition, staff fail to raise the competence of all health and social care apprentices in using information and communication technology (ICT), particularly within a vocational context.
- Leaders and managers have maintained the good outcomes for all learners noted at the previous inspection. Apprenticeship and adult learning achievement rates were high in 2016/17. The rate at which learners and apprentices achieved within their planned timescale was also high. In-year data indicates that leaders and managers have maintained this trend.
- Adult learners progress to further education or employment at a high rate. A high proportion of apprentices advance from programmes at level 2 to level 3. Apprentices enter and sustain employment on completion of the programme at a high rate. A large proportion of traineeship learners gain apprenticeships and employment on completion of their programme. Rates for trainees aged 17 years or older are very high. No significant differences in achievement exist between the relatively large number of apprentices and adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities when compared to other groups.
- A high number of learners pass their functional skills examination at first sitting. A significant minority of apprentices undertake and achieve a level of functional skills that is higher than required by their programme.
- Overall, the quality of information, advice and guidance is good. The help that

unemployed adults receive appropriately extends their understanding of the available career options. It allows them to make realistic and informed decisions about their future. Information, advice and guidance arrangements meets the needs of most apprentices working within different sectors, including those who wish to progress to further or higher education. However, help for a minority of apprentices is limited to the consideration of a narrow variety of career options within their employment sector.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all apprentices develop a good understanding of the dangers posed by extremism and radicalisation
- assessors set and review detailed, time-constrained short-term targets for health and social care apprentices that include full guidance on how to acquire the required skills and knowledge
- staff provide to all health and social care apprentices the support they need to improve rapidly their English, mathematical, and information and communication technology skills
- all apprentices receive information, advice and guidance that fully inform them about their careers, so that their decisions are based on a good understanding of the available options within their own and other employment sectors.

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

Yours sincerely

Nigel Bragg
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, you assisted us as nominee. We met with managers, assessors and tutors. We used individual interviews and online questionnaires to gather the views of all learners. These views are reflected within this letter. We reviewed adult learners' and apprentices' assessed work. Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of key documents, including those relating to achievement data, the planning of training, quality assurance, performance monitoring and safeguarding. In addition, they took account of your organisation's policies, procedures, development plans and the previous inspection report.