

# CSM Consulting Limited

Independent Learning Provider

## Inspection dates

7–9 March 2018

Overall effectiveness		Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>	Apprenticeships <b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>	
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>	
Outcomes for learners	<b>Good</b>	
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good provider

- A large majority of apprentices gain their qualifications as a result of good teaching, learning and assessment.
- A very high proportion of apprentices gain their English and mathematics qualifications at their first attempt.
- Apprentices improve their confidence and workplace skills as a result of effective coaching and good support for their learning by assessors.
- Apprentices enjoy their courses and make good progress because assessors monitor their progress carefully and help them with their individual needs.
- The standards of work and behaviour of apprentices are very good. Their attitudes to their work in schools, offices or healthcare settings are very professional.
- New arrangements for governance have improved directors' scrutiny and understanding of the performance of apprentices and managers.
- Managers do not exercise sufficient oversight of construction apprentices. This lack of scrutiny results in these apprentices making slow progress in achieving their qualifications within the planned timescales.
- Managers do not observe all assessors' performance regularly and do not identify and share good practice demonstrated by the more effective assessors.
- The most able apprentices do not make the progress they are capable of because targets are not specific enough to help them improve as quickly as they might.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- CSM Consulting now trades under the name of UCAN. The company provides training in the south west, Yorkshire and London. It has a training facility at Royal Victoria and a training workshop in Stratford, both in London.
- UCAN mainly provides apprenticeship training. The vocational areas with the largest number of apprentices are supporting teaching and learning (for teaching assistants in school), health and social care, and business administration and team leading. UCAN also provides construction apprenticeships in the south west linked to the Hinckley Point project.

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

- Managers should monitor the progress of construction apprentices more closely. They should ensure that they receive appropriate help to improve their English and mathematics abilities earlier in their apprenticeships and gain their qualifications within the planned timescale.
- Managers should carry out observations and appraisals of assessors' performance more regularly, in line with UCAN's policies and procedures. They should share the good practice identified widely across the company.
- Managers should make sure that assessors set precise targets that help the most able apprentices to make the progress they are capable of.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Managers have conscientiously carried out the recommendations from the previous inspection. These include, for example, the appointment of new directors, implementing an effective system for monitoring apprentices' progress and closer scrutiny of the performance of managers and apprentices.
- Managers now plan and make improvements well and in a timely way. They regularly update the quality improvement plan using data about the apprentices and programmes well. Staff understand how they contribute to making improvements through the self-assessment process. The self-assessment report sets out clearly the areas for improvement and strengths based on managers' well-considered assessments.
- Managers have a balanced and feasible strategic plan based on local and regional priorities such as improving social mobility. They have established effective partnerships with local authorities and employers that enable them to deliver appropriate apprenticeships for construction workers, teaching assistants and healthcare workers for example.
- Managers maintain regular contact with employers and keep them well informed about changes regarding apprenticeships. However, they have not been fully successful in engaging all employers to take an active role in monitoring the progress of their apprentices.
- The reorganisation of the teaching of functional skills has resulted in a high proportion of apprentices achieving their qualifications in English and mathematics. Assessors' confidence and abilities in teaching functional skills have improved following training by the newly appointed director of functional skills. This has helped to improve apprentices' achievements.
- Assessors receive appropriate professional development to update their skills. For example, most assessors are now confident in helping apprentices to understand fundamental British values in the context of their apprenticeships. Managers' monthly notices support assessors well in making apprentices aware of the 'Prevent' duty and importance of equality and diversity.
- Managers do not undertake regular and systematic appraisals of the performance of all assessors based on observing them while they are assessing apprentices. Consequently, learning and sharing of good practice among staff does not happen regularly.
- Managers have not been sufficiently rigorous in monitoring the performance of a small group of construction apprentices. They are, therefore, making slow progress in their English and mathematics abilities and towards achieving their qualification in the planned timescale.

### The governance of the provider

- A new governance board is now in place. It has overseen a successful staffing restructure. The appointment of an independent member has benefited the board and enhanced the knowledge and awareness of all directors.

- Directors receive and act on relevant and timely information about how managers, staff and apprentices are performing against targets. They question the details in an open and professional way that leads to improvements for apprentices and staff, for example in how managers monitor apprentices' progress closely.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Apprentices and assessors know how to keep themselves safe in their workplaces. They demonstrate a good understanding of health and safety. Apprentices are aware of how to be safe online and when using social media. They know who they should contact if they have concerns about safeguarding issues.
- Managers have ensured that assessors and staff have received training on the 'Prevent' duty, covering the risks of extremism, how to stay safe using the internet and avoiding grooming.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The vast majority of apprentices enjoy their programmes, make good progress and have a good rapport with their assessors. The good support from their assessors raises their aspirations.
- Apprentices benefit from a well-planned induction process. This provides a positive start for apprentices, helping them to understand the expectations of their programmes. At induction, assessors and senior staff assess apprentices' English and mathematics abilities carefully. Assessors use the information well to plan their training and assessment of apprentices.
- Apprentices receive extra support promptly as a result of early assessment of their needs. For example, apprentices benefit from extra help for dyslexia or dyspraxia if required.
- Assessors are astute at helping apprentices appropriately with their personal and emotional needs. They tailor the support to match apprentices' requirements, helping them to gain confidence when undertaking practical and written assignments.
- Most apprentices benefit from effective English and mathematics support that enables them to achieve their functional skills qualifications. The majority of assessors are now confident and capable in supporting apprentices with improving these skills.
- Motor vehicle apprentices enjoy good workshop facilities that include up-to-date, industry-standard software. They make good progress in lessons because their assessor encourages them to reflect on their work experience in relation to the tasks they undertake.
- Since the previous inspection, assessors have improved how they monitor apprentices' progress. They use a new monitoring system well to keep apprentices on track and provide individual coaching that motivates them.
- Apprentices and assessors find the virtual learning environment and the electronic portfolio system very helpful and useful. They develop their information technology skills well by using the online resources. They also improve their knowledge and understanding

by using the guidance and links to other learning sites effectively.

- Assessors use local knowledge effectively to extend apprentices' understanding of fundamental British values. For example, to illustrate democratic processes one assessor explained the strike by women workers at a car factory in Dagenham and its influence on the development of the Equal Pay Act.
- The quality of teaching and assessment of construction apprentices is too variable. For example, assessors' feedback to them on their assessments is not always clear enough. The pace of the training they experience away from their workplace is slow, resulting in them losing interest in this aspect and not making sufficient progress.
- Targets set by a minority of assessors do not help apprentices to speed up the pace of their learning and extend the capabilities of the most able. The targets do not challenge and encourage apprentices to develop new skills or improve their knowledge.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

- Nearly all apprentices broaden their skills and improve their technical knowledge as a result of undertaking their apprenticeship. Many in the field of information technology, for example, quickly improve their skills and knowledge of technical software. Construction apprentices gain good on-site practical skills.
- Apprentices in schools enhance their understanding of the challenges pupils face. They improve their ability to work with a wider ability range of pupils. They also acquire a better understanding of theories about education and government policies.
- Many apprentices continue to improve their English skills. For example, they improve their ability to write reports avoiding jargon and technical words for parents or clients.
- Very many apprentices are motivated by the training and grow in confidence in the classroom and workplace. Motor vehicle apprentices acquire good technical skills in using modern equipment. They demonstrate their competence through carrying out tasks effectively in practical training and assessment activities. For example, they efficiently and competently use high-tech equipment to diagnose engine failure.
- In the area of health and social care, apprentices learn sensible strategies from their assessors to cope with patients with dementia. In one setting, they undertake additional training such as spending time in a hospice to equip them to deal with end-of-life care.
- Apprentices pay good attention to health and safety requirements. They know how to keep themselves and their clients or pupils safe. Through taking part actively in professional discussions with their assessors or tutors they are aware of the government's expectations to identify and report matters that might relate to extremist behaviour.
- In formal lessons, apprentices show respect and consideration for each other. They are punctual and attend well. Through their induction and when being assessed, they receive practical careers advice and guidance about more general employment and opportunities for progression in their chosen career.

## Outcomes for learners

**Good**

- Most apprentices achieve their qualifications and the proportion doing so within planned timescales has improved since the previous inspection. Current apprentices are making good progress towards gaining their qualifications.
- A large majority of apprentices achieved their functional skills mathematics and English qualifications in 2016/17; most did so at their first attempt.
- Very many apprentices work to high standards and demonstrate excellent professional skills; for example, in how they work with clients in care homes who have physical or mental disabilities.
- Many apprentices, for example construction apprentices and apprentices working in health and social care, gain additional qualifications that help them in their chosen careers.
- At least one in three apprentices improve their career prospects, gain promotions or move onto higher pay scales by doing their apprenticeship. Many support assistants in schools take on additional responsibilities or progress to higher education to train to become teachers.
- The small number of construction operations apprentices improve their prospects to secure permanent employment and promotion in the industry through doing their apprenticeship.
- Managers have analysed reasons for the small differences between achievements of male and female apprentices where female apprentices perform better than males. They are taking appropriate actions to remedy this imbalance, caused largely as a result of the slow progress of construction apprentices.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	51433
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	1,398
Principal/CEO	Rory Finlayson
Telephone number	01278 452015
Website	<a href="http://www.ucan.co.uk">www.ucan.co.uk</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	-	35	-	29	-	9	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	10	98	22	197	-		17	
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		1		1			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director of functional skills, 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 and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners 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.

## Inspection team

Peter Green, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lyn Bourne	Ofsted Inspector
Rosemary Belton	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Lacey	Ofsted Inspector
John Evans	Ofsted Inspector
Carolyn Brownsea	Ofsted Inspector
Steven Tucker	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stefan Fusenich	Ofsted Inspector



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