

ALM Training Services Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates

21–23 March 2018

Overall effectiveness			Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good		
Outcomes for learners	Good		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Leaders and managers have made good progress in rectifying almost all of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.
- Most learners make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills and achieve qualifications that prepare them well for purposeful employment.
- Staff provide highly effective support for the many learners with challenging backgrounds; as a result, these learners often excel.
- Trainers provide effective practical skills training that enables learners to become competent and confident forklift truck drivers.
- Learners with low prior achievement make significant improvements in their English and mathematics skills.
- Learners develop good personal and social skills that enable them to progress to further training at a higher level and employment.
- Leaders and managers do not ensure that some of the most able learners are provided with work experience early enough in their programme so as to enhance their industry-specific skills.
- Leaders do not ensure that observations of teaching, learning and assessment lead to appropriate action planning for improvement.

Full report

Information about the provider

- ALM Training Services Limited (ALM) is a private limited company established in 1993. The provider is located at two sites. It has a head office and training facilities in Tilbury and another training facility in Colchester. ALM's primary focus is to provide training in the logistics sector. It offers a study programme in warehousing and storage for learners who were previously not in education, employment or training and who had no, or very few, qualifications when they started.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers should ensure that work experience is arranged early enough in the programme for the learners for who it is appropriate.
- Trainers should ensure that all learners have sufficiently challenging targets to best meet their needs and abilities.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that the observation of teaching, learning and assessment leads to appropriate action planning for improvement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers are very ambitious for their learners, many of whom have multiple barriers to learning, and have been successful in pursuing high standards since the previous inspection. They are effective in motivating staff and learners to achieve good results. As a result, learners are keen to achieve, make good progress and are successful in meeting their goals.
- Leaders and managers have made significant improvements to learners' programmes since the previous inspection through their carefully planned actions. They have introduced better training methods, particularly in the teaching of English and mathematics. As a result, a greater proportion of learners now achieve their qualifications.
- The warehousing and storage curriculum, along with the training and certification in using forklift trucks, is closely aligned to the local enterprise partnership's priorities and the skills shortages in logistics within Essex. ALM has a strategic aim to work with hard-to-reach potential learners. Leaders plan effective and imaginative approaches to achieve this, including a 'skills' lorry equipped with a simulator of a forklift truck, to reach out to potential learners and to interest them in a future career in logistics.
- Leaders and managers understand the organisation's strengths and weaknesses. Their self-assessment report is thorough and accurate and is now more evaluative than previously. The quality-improvement plans focus well on tackling areas requiring further improvement. Managers carefully monitor and rate the progress made against the planned targets for improvement.
- Leaders' arrangements for performance management are rigorous. Staff work towards clearly defined performance targets and participate well in training and development activities. The process for observing teaching, learning and assessment is effective and results in observers making accurate judgements and identifying incisively strengths and areas for improvement. However, leaders have not ensured that observers make precise recommendations for actions to bring about improvements in teaching and learning where weaknesses are identified.
- Learners receive good impartial careers advice and guidance through visits from National Careers Service staff and from ALM staff with external accreditation for the quality of the advice and guidance they provide. As a result, learners are clear about their next steps and the majority progress into employment or further training.
- Leaders have forged good working relationships with the local council, the youth offending team, agencies for young people not in employment, education and training, and employers. Learners with low prior achievement and challenging circumstances benefit considerably from these partnerships through the very high-quality support they receive. The local agencies value the service provided by ALM in accepting, supporting and helping vulnerable learners with challenging backgrounds progress into employment.
- Leaders and managers ensure that staff effectively promote learners' understanding of fundamental British values in their teaching and, as result, learners understand the diverse nature of Britain and are able to explain the importance of being able to work well with people from a wide range of backgrounds. Managers ensure that trainers, staff and

learners share a culture of mutual respect and staff challenge unacceptable language or behaviour sensitively.

- Leaders and managers have been slow to arrange work experience for a small minority of the most able learners. However, learners benefit from considerable work-related learning during their course.

The governance of the provider

- The managing director, who is the owner, is responsible for all aspects of the company, and provides an effective oversight of its strategy and performance, ensuring good and improving outcomes for learners.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff have appropriate checks to ensure that they can work safely with young people, and have completed safeguarding training. A dedicated and qualified member of staff is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the safeguarding policy and communicating with the relevant external agencies.
- Staff training to comply with the 'Prevent' duty has been effective, resulting in learners having a good awareness of the risks of radicalisation and extremism, knowing how to keep themselves safe online and how to report concerns.
- Staff and learners display high standards of health and safety. Staff promote safe working practices particularly well during the practical training in the warehouse. Consequently, learners' understanding and application of health and safety is good.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good because trainers provide challenging and interesting skills training sessions that learners enjoy, and which are closely aligned to industry standards. As a result, learners make good progress in developing their practical skills. For example, in one forklift driving session, a group of relatively new learners were able to skilfully drive a loaded forklift truck and accurately negotiate tight bends.
- Trainers effectively use their industry experience to develop learning points well in classes, using highly relevant examples to add points of interest and to extend learning. For example, in one session looking at the safety checks required before using a forklift truck, the trainer explained different types of forklift that learners may encounter in warehouses and the potential hazards to look for when checking these vehicles. As a result, learners understand how their learning will be used when working in the logistics industry.
- Before learners join the programme, managers ensure that their needs are identified clearly and that appropriate support is put in place to overcome potential barriers to learning. Consequently, the learners, most of whom have few prior academic achievements, are able to participate fully in lessons, make good progress and achieve their qualifications.
- Learners' starting points are assessed thoroughly at the outset of the course. Trainers

make good use of this information to plan learning that meets the needs of learners well.

- The small class size and high trainer-to-learner ratio enable trainers to adapt learning well to meet learners' needs. Trainers provide effective support on a one-to-one basis. Learners' challenging personal issues may occasionally result in a learner missing classes. In such instances, trainers ensure that learners are able to catch up on missed learning through individual tuition and support.
- Learners value the highly supportive programme offered by staff at ALM. All staff support learners well throughout the programme and ensure that learners who might otherwise leave the course are able to continue in learning. ALM staff work effectively to ensure that parents, carers and other relevant people are kept informed of learners' progress and development.
- The formal assessment carried out by trainers is frequent, accurate and reliable and meets the requirements of the awarding body well. Trainers' feedback to learners provides helpful advice on how they can improve their work and refine their skills; this motivates the majority of learners to do their best and work hard. Although the written feedback on learners' written work correctly identifies grammatical errors, it lacks sufficient overall clarity and detail to help learners identify those parts they have done well and to challenge them to improve weaknesses further.
- Learners are set clear targets for improvement during their reviews of progress. Although these targets focus well on the units of the qualification to be completed, they do not sufficiently address the personal skills learners need to develop for work; these targets often lack sufficient challenge for the most able learners.
- Trainers make good use of opportunities in lessons to develop learners' English and mathematics skills. Nearly all learners start their training without English and mathematics qualifications, and trainers ensure that learners achieve increasingly higher levels of qualifications during their programme. Learners benefit from effective one-to-one support to develop specific aspects of mathematics or English that may prevent them from achieving their qualifications. As a result, learners significantly improve their English and mathematics skills and achieve their qualifications during their time on their study programmes.
- Learners are encouraged to voice their opinions in lessons and they contribute well to discussions. Learners listen well to their peers and develop skills of building on and developing points raised in a respectful manner, resulting in lively debates. The discussions include topics that help learners to develop a good understanding of equality and diversity.
- Trainers ensure that learners have a good grasp of equality and celebrate diversity well through purposeful discussion and work on topical local and national events.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good because learners who were previously not in education, employment or training behave well and develop very positive attitudes towards their learning. They learn skills that increase their confidence and prepare them well for entering employment in the logistics industry.
- Learners attend promptly and arrive for classes well prepared for learning. This includes

being prepared with the appropriate personal protective equipment in practical lessons. However, the attendance of a few learners is low.

- Learners enjoy their learning. Almost all participate readily and respond well to opportunities to contribute in classes. Learners respond immediately to trainers' directions and instructions. For example, during practical forklift training, learners ensured that they followed the detailed instructions and guidance of the trainer precisely when driving the forklift truck in the warehouse area at the training centre. Consequently, learners develop good skills and the confidence needed to work in the warehousing and distribution industry.
- Learners achieve additional qualifications, which significantly enhance their career opportunities. For example, all learners work towards a qualification in using forklift trucks, and achieve a health and safety award as part of their course. In addition, the majority also prepare for and gain their licence to work on large construction sites. Learners have a secure understanding of their rights and responsibilities in the work place.
- Learners undertake significant work-related learning that prepares them well for employment and they spend a significant portion of each day's training in a warehouse. However, managers have been too slow to ensure that sufficient arrangements are in place for the small number of most-able learners, who are ready for the challenge of external workplace experience and to undertake this early in their programme.
- Learners improve their English skills well. Teachers challenge learners to participate and contribute in classes, for example by reading out parts of text or sample questions that will form the basis of subsequent discussions. As a result, learners' communication skills and their confidence in using these skills improve during their training programme.
- Trainers integrate the use of number effectively into learners' practical work, which helps develop learners' confidence in mathematics. For example, they require learners to precisely measure and set up a training circuit for the exercises in driving forklift trucks. Learners also calculate the loads moved by the forklifts to ensure safe working practices.
- Learners are safe and feel safe. ALM staff place a high emphasis on learners maintaining high standards of health and safety in the workplace. Learners are able to explain relevant safety procedures well and know how to report concerns should they arise.
- Learners receive good initial and ongoing information, advice and guidance to ensure that they are able to make informed decisions about joining the study programme and their next steps. Nearly all current learners are already focused well on opportunities to progress into full-time employment in warehousing.
- Learners have a good understanding of the dangers of radicalism and extreme views. They complete online training and are able to discuss relevant points confidently, drawing on recent topical examples. Learners have a good understanding of how to keep safe when online.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Learners make good progress from often low starting points. The large majority of learners complete their programmes and achieve their qualifications on time. The proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications has increased significantly since the previous inspection.
- Learners acquire a range of skills, knowledge and additional qualifications on the study programme, which enable them to move forward and progress towards further education and employment. Learners become competent and confident forklift truck drivers and become qualified to apply these skills within the logistics industry.
- The standard of learners' work meets the needs of the qualification that they are taking. Trainers ensure that learners reach high standards in their practical skills and adhere strictly to the exacting requirements for safe working practices when working in warehouses. The majority of learners also achieve valuable health and safety certification that allows them to drive forklift trucks on building sites.
- Learners with low prior achievement make significant improvements in their skills in English and mathematics, and they make considerable gains in confidence in communicating. A high proportion of learners pass qualifications in these subjects.
- There are no discernible gaps in the achievement of different groups. Those learners identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well and achieve their qualifications on time.
- Learners are well prepared for their next steps and, as a result, the majority of learners progress on to employment or further education and training.

Provider details

Unique reference number	59201
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16–18
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	14
Principal/CEO	Darren Coleman
Telephone number	01375 489738
Website	www.almtrainingservices.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 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
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 quality manager, 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, and telephone calls to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, and assessments. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

Roger Pilgrim, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Masterson	Ofsted Inspector

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