

# Penshaw View Training Limited

Monitoring visit report

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<b>Type of provider:</b>	Independent learning provider
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# Monitoring visit: main findings

## Context and focus of visit

This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of a series of monitoring visits to a sample of new apprenticeship training providers that are funded through the apprenticeship levy. Ofsted's intention to carry out monitoring visits to these new providers was first announced by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in November 2017. The focus of these visits is on the three themes set out below.

Penshaw View Training Limited (Penshaw) was established in 2011 as a privately owned independent learning provider. It has delivered apprenticeships and employability training courses as a subcontractor for other providers since it was established. In May 2017, it secured a contract to deliver levy-funded apprenticeships, and, in January 2018, received a contract to deliver non-levy funded apprenticeships.

At the time of the monitoring visit, Penshaw had 66 apprentices enrolled on programmes of whom 38 were on standards-based programmes. These included the customer service practitioner standard at level 2, the retail team leader standard at level 3, and the safety, health and environmental technician standard at level 3. The 28 apprentices on framework programmes were on business administration at levels 2 and 3, customer service at level 3, and retail at levels 2 and 3.

## Themes

### How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

### Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have developed an apprenticeship programme that meets the demands of employers in the wholesale and retail sectors across the north of England. Penshaw is becoming recognised by employers as a specialist provider of the new safety, health and environmental technician standards-based apprenticeship. Leaders and managers have grown their provision slowly and sensibly to enable them to retain control over the quality of their delivery.

Leaders and managers have recruited assessors and trainers who have extensive experience of working in the vocational areas in which they deliver, many of them at a high managerial level. This ensures that assessors and trainers have a current working knowledge of the sectors in which the apprentices who they support are employed and ensures that they have credibility with employers. Leaders and managers have invested in a highly qualified lead tutor for English and mathematics to support assessors and trainers in the delivery of these subjects, resulting in high first-time pass rates for apprentices taking their functional skills tests. Leaders and managers have developed a new strategy to develop further the English and

mathematical skills of apprentices who are exempt from the need to take functional skills qualifications, but it is too early to see an impact.

Leaders and managers monitor the progress of apprentices effectively. Three of the four company directors hold operational roles within the organisation. This gives them a close understanding of the progress that each apprentice is making and enables them to intervene quickly when an apprentice's progress is not on track.

Leaders and managers have effective systems in place to manage the performance of assessors, including those who are delivering at some considerable distance from the provider's base. As a result, the great majority of current apprentices are making the expected progress. The small number of apprentices who completed their programmes in 2017/18 did so within their planned timescales.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the quality of the provision from the information that they gather from a set of effective quality assurance arrangements. Observations of teaching, learning and assessment identify clear improvement actions for assessors, which managers ensure are implemented within reasonable timescales. Leaders and managers enable their assessors to improve their practice through a well-designed programme of professional development.

Leaders and managers work effectively with employers to ensure that all apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job training. However, they recognise that they need to improve the consistency of the way that assessors and apprentices record the length and nature of off-the-job training to ensure that it is carried out at a consistently high standard.

### **What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? Reasonable progress**

Assessors provide high-quality information, advice and guidance to apprentices at the start of their courses so that apprentices are aware of the requirements of the programme and the career pathways that are available to them. Assessors ensure that employers are actively involved in choosing relevant and challenging optional specialisms so that the curriculum is matched effectively to the needs of the employer and to prepare the apprentice for their job role. For example, one large wholesale company in the north west of England requested that all its retail apprentices took additional qualifications in food safety as part of their programme.

Assessors identify the knowledge and skills that apprentices have at the start of their programmes through interviews, discussions with their line managers, and formal assessments of their English and mathematical skills. They use this information effectively to plan and deliver individual learning programmes, with more experienced apprentices being given the opportunity to complete their programmes

more quickly than those with less experience. However, assessors for the new standards-based programmes do not routinely record these starting points in apprentices' individual learning plans.

Apprentices benefit from regular and effective off-the-job training delivered in group sessions or on a one-to-one basis in employers' designated training rooms or in a suitable place away from the immediate work area. Apprentices' levels of attendance and punctuality at planned training sessions are high.

Assessors work with employers to ensure that the off-the-job training equips apprentices with the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they require in their job roles. Apprentices apply their learning quickly and effectively at work. For example, managers on the standards-based retail programme at level 3 develop an understanding of how brands drive sales and, therefore, why they should promote them more vigorously in their stores.

Assessors review apprentices' progress effectively. They use regular reviews to ensure that apprentices understand how well they are doing and what they need to do if they want to achieve more than a pass at their end-point assessments. Assessors use their experience effectively to provide informative and helpful feedback on submitted assignments and projects that enable apprentices to understand where further improvements are required.

Assessors provide targeted support to improve apprentices' English and mathematical skills. They coach apprentices on their speaking skills to boost their confidence, and they highlight corrections on written work so apprentices do not repeat errors. However, assessors do not extend sufficiently the English and mathematical skills of the apprentices who have already achieved their functional skills qualifications.

### **How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have developed effective policies and procedures to ensure that apprentices and staff are safe.

All staff recruited by the provider go through extensive checks before they are employed, including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. The designated safeguarding officer is trained to the right level to fulfil his functions. Leaders and managers ensure that staff, irrespective of their role, complete mandatory training on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty, supplemented by regular refresher training.

Apprentices understand how to report safeguarding concerns, with the great majority being able to identify the designated safeguarding officer as their point of contact.

The procedure for reporting incidents is well established, having been used for the provider's other contracts, but it has not yet been tested on its directly delivered apprenticeship provision.

Assessors are skilled at reinforcing apprentices' understanding of safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty at regular reviews. As a result, the great majority of apprentices can speak knowledgeably and confidently about the risks of radicalisation and extremism and how they might relate to their job role.

Leaders and managers place a high priority on staying safe online. They ensure that apprentices receive effective training to enhance their understanding of the need to protect themselves from potential dangers associated with the use of the internet and social networking. All staff have been trained extensively on the new regulations on data protection and how this applies to their work.

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