

Qualitrain Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1276415

Name of lead inspector: Nigel Bragg, Her Majesty's Inspector

Inspection date(s): 26–27 September 2018

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: The Genesis Business Centre
Kings Street
Alfreton
DE55 7DQ



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.

Qualitrain Limited (Qualitrain) began delivering vocational training by means of apprenticeships in May 2011. The company started training apprentices using levy funding in June 2017. This levy-funded provision was in scope for the monitoring visit.

Qualitrain currently delivers training to 332 apprentices, of which 34 follow standards-based improvement technician, improvement practitioner, engineering technician, lead adult care worker or adult care worker programmes. Standards-based apprenticeships are offered at levels 2, 3 and 4. All standards-based apprenticeships are funded through the employer levy. The remaining apprentices are enrolled on framework apprenticeships in either business administration or performing manufacturing operations at level 2 and business improvement techniques or fabrication and welding at levels 2 or 3. Training is also provided in residential childcare at level 3 and leadership for health and social care at level 5.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Senior leaders have set and communicated clear strategic objectives to address employers' skills development needs using apprenticeships. They have been careful to work only with employment sectors where they have relevant experience and capacity to provide good-quality training. Consequently, Qualitrain primarily delivers training within the fields of improvement techniques and industrial manufacturing processes.

Leaders and managers have established training programmes that satisfy apprenticeship requirements. Although apprentices are established employees, managers ensure that they pursue programmes that successfully develop new skills, knowledge and behaviours. Consequently, apprentices become more effective in their roles, take on additional responsibility and make a valuable contribution to their workplace.

The senior management team have invested significantly in premises to allow for the expansion and improvement of training facilities in Derby. Managers have recruited additional staff to bolster effectively the individual support and specialist-training which apprentices receive. In addition, senior managers have deployed training resources well to develop the professional competence of all staff. Trainer-assessors are suitably qualified and demonstrate the application of appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil their roles. Apprentices use high-quality learning resources to support their achievement. This effectively aids their development.

Leaders and managers have a sound appreciation of standards-apprenticeships and apprentices' entitlement to on- and off-the-job training. Most apprentices receive their full entitlement to off-the-job training. Managers recognise that the measures to check the quantity of hours apprentices participate in sessions are overly complex and bureaucratic. The arrangements can result in delays to managers' identification of failures in planned attendance when compared to individual apprentices' targets. Consequently, managers are not always able to respond rapidly enough to resolve situations where attendance shortfalls are evident. A small minority of health and social care apprentices fail to distinguish clearly between the training completed in work and non-work time.

Leaders and managers have forged very productive working relationships with employers. The senior management team only sanction working with employers who commit fully to the requirements of the apprenticeship, including releasing apprentices to undertake off-the-job training within working hours. Senior managers ensure that workplace managers have a sound understanding of the apprenticeship programme and their role in training delivery. For example, tutor-assessors and workplace managers appropriately support apprentices to undertake activities that effectively prepare them for the end-point assessment.

Senior leaders and managers have developed and implemented adequate quality-assurance processes. They successfully use these arrangements to identify and share best practice to improve training quality. Internal audit procedures effectively contribute to raising standards. Managers directly observe key training activities to judge their quality. However, observers of taught sessions place insufficient emphasis on the evaluation of the quality of learning and assessment experienced by apprentices. Observers do not record all improvement action points for trainer-assessors in sufficient detail or include time-constrained targets. This limits the efficacy of observations in swiftly improving session quality. The establishment of formal performance appraisal for all staff is at an early stage. Consequently, managers have yet to exploit fully the outcomes of quality assurance practices to enhance training quality.

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**

Trainer-assessors are well qualified, particularly so in the largest vocational areas of metal fabrication, welding and heavy steel works. Most trainer-assessors have many years' experience in the industrial sector in which they train. Trainer-assessors are enthusiastic about their subject and are ambitious for apprentices. All trainer-assessors convey this effectively when they visit apprentices in the workplace to carry out training and assessment sessions. Trainer-assessors use their skills and knowledge well to engage apprentices in learning and motivate them to gain new skills, knowledge and behaviours.

Trainer-assessors plan and deliver off-the-job training well. For example, trainer-assessors work closely with employers to structure and deliver company projects for apprentices following business improvement techniques programmes. Apprentices work diligently on a range of projects to identify waste, duplication and cost savings in a company's production and manufacturing processes. As a result, apprentices have implemented a range of actions to production processes, ensuring improvement in their efficiency and effectiveness. Trainer-assessors adeptly support apprentices to use the outcomes from these projects to meet programme requirements. This facilitates well apprentices' progress and success.

Most apprentices develop occupationally specific skills, knowledge and behaviours at an appropriately rapid rate. As a result, they can carry out their work roles more effectively. For example, business improvement apprentices report an increased awareness of the challenges faced by colleagues. This has engendered improved communications and joint working, resulting in improved production and manufacturing processes.

Line managers and tutor-assessors liaise effectively so that prospective apprentices enrol on programmes voluntarily. Trainer-assessors collaborate successfully with employers to provide coherently designed apprenticeships that meet the needs of the steel and health and social care sector. On- and-off-the-job training is suitably coordinated and promotes successfully apprentices' success. Apprentices make the expected or better progress from their starting points and are on target to achieve within the programmes' planned duration.

Arrangements for careers information, advice and guidance are adequate. Trainer-assessors provide apprentices with impartial guidance on the range of career pathways available following apprenticeship completion. In addition, trainer-assessors work well with employers to ensure that apprentices are aware of the commitment required to succeed. Most learners want to remain with their existing employer at the end of their apprenticeship. A good proportion of apprentices advance their careers through further study. Managers acknowledge the need to

capture fully the subsequent career destination of apprentices who complete their programme to inform programme evaluation.

Apprentices recognise the good progress they make in improving their English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) skills over the course of their studies. Mathematics skills development and application to engineering principles is particularly strong. English, mathematics and ICT functional skills examination pass rates at first sitting are very high. A high proportion of apprentices study towards a level of English and/or mathematics that is above the programme requirements.

Trainer-assessors mark accurately apprentices completed work. However, the quality of written feedback apprentices receive from trainer-assessors requires improvement. Trainer-assessors do not consistently provide sufficient guidance on what apprentices have done well and how they could improve further. For a small minority of apprentices, feedback received is too brief and fails to challenge them to reach their potential.

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

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and managers have a good awareness of their safeguarding duty. They have established and implemented effective safeguarding processes. This has contributed to an appropriately caring and supportive culture that protects apprentices. Consequently, apprentices report feeling safe while participating in training and at the workplace.

Apprentices generally have an adequate understanding of fundamental British values. They know how to protect themselves from the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. Most can explain how they would apply their learning and therefore respond appropriately to situations they may encounter. Apprentices demonstrate an adequate understanding of how to stay safe when using social media and internet-based activities. It is too early to judge the impact of improvement initiatives to raise further apprentices' awareness of fundamental British values, the 'Prevent' duty and e-safety.

All staff undertake a wide range of pertinent update training that raises their professional competence to safeguard apprentices. They are conversant with relevant legislation and the safeguarding referral processes should a concern be identified. Managers have established relevant referral links with external specialist agencies and safeguarding bodies to support apprentices. A suitably trained and experienced designated safeguarding officer is in post. In the rare cases where safeguarding instances occur, the officer maintains appropriately detailed records and responds rapidly and effectively.

Leaders and managers ensure that all staff are subject to pertinent pre-employment checks and vetting procedures before their employment begins.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Learner View

Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too. To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

Employer View

Employer View is a website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too. To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018