

LD Training Services Limited

Independent Learning Provider

Inspection dates

20–23 November 2018

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement	Adult learning programmes	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement	Apprenticeships	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement		
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected	

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not identified accurately the weaknesses in the business level 3 and functional skills English and mathematics adult learning courses.
- Leaders and managers do not focus sufficiently on developing the English writing and speaking skills for those learners who speak English as a second language.
- Too few adult learners on courses in business, health and social care and childcare achieve their qualifications within the planned time.
- Tutors and assessors do not use the information they have about adult learners' prior skills and knowledge effectively to plan and teach individualised programmes that meet learners' needs.
- Too many adult learners complete functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics at too low a level. They achieve but do not learn new skills.
- On adult courses in business, warehousing and food and beverage services, tutors and assessors do not provide good enough feedback to learners on their work so that they know how to improve.

The provider has the following strengths

- Training on apprenticeship programmes is good and most apprentices produce work to a high standard.
- Assessors give apprentices on fenestration frameworks at level 2, very effective support to develop their glazing skills. Apprentices quickly make a positive contribution to their employers' business and make good progress.
- Leaders and managers develop good partnerships with employers in care, catering and warehousing. They work well to ensure that the curriculum is very responsive to their needs.
- The vast majority of adult learners move on to further or higher education and remain in or gain employment after they complete their qualifications.
- Managers have designed courses effectively so that adult learners attend weekend training sessions and gain qualifications while maintaining full-time employment.

Full report

Information about the provider

- LD Training Services Ltd (LDT), established in 2009, is an independent training provider based in Edgware, Middlesex. LDT offers adult learning programmes in mathematics, English, health and social care, childcare, business, warehousing and food and beverage services. It also has apprenticeships in fenestration at level 2, business administration level 2 and health and social care level 3. Originally a subcontractor for apprenticeship programmes, LDT gained its own funded contracts in 2016/17.
- LDT offers training in a variety of local community centres across London, Manchester and Birmingham and on employers' premises. At the time of this inspection, there were 25 apprentices on programme, the vast majority on fenestration. There were approximately 450 adult learners. All learners and apprentices were aged 18 and over.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers must implement their quality assurance activities at the start of new courses in business and functional skills English and mathematics, so that they identify quickly the areas for improvement and intervene when necessary.
- Improve the English speaking and writing skills of all learners, including those with English as a second language, to help them make good progress and achieve their qualifications in the planned time, by:
 - reviewing and improving the assessment methods used to identify learners' and apprentices' prior skills in these areas
 - implementing an effective policy to promote and develop learners' and apprentices' English skills
 - supporting and training vocational tutors and assessors to develop their skills and confidence in checking learners' and apprentices' prior skills in English and agreeing the required actions to support learners and apprentices to improve.
- Tutors and assessors on adult learning programmes should make better use of information gained, prior to the start of the course, on the skills and experiences that learners have, to ensure that they teach individual programmes that meet the needs of all learners and support learners to achieve their qualifications in the planned time.
- Leaders and managers need to ensure that adult learners on functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics study at an appropriate level.
- Tutors and assessors should ensure that they give learners specific feedback on their work so that learners know how to improve and how to aim for high grades.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not been successful in ensuring that all adult learners experience the same good-quality provision as their apprentices. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment for too many adult learners, which forms the large majority of the provision, requires improvement.
- Leaders and managers do not correctly identify all the areas for improvement in the adult learning programmes. They carry out a wide range of activities to evaluate their quality, but they have been too slow to evaluate the current courses in business at level 3 and functional skills in English and mathematics. As a result, they have not identified the weaknesses in these courses.
- Leaders and managers have not placed sufficient priority on developing adult learners' English and mathematics skills. A large proportion of learners speak English as a second language and the arrangements to identify their individual needs require improvement. As a result, learners do not improve their speaking and writing skills or their mathematical skills to support them in their vocational learning.
- Leaders and managers have a clear and ambitious vision to provide opportunities for learners and apprentices, many from disadvantaged backgrounds, to achieve qualifications and to secure employment. They communicate this clearly to staff and employers, who enthuse about their work, and support leaders and managers to establish a very inclusive and welcoming learning environment.
- Leaders, managers and staff develop very good partnerships with local employers. They ensure that their courses meet employers' needs and secure employment for learners and apprentices. Many of the employers who work with LDT to train their staff do so because of its adaptable approach to training, and the frequent support offered by assessors.
- Leaders, managers and staff plan the timing of training effectively to meet the needs and circumstances of adult learners, apprentices and employers. For example, they offer timetabled classes at the weekends, and small-group sessions at employers' premises.
- Tutors and assessors are well qualified and experienced in their occupational area and in teaching and assessing. Staff attend frequent updates and professional development sessions to keep up with current trends. Apprenticeship assessors in fenestration continue to work in the industry and use their knowledge particularly well to support apprentices.
- Leaders and managers use performance management effectively to hold staff to account for their performance. In instances when staff have not made the necessary improvements, leaders implement their capability process and staff move on when appropriate. Leaders have high expectations of their staff and set sufficient improvement targets. However, leaders and managers do not make sure that all staff supporting the business course perform to the high standard expected of them.

The governance of the provider

- The oversight, support and challenge that the advisory group provide to leaders and managers is broadly effective. Group members have an appropriate set of skills and

experiences to support and challenge leaders and managers on the quality of programmes and the improvements leaders have identified. However, because leaders have not identified all the areas for improvements, including the priority to develop adult learners' English and mathematics skills, the group have not sufficiently challenged leaders and managers in these areas.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and managers have ensured that staff have appropriate training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. The designated safeguarding officer is suitably trained and knowledgeable, and clear processes are in place to report safeguarding issues.
- Leaders and managers have suitable arrangements to identify and support vulnerable adults. They carry out appropriate checks on tutors and assessors before recruitment and keep detailed records.
- Tutors and assessors have a clear understanding of how to keep adult learners and apprentices safe at work, such as when working with vulnerable clients in health and social care, and on construction sites in fenestration.
- Adult learners and apprentices feel safe and know whom to contact if they have any concerns. Learners and apprentices receive safeguarding training and information at induction and during progress reviews. They have a reasonable understanding of the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment on the different adult programmes is not consistently good. Adult learners on functional skills courses in English and mathematics, business level 3 and warehousing do not make strong progress. Too often tutors and assessors do not support adult learners sufficiently to produce enough of their own work, and too many learners rely on others in their groups to answer questions.
- Staff are not skilled enough at identifying adult learners' prior attainment and their English skills. They do not know how well learners, particularly those for whom English is a second language, write or understand spoken English. Too often these learners struggle to complete their written assignment work.
- Tutors and assessors do not use the information they have about adult learners' prior skills and knowledge effectively to plan and teach individualised programmes that meet learners' needs. As a result, learners on level 3 business courses all work towards completing their programme in the same timeframe, despite many needing extra help to understand the topics. Tutors do not have a clear view on which learners completing functional skills in English and mathematics could make more rapid progress.
- On business, warehousing and catering courses, tutors and assessors are too slow in providing feedback on the quality of adult learners' work, or their feedback does not help learners understand how to improve. Tutors and assessors do not give adult learners information on how to achieve high grades. Assessors supporting the apprenticeship programme give apprentices clear feedback that helps them to make good progress.

- The majority of adult learners and apprentices enjoy their learning and feel they receive good support. Tutors and assessors use workshops and one-to-one sessions effectively to develop learners' and apprentices' technical skills and knowledge. They also build their confidence in working in groups. For example, adult learners on functional skills courses share their learning experience and knowledge confidently with each other.
- Apprentices benefit and learn from very experienced vocational assessors. Assessors use their knowledge effectively to help apprentices develop good technical skills and understanding.
- On catering, health and social care, and apprenticeship programmes, assessors use effective assessment methods to check learners' and apprentices' progress and understanding. Assessors use questioning successfully to confirm their apprentices and learners have a deep understanding of topics. Apprentices consolidate their learning during frequent progress reviews with their assessor and employer.
- In health and social care, assessors support learners effectively to select optional units that challenge them to learn new topics. Assessors ensure that learners keep up to date with issues in the care sector. For example, health and social care learners study extra units on mental health care and capacity.
- Tutors and assessors use a wide range of activities to promote health and safety at work to adult learners and apprentices. Learners on health and social care and childcare courses learn how to prevent cross-infection by wearing aprons and gloves. Apprentices on fenestration frameworks have a good understanding of how to work safely on construction sites and use tools correctly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

- Tutors and assessors on adult learning programmes do not support learners sufficiently to develop their English skills. The large number of adult learners speak English as a second language. Staff pay insufficient attention to this when setting and marking learners' work. As a result, learners do not improve their writing skills. In business level 3, too many learners struggle with their verbal communication.
- Unemployed adult learners on business and functional skills courses, do not benefit from work-related activities, including work experience, to support them to develop essential skills needed in the workplace and understand the choices available to them.
- Leaders' and managers' approach to ensuring that learners understand issues relating to their own health and well-being is underdeveloped. Learners and apprentices do not access the online 'learning wall' that promotes these topics frequently enough. Learners' and apprentices' knowledge of these topics is vague.
- Most adult learners and apprentices attend their sessions when expected and do so on time. However, when adult learners arrive late to their sessions, tutors do not always challenge them. Leaders and managers monitor attendance at teaching sessions, but do not check if there are trends of poor attendance or punctuality by certain groups.
- Tutors and assessors give the majority of learners and apprentices sufficiently detailed information, advice and guidance throughout their programme. Apprentices have a good understanding of the options available to them, when they complete their programme. Adult learners on health and social care, food and beverage services, childcare and warehousing courses know the potential progression routes available to them.

- Assessors support apprentices sufficiently to develop their skills in mathematics in relation to their job roles and subject of study. However, for adult learners on vocational courses, the focus by tutors to support learners to improve these skills is insufficient.
- Tutors and assessors quickly increase learners' and apprentices' confidence. They support the majority of them effectively to develop the appropriate skills needed in their chosen careers. In health and social care, learners develop their communication skills when dealing with clients. In warehousing, learners understand well the importance of avoiding conflict at work, which could put employees at risk.
- The majority of learners and apprentices engage enthusiastically in their sessions. They enjoy working together in their diverse groups and show respect to each other and their tutors and assessors.
- Learners and apprentices have an adequate understanding of British values and what it means to be a British citizen. Assessors and tutors promote British values through the discussions they have with learners and apprentices during their induction and in their progress reviews.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- In 2017/18 the vast majority of adult learners on courses in business, health and social care and child care did not achieve their qualifications within the planned time. The majority of learners achieved their qualifications in business. However, due to poor planning of the external verification, the achievement of these qualifications was severely delayed.
- In 2017/18 the vast majority of adult learners achieved their entry level functional skills qualifications, at the first attempt, in English and mathematics. However, too many adult learners are enrolled on courses that are too easy for them relative to the skills they already have. As a result, learners achieve, at a comparatively low level, but do not gain new skills.
- The vast majority of adult learners on entry level functional skills courses go on to study at the next level. However, tutors do not support them well enough and too many learners do not achieve these qualifications at levels 1 and 2.
- The proportion of adult learners who achieved national vocational qualifications in health and social care and in childcare was also too low. The majority of adult learners currently on courses in business at level 3 make slow progress.
- LDT have not had any apprentices due to achieve their qualifications since they started to offer direct programmes. The majority of apprentices on level 2 fenestration frameworks make good progress. They develop good glazing skills that they need to help them progress in their workplace. For example, they learn quickly how to fit bi-fold doors into domestic properties, and how to remove and replace glass in bay windows.
- In 2017/18, a high proportion of adult learners went on to further or higher education, and remained in, or gained, employment after they completed their qualifications.
- Leaders and managers pay sufficient attention to the achievements of different groups of learners. The achievement gaps between learners from different ethnic backgrounds are insignificant. Leaders have rightly identified that females achieved at a lower rate than males as a result of the low achievement in health and social care qualifications last year.

Types of provision

Adult learning programmes

Requires improvement

- At the time of the inspection, approximately 450 adult learners are on a variety of courses. Around half of these are on functional skills courses in English and mathematics, 91 are on advanced learner loans level 3 business courses, 43 are completing level 2 diplomas in care, and 32 are taking level 2 diplomas in food and beverage services. A small number of learners are on level 2 courses in business administration, warehousing and childcare.
- Leaders, managers and tutors do not ensure that courses in business and functional skills English and mathematics build on learners' prior attainment or take account of learners' abilities. Too many learners on business level 3 courses make slow progress as they do not have the required English speaking and writing skills to support them in completing their assignments. Too often learners completing functional skills qualifications are on courses that are too easy for them.
- In business level 3 courses, tutors and assessors do not support learners sufficiently to develop the personal, social and work-related skills needed in the sector. Staff have not developed strong partnerships with employers in this area. Consequently, learners on the business programme do not have the opportunity to take part in work experience or work-related activities and projects to help them gain a good understanding of business.
- The quality of adult learners' work is not consistently high. In health and social care, learners' work is good. It shows that learners understand how legislation and regulations impact on care routines and care plans for clients. However, in business, and in functional skills English and mathematics at levels 1 and 2, the standard of learners' work requires improvement.
- Staff work closely with employers in health and social care, childcare, warehousing, and food and beverage services to offer a flexible solution to their training needs. Employers value highly the relationship they have with LDT. They appreciate the frequency of visits and the support their staff receive to help them make good progress.

Apprenticeships

Good

- At the time of the inspection, 21 apprentices are on fenestration level 2 frameworks, 3 are on health and adult care level 3 standards and 1 on the business administration level 2 framework.
- Leaders, managers and assessors plan and manage the apprenticeship programme successfully. They have developed very good partnerships with employers. Through these partnerships they ensure that apprentices receive appropriate and effective off-the-job training. Apprentices complete off-the-job training in a variety of ways, including group and one-to-one sessions, online learning and research, and work shadowing.
- Assessors work closely with employers to plan and agree the specific and individualised learning that apprentices complete. The off-the-job training links well to the on-the-job activities. Consequently, apprentices make good progress. Employers quickly see the impact to their businesses, as apprentices become more independent and tackle more difficult tasks. Apprentices produce practical work of a high standard.

- Assessors give apprentices good support to develop the appropriate mathematical skills needed in their job roles. For example, apprentices on fenestration frameworks successfully use Pythagoras' theorem when measuring glass for sash windows and confidently convert imperial measurements to metric ones.
- Apprentices enjoy frequent face-to-face and remote contact with their assessors. Progress reviews help apprentices to understand the progress they make and what they need to do to complete their programme. The majority of apprentices know when they will take their functional skills examinations and feel well prepared for them.
- For a very small minority of apprentices employed in the glazing industry for many years, the apprenticeship programme is inappropriate. These apprentices deepen their knowledge regarding health and safety, but they do not develop substantial new knowledge and skills.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1237124
Type of provider	Individual learning provider
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	350
Principal/CEO	Linda Johnson
Telephone number	020 7998 3655
Website	www.ldtraining.org.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	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	–	210	–	145	–	95	–	–
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	–	21	–	4	–	–	–	–
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 and compliance 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, 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

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Francoise Beregovo	Ofsted Inspector
Marinette Bazin	Ofsted Inspector

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