

# Ensis Solutions Limited

Independent learning provider

**Inspection dates**

22–24 July 2019

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

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders, managers and staff do not use data and information well enough to identify priorities to improve the provision.
- The proportion of apprentices who achieve their apprenticeship is too low because too many leave their course early.
- Tutors do not give sufficient clear and detailed feedback to apprentices to help them improve.
- Tutors do not set challenging enough targets for apprentices. They do not routinely check the achievement of targets set. Consequently, a few apprentices do not develop significant new skills.
- Too few employers take part in the planning of apprentices' programmes and in reviewing the progress of their apprentices. As a result, a small minority of apprentices do not make the progress of which they are capable.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Apprentices have a good understanding of the importance of equality in their workplaces and everyday lives.
- Most apprentices develop a good understanding of safeguarding and the risks posed by radicalisation and extremism.
- Apprentices develop good work-related behaviours. Many gain increased responsibilities and add value to employers' businesses.
- Most apprentices achieve their English and mathematics qualifications at the first attempt.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Ensis Solutions Limited is based in the Leigh South ward of Wigan, Greater Manchester. Currently, 104 apprentices study on programmes at levels 2, 3 and 5. Almost all of these are on standards-based apprenticeships in management and leadership, customer service and business administration. A very small number are on frameworks in business administration and customer service. Almost all apprentices are over 19 years of age.

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

- Increase the proportion of apprentices who complete their programmes on time by:
  - using the information collected about apprentices' existing skills and knowledge to plan challenging individual programmes
  - ensuring that tutors give apprentices specific and helpful feedback on their work that helps apprentices to develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours more rapidly
  - involving employers in the planning of apprentices' programmes, in the reviewing of their apprentices' progress and in setting apprentices clear and challenging targets so that they make the progress of which they are capable in relation to their starting points.
- Ensure that leaders:
  - implement a rigorous self-assessment process that clearly identifies the improvements needed and measures the progress made in improving the quality of the provision
  - put in place effective arrangements for observations of teaching, learning and assessment that focus on learners and the quality of their learning
  - provide the training required by individual tutors to improve their teaching skills
  - monitor the progress of different groups of apprentices, so that they can identify any groups who do not progress as well as others
  - improve apprentices' awareness of further learning and career opportunities by providing good-quality advice and guidance throughout apprentices' programmes.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

- Leaders and managers have a broad oversight of the quality of the provision. However, they do not evaluate sufficiently well key aspects, such as the effectiveness of governance or quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Quality improvement arrangements require further development. However, the self-assessment report is too descriptive. It does not focus sufficiently on the impact of the provision on apprentices. Too many actions in the quality improvement plan, which was identified as a weakness at the previous monitoring visit, lack detail and measurable targets. Consequently, leaders are not able to evaluate sufficiently the impact of actions on improving the quality of provision.
- Leaders and managers do not ensure that they, or their staff, use their data reports and systems well enough. As a result, too many apprentices make slow progress.
- Current apprentices do not benefit from sufficient impartial advice and guidance. This results in a minority of apprentices being placed on inappropriate courses. Senior managers have worked with employers to improve the effectiveness of recruitment and induction. This will allow apprentices and their managers to understand fully what their programme involves. Due to the restriction on recruitment, this new process is not yet in place.
- Senior leaders have been too slow to improve the performance of staff. They have recently applied performance management processes so that underperforming staff either improve or leave the business. Leaders and managers rightly acknowledge that performance management of staff requires strengthening.
- Leaders and managers have established good relationships with employers. They strive to understand the needs of employers. Managers and employers agree, for nearly all apprentices, the most appropriate apprenticeship and additional qualifications. Together, they ensure that they meet the principles of apprenticeship programmes.
- Observations of teaching, learning and assessment do not focus enough on the impact of teaching and learning. Observers are overly positive. They do not routinely identify or record weaknesses to help tutors improve their teaching practice. Consequently, leaders do not have an accurate view of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

### The governance of the provider

- Governance arrangements are effective. Senior leaders recently established a non-executive board. Directors now hold senior leaders to account in improving the quality of provision. Senior leaders report to the board regularly on the progress of apprentices. However, the quality of reports on the performance of learners in terms of achievement, attendance and retention require improvement.

### Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- Senior managers ensure that comprehensive and effective policies, procedures and checks are in place. Managers check that staff, including those newly recruited, are safe to work with apprentices.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) receives the appropriate level of training. All staff undertake appropriate training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. As a result, they support apprentices confidently and make any necessary referrals to the DSL. The DSL follows up apprentices' concerns swiftly. They record any safeguarding-related cases accurately.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good. Most tutors use apprentices' starting points to plan appropriate individual learning. Consequently, a minority of apprentices do not know what they need to do to develop further their knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Tutors do not inform apprentices routinely about what they need to do to improve. Feedback by tutors during reviews of apprentices' progress is too positive and insufficiently developmental. Tutors do not regularly identify gaps in apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Tutors have recently placed a high priority on developing apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. Apprentices successfully put into practice what they have learned in their tutorials and off-the-job training. For example, apprentices manage different teams skilfully. Consequently, more apprentices than at the previous monitoring visit gain new knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Tutors are suitably qualified. Managers and tutors have created an extensive range of high-quality resources. These include sector subject, functional skills, safeguarding and health and well-being materials. However, managers do not know how well apprentices use these.
- Tutors provide effective support to apprentices. They visit regularly to review apprentices' progress and set targets. However, tutors do not follow up targets consistently. Too few employers plan apprentices' programmes or take part in progress reviews. As a result, a small minority of apprentices make slow progress.
- Managers and tutors ensure that apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job training. However, tutors do not ensure that apprentices routinely record their learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

- Too many apprentices do not receive sufficient information throughout their programme about further learning and long-term career opportunities. Apprentices receive information on possible progression routes at the start of their programme.
- Tutors do not set challenging enough targets for apprentices. This is particularly the case for apprentices who have been in their current job role for a significant period of time. As a result, a few apprentices do not develop significant new skills.
- Apprentices have a narrow understanding of British values. They recognise the

importance of mutual respect but are less familiar with other values. Tutors ask cursory questions and do not probe apprentices' understanding well enough. As a result, apprentices do not improve their understanding.

- Apprentices feel safe and are safe in their work environments. Most apprentices have a good knowledge of safeguarding and the risks posed by radicalisation and extremism. For example, a small number of apprentices who work at airports understand how their work environment could be vulnerable to terrorist attacks.
- Tutors routinely develop apprentices' understanding of equality issues at work and in their everyday lives. For example, apprentices communicate confidently with overseas customers who speak a foreign language. As a result, they manage skilfully to resolve customer complaints.
- A small number of apprentices benefit from additional training. They gain extra responsibilities at work. For example, a few apprentices become the first aid appointed person.
- Attendance is high. Managers carefully check the attendance of apprentices at training and in their workplaces. They immediately raise any concerns with the employer.
- Apprentices develop good work-related behaviours. For example, apprentices develop their communication skills and confidence through speaking to clients. Consequently, apprentices add value to their employer's business.

### Outcomes for learners

### Requires improvement

- At the time of the previous monitoring visit, too many apprentices were making slow progress towards achieving their qualifications. Leaders and managers implemented a range of improvement actions, which are now starting to have an impact. As a result, the majority of current apprentices are now making expected progress for the current stage of their programme.
- The proportion of apprentices who achieve their qualification is too low. Too many apprentices leave their course early. This is particularly the case for the level 3 team leading/supervisor apprenticeship.
- Leaders prioritise the development of apprentices' English and mathematics skills. As a result, most apprentices achieve their English and mathematics qualifications at the first attempt.
- The standard of work that most apprentices produce is appropriate to their level of study.
- Leaders and managers recently implemented a process to collect apprentices' destination data. However, this has not yet led to improvements.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	1276475
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	180
CEOs	Stuart Crosby and Mike Gregory
Telephone number	01942 265859
Website	<a href="http://www.ensissolutions.co.uk">www.ensissolutions.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)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	1	25	–	69	–	9		
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 head of curriculum and quality, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous monitoring visit 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

Kim Bleasdale, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jackie Moores	Ofsted Inspector
Andrea Machell	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rachael Hennigan	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Ingle	Ofsted Inspector

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