

# The Training Brokers Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 1270882

**Name of lead inspector:** Ken Fisher Ofsted Inspector

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**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** Wesley House  
24 Wesley Street  
Sinton  
Manchester  
M27 6AD



## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

From March 2019, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of adult learning provision which began to be funded from August 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the *Further education and skills inspection handbook*, especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly funded to deliver adult learning provision' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

The Training Brokers Limited (TTB) received its first publicly funded contract for adult education in August 2017. Since then, 245 learners have enrolled on courses. Courses run for approximately 20 weeks in TTB's learning centre in Swinton and in community venues in Greater Manchester. They range from introductory courses to courses at level 2. Courses include business administration, counselling, mental health awareness, mentoring, preparing to work in adult health and social care, skills for employment, and support work in schools. Most learners are not in employment and those who are receive low wages.

### Themes

<p><b>How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant adult learning provision that has a clearly defined purpose?</b></p>	<p><b>Reasonable progress</b></p>
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Leaders and managers have a clear strategy for delivering employability, vocational and community learning courses. They have a good understanding of employment opportunities and associated skills needs in Greater Manchester. They design courses specifically to enable learners to acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding that employers require.

Leaders target their adult education budget very effectively on learners who are least likely to participate in education and training. Leaders and managers re-engage learners successfully and help them to overcome their barriers to employment. However, they recruit too few male learners.

Leaders and managers work effectively with a range of external organisations. For example, they liaise appropriately with local authorities, Jobcentre Plus and voluntary sector organisations. Leaders and managers identify training needs accurately and follow up learner referrals efficiently. Their awareness of other training provision in Greater Manchester is good.

Leaders and managers have good oversight of learners' progress. They intervene quickly if learners' progress is slower than expected. Their intervention makes a good contribution to most learners completing their courses successfully.

Leaders and managers monitor systematically learners' progression into employment, voluntary work and higher-level courses. They use this information effectively to evaluate the relevance of their curriculum offer. Learners' progression is good.

Members of the advisory board support and challenge senior leaders and managers very effectively. For example, they have given sound advice on data management, the three-year business plan and the implementation and monitoring of the quality improvement plan.

Leaders' and managers' quality improvement arrangements are insufficiently rigorous. They do not have the intended impact of improving the quality of provision rapidly. For example, the self-assessment report is not sufficiently concise and judgemental. The process for observing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment places too little importance on what learners learn and on the progress they make.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aim and/or personal goals?** **Reasonable progress**

Tutors provide effective advice and guidance. They ensure that learners are on the most appropriate course at the correct level. Learners develop substantial personal, social and employability knowledge, skills and understanding. They have a good awareness of their career possibilities and progression routes.

The vast majority of learners who start courses stay to the end. Learners enjoy their studies. They make good progress, achieve their qualifications and become more independent.

Tutors are knowledgeable and experienced in the subjects they teach. They plan lessons effectively to encourage and promote learning. Tutors assess and record learners' progress regularly. They provide good additional learning support when learners need it.

Learners develop high levels of confidence and good subject knowledge. They provide comprehensive answers to written questions. Learners' work shows evidence of good research skills.

Learners are very positive about the value of adult education. Most of them are extremely enthusiastic and recognise how it is helping them to achieve their personal and work-

related goals. For example, several learners who volunteer as support workers in schools want to continue studying and become teachers.

Tutors use a good range of learning activities, including worksheets, workbooks and group discussions. However, the pages in several workbooks are poorly displayed.

Managers do not offer functional skills English and mathematics classes. However, they make appropriate arrangements for learners who require functional skills English and mathematics tuition to attend classes elsewhere. Tutors provide good support to help learners develop mastery of the technical language associated with their subjects and to improve their mathematics.

Feedback to learners on marked work is not specific enough. It does not identify what is good and where learners can make improvements. Tutors' feedback too often does not identify errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar. Consequently, learners repeat errors.

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

Leaders and managers give a high priority to safeguarding learners. The designated safeguarding lead (DSO) and deputy DSO are appropriately qualified.

Leaders follow safe recruitment practices when appointing new staff. They ensure that applicants are eligible to work in the UK. Leaders and managers carry out appropriate background checks to make sure that applicants are suitable to work with adult learners.

Staff, as appropriate, receive Disclosure and Barring Service checks periodically. Tutors receive relevant update training.

Learners are fully aware of the procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns. Most learners have a good understanding of the dangers associated with radicalisation, extremism and social media. They feel safe and are safe.

The DSO deals with safeguarding concerns efficiently. When necessary, the DSO refers learners to external specialist agencies. However, there is a reluctance to close cases when TTB's involvement ends.

No advisory board member has responsibility for monitoring the management of safeguarding.

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Piccadilly Gate  
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M1 2WD

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