

# Real Skills Training Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 1270912

**Name of lead inspector:** Alex Lang, Her Majesty's Inspector

**Inspection date(s):** 7 to 8 August 2019

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** 215 Crosby Road South  
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## 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.

Real Skills Training Ltd is a small specialist training provider delivering courses for the rail industry. It received its first publicly funded contract for adult education in November 2017. Prior to this, the company operated as a subcontractor with five providers. Currently, there are 45 learners on a diploma in rail engineering track maintenance at level 2. Courses run two days per week over an eight-week period. The company also delivers commercial training programmes and operates as a subcontractor with one provider.

### Themes

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant adult learning provision that has a clearly defined purpose?**      **Reasonable progress**

Leaders have a very clear focus for the company. They specialise in training adults for the rail industry. They use their links with partners such as Jobcentre Plus, probationary services and ex-offender referral agencies effectively in order to provide training opportunities for adults who have been away from the workplace for a long time or who face significant barriers to gaining employment.

Leaders work effectively with employers to provide work opportunities in the rail industry. They ensure that their programme meets the needs of the industry. For example, they have introduced additional training and qualifications in using small plant machinery at the request of employers. Additional skills and competences for working near overhead electric cables and personal track safety have also been introduced to enhance learners' knowledge, skills and prospects of employment.

Employers value the skills and work ethos that learners gain from their programme. The training helps employers to meet their staffing needs with skilled and competent employees.

Leaders have appropriate processes to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including frequent lesson observations. They use these to identify development needs promptly in standardisation meetings. For example, leaders have

identified and addressed the need to improve feedback to learners to help them make better progress. However, leaders rightly acknowledge that their self-assessment lacks sufficient rigour and detail to identify accurately all the improvements that they need to make. Improvement actions are not precise enough to enable leaders to measure their impact on the quality of training.

Leaders monitor learners' progress frequently. The proportion of learners who achieve their qualification and move into employment is high. However, leaders do not analyse data sufficiently to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision or to identify further improvements to the programme.

There are no governance arrangements in place to challenge or support leaders.

**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**

Trainers are highly qualified and experienced in the rail industry. Leaders allow trainers to work in the industry to maintain their operational licenses. Trainers use their knowledge of current working practices to plan and deliver courses that develop the skills and behaviours required in the industry. Learners gain valuable hand-tool skills and carry out safe working practices in the well-equipped learning environment.

Trainers know their learners well. They meet the specific needs of learners. For example, they ensure that learners who require additional support have access to computers and overlays. They provide learners with resources to help them work more independently. When learners fall behind, trainers provide individual support to help them catch up quickly.

Trainers provide learners with expert information, advice and guidance about working in the industry. They discuss thoroughly the demands of the programme and learners' career aspirations and personal goals. Consequently, learners are enrolled on to the course appropriately. Learners without the necessary entry requirements are directed to alternative programmes. The vast majority of learners who complete their programme gain employment. Many learners improve their skills when in employment and gain promoted roles in, for example, control of site safety.

Trainers provide useful and encouraging feedback to learners. Consequently, learners know what they need to do to improve their practice. This motivates learners to make the progress of which they are capable.

Learners develop industry-relevant mathematical and English skills. For example, they use feet and chains to measure distances. They use technical language confidently to describe their actions in work and when reporting on safety.

Learners' achievement of rail track maintenance and additional qualifications is high. However, the identification of learners' starting points is poor, and, therefore, trainers do not match learning activities to individual learners' abilities. Consequently, a few learners do not work to their full potential.

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

Leaders have in place appropriate policies to safeguard learners. The designated safeguarding lead is trained for the role and has introduced effective reporting and recording processes. At the time of the monitoring visit, no safeguarding incidents had been reported. Leaders use their links with external support agencies appropriately to refer learners who need welfare support.

Safe recruitment processes are in place to ensure that trainers are suitable to work with learners. All staff receive training in safeguarding and online 'Prevent' training during their thorough induction process. However, trainers do not reinforce sufficiently learners' understanding of risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

Leaders and staff place a high priority on the health and safety of learners. Trainers ensure that the training environment meets the high safety standards of the rail industry. Consequently, learners feel safe, demonstrate safe working practices and have a good knowledge of health and safety issues.

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