

# Short inspection of TheLightBulb Limited

Inspection dates:

30–31 October 2019

## **Outcome**

TheLightBulb Limited continues to be a good provider.

## **Information about this provider**

TheLightBulb Limited mostly offers apprenticeships: 182 apprentices are currently in learning, with 165 on standards-based apprenticeships and 17 on health and social care level 3 frameworks. Most apprentices are on level 3 apprenticeships.

TheLightBulb Limited provides apprenticeships in customer service practitioner level 2 and specialist level 3, human resource support level 3, business administrator level 3, business consultant level 5, digital marketer level 3, team leader/supervisor level 3, operations department manager level 5, learning and development practitioner level 3, recruitment resourcer level 2 and consultant level 3. Two thirds of the apprentices are aged 23 years and over. TheLightBulb Limited works from its head office in Basildon. They work with employers throughout Essex, East London and the Thames Gateway.

## **What is it like to be a learner with this provider?**

Apprentices are set ambitious targets and are expected to achieve. Most benefit from stimulating and inspired teaching.

Apprentices work with supportive employers and find their job roles revitalising. They become confident in their knowledge and abilities and respond to new challenges positively. Apprentices become valuable team members. They suggest innovative ideas and communicate these effectively to senior managers and to their clients.

The learning and development mentors (LDMs) have an excellent rapport with apprentices. They ensure that training develops apprentices' skills and knowledge quickly. A high proportion of apprentices achieve their qualifications in the time planned and continue in their chosen career.

Apprentices enjoy their training and feel safe.

## **What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders and managers ensure a coherent curriculum to meet the needs of their employers and the skills gaps in the region, for example by delivering the digital marketer standard.

Senior leaders, managers and LDMs have ambitious expectations for apprentices. Apprentices show high professional standards at work early in their training. As a result, they gain more responsibilities and/or promotions.

Apprentices generally benefit from highly qualified staff with up-to-date industry experience. Staff use their knowledge effectively to enhance learning. For example, they include aspects of recent management trends in learning organisations as part of the human resource practitioner standard. Apprentices understand key concepts and deepen their knowledge and experience. They achieve high grades in their final examinations.

Careers advice and guidance are thorough. Leaders and managers work with a broad range of external agencies to provide apprentices with the right opportunities to realise their career aspirations. LDMs offer particularly good guidance during and after the apprenticeship. This allows apprentices to be clear about their next steps and make good career choices.

Managers and staff plan all aspects of training exceptionally well. This helps apprentices to understand and apply key concepts in the workplace. For example, apprentices learn how to manage and implement projects successfully. Apprentices quickly develop the wide range of skills and knowledge needed to carry out their job role effectively. For example, business administration apprentices produce accurate and detailed insurance quotes for customers. LDMs help apprentices to develop their

English skills further to produce professional, high-quality work.

Learners who need extra help to complete their studies do very well. Staff are attentive to their needs and ensure that apprentices stay motivated. As a result, apprentices become confident practitioners.

Senior leaders have effective strategies in place to ensure sustained improvements. Leaders recently recruited a non-executive director to give additional support and challenge to the board. This has had a positive impact on the business and on securing further improvement.

The small number of customer service apprentices make slow progress due to frequent staff changes. These apprentices spend too much time repeating work that they have already covered. Too often, they practise skills they are competent in rather than learning new ideas and concepts. LDMs do not provide these apprentices with prompt and evaluative feedback on their work. Apprentices often are unclear on what they need to do to improve their skills and knowledge. LDMs do not reflect on the skills and knowledge these apprentices are developing. They do not use this information to guide future training.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All apprentices feel and are safe. Senior leaders use information from their contacts with external agencies very effectively. Apprentices have a good understanding of current threats. For example, they understand the threat posed by county line gang activity. Apprentices know what action to take should they feel threatened or unsafe.

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

- Leaders and managers need to ensure that customer service apprentices receive high-quality training. They need to make sure that, when new staff are appointed in this area, staff build upon the skills and knowledge apprentices have already acquired.
- LDMs need to provide customer service apprentices with prompt and developmental feedback to help them deepen their knowledge and improve their skills more quickly. Managers need to ensure that LDMs use this feedback to reflect on how to improve training further.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	53032
<b>Address</b>	2–3 Edison House Paycocke Road SS14 3DP
<b>Contact number</b>	01268 270648
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://thelightbulb.co.uk">thelightbulb.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Lesley Jones
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26–29 January 2016
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	N/A

## Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since TheLightBulb Limited was judged to be good in January 2016.

The inspection team was assisted by the operations director, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including observing learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

## Inspection team

Sambit Sen, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christine Blowman	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Griffin	Ofsted Inspector
Christina Christou	Ofsted Inspector

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