

Inspection of Veolia Environment Development Centre Limited

Inspection dates: 10–13 December 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Veolia Environmental Development Centre Limited (Veolia) operates within Veolia UK, which is part of the global Veolia Group. Veolia UK has over 14,000 employees delivering waste, water and energy services across the country.

Veolia is an employer provider. The training is managed from a campus in Four Ashes, Wolverhampton. At the time of the inspection, there were 187 apprentices. Around 50% of these were studying the level 3 team leader/supervisor standard. Just over 25% of apprentices were studying either the level 3 business administrator or level 5 operations/departmental manager standards. There were 32 apprentices studying the level 2 large goods vehicle (LGV) driver standard, and six apprentices on the level 2 customer service standard.

Veolia led the 'trailblazer' group for the new level 2 waste resource operative standard and has recently enrolled seven apprentices onto this programme.

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

Apprentices receive effective teaching to enable them to apply their learning in context. Most apprenticeship specialists skilfully promote the link between theory and practice. As a result, apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours that they can use in the workplace. For example, LGV driver apprentices build their awareness of potential hazards, and their understanding of winter maintenance, and vehicle defects.

The curriculum is not consistently challenging for all apprentices. Apprenticeship specialists do not use the information about what apprentices already know and can do to build a programme that enables them to develop according to their potential.

Apprentices are not well enough prepared for their end-point assessment. Apprenticeship specialists do not sufficiently plan the guidance which apprentices need, including support to develop their knowledge and skills in English and mathematics. As a result, too many apprentices do not achieve their apprenticeship on time.

Apprentices do not receive enough advice and guidance to prepare them fully for their next steps. Too few apprentices are aware of the opportunities they have after they complete their programme, or whether the apprenticeship will help them attain their career aims. As a result, they are unable to make informed choices about options for further study or employment within the business.

Apprentices feel safe and know where to go to report any concerns that they have. They are well supported and know that if they have any issues, managers will deal with them quickly and effectively. The provider operates an 'are-you-ok' agenda which focuses on apprentices' well-being.

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

Leaders and managers have a clear intent for the apprenticeship programmes. They offer standards that support succession planning and help to upskill the workforce to meet the needs of the business. For example, they have developed the new waste resource operative level 2 standard to provide apprentices with a broader understanding of the industry.

Managers do not always provide useful information, advice and guidance to apprentices at the start of their programme. A small minority of apprentices start without a review of their personal goals. As a result, too few apprentices are confident that their programme will prepare them for their future career.

Apprenticeship specialists do not use the information that they have about individual apprentices to plan a sufficiently challenging curriculum. Apprentices now assess their own skills at the start of their programme. However, apprenticeship specialists do not use the information to plan a programme to meet individual needs and

potential, including the development of English and mathematics skills. Therefore, apprentices are not always able to extend their knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, operations/departmental manager apprentices do not apply project management skills which they have developed before the start of their programme.

Most apprenticeship specialists use their expertise to plan and order their teaching in a logical way so that most apprentices can build their knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, apprentices on the LGV driver standard start with the theory of driving and loading an LGV. However, in a small minority of cases, this order of teaching is not as coherent for those apprentices who join the group late. For example, apprentices who start the operations/departmental manager standard late miss basic concepts from the management theory module, which hampers their progress in later modules.

Apprenticeship specialists skilfully use a wide range of teaching techniques and present information clearly. As a result, they engage apprentices in meaningful discussions and activities to deepen their learning. For example, apprentices on the level 5 operations/departmental manager standard discuss change management strategies to support staff with new growth plans.

Most apprenticeship specialists do not make effective use of assessment. They develop plans to make sure that apprentices complete the required modules. However, the assessment is not used well enough to inform the apprentice about specific gaps in their knowledge. For example, business administrator apprentices are all expected to complete the same work and to reach the same standard, irrespective of their knowledge and skills.

The vast majority of apprentices show a positive attitude to their learning. For example, apprentices react well to setbacks and develop motivation to succeed. When they do achieve, apprentices are proud of their achievement. For example, LGV driver apprentices show resilience if they do not pass their practical driving test at the first attempt.

Apprenticeship specialists provide apprentices with useful information on how to live a healthy lifestyle. Apprentices receive information on a range of mental and physical health conditions. For example, apprentices on the waste resource operative standard are aware of physiotherapy they can access. This is through a 'back-in-action' focus, which supports employees to return to work in jobs which involve manual handling.

Leaders and managers do not have enough oversight of the progress apprentices make. Thus, they do not ensure that those who fall behind receive the rapid support they need to get back on track. For example, they do not identify or provide enough support for apprentices to develop their English and mathematics skills. As a result, too few apprentices achieve their functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics quickly enough.

Leaders, managers and apprenticeship specialists do not adequately plan for end-

point assessments. They do not put in place appropriate timetables, nor do they track the extent to which apprentices develop the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviours. A minority of apprentices do not receive the guidance they need to prepare them for their end-point assessment. As a result, too few apprentices on the team leader/supervisor standard complete their end-point assessment on time. Apprenticeship specialists now recognise this. They have a new delivery plan that allows apprentices to practise their skills throughout the programme.

An advisory board is in place to hold leaders to account. Board members have an appropriate range of experience. They use this well to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the business. However, they are not yet provided with enough information about the progress apprentices make. As a result, they do not sufficiently challenge leaders on this. Leaders accurately identify and report weaknesses in provision, but it is too soon to see the impact of actions they take as a result. For example, the board recently gave approval for a new electronic portfolio system, but this is not yet operational.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The Veolia group has strong health and safety practices. As a result, apprentices know how to keep themselves and others safe in the workplace. They routinely use the correct personal protective equipment and promote the use of health and safety procedures to their peers. Managers who lead on safeguarding are appropriately trained. They use external networks effectively to share practices with other providers.

Apprentices receive training on safeguarding, cyber security, and the risks of radicalisation. However, apprenticeship specialists do not routinely reinforce this. As a result, a small minority of apprentices do not sufficiently understand local risks.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should improve the monitoring and oversight of the progress that apprentices make to inform rapid interventions when apprentices fall behind with any aspect of their programme.
- Apprenticeship specialists must make better use of the information they have about individual apprentices to plan a curriculum that takes into account their prior knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Leaders, managers and apprenticeship specialists should improve the way in which they identify, provide and monitor the support for individual apprentices to improve their English and mathematics skills.
- Apprenticeship specialists should adapt their use of assessment so that they can identify quickly and act upon areas where individual apprentices need to improve.
- Leaders and managers must enhance the information, advice and guidance given

to apprentices so that they understand how the programme meets their individual needs and goals.

Provider details

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Contact number	0203 567 6854
Website	www.campus.veolia.co.uk
Principal/CEO	Matthew Pitt
Provider type	Employer
Date of previous inspection	20–23 March 2017
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the apprenticeships and graduates manager, 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.

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