

Short inspection of Hull Business Training Centre Limited

Inspection dates:

11–12 December 2019

Outcome

Hull Business Training Centre Limited continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

Hull Business Training Centre (HBTC) is an independent learning provider which was founded in 1994. It provides apprenticeship training and a small amount of adult learning and traineeships in Hull, Grimsby, Scunthorpe and surrounding areas. At the time of the inspection, there were 248 apprentices on level 2 and level 3 programmes, around two thirds of whom were studying business administration. The remainder were studying on apprenticeships in customer service, IT application specialist, social media marketing, supporting teaching and learning in schools, and team leading and management. Most apprentices are studying frameworks, with only a small number following standards-based apprenticeships. There were six learners on adult learning programmes and four learners on traineeships.

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

Apprentices are carefully matched with employers so that they quickly become highly valued at work. Most enjoy their learning and want to do well at work. Leaders and managers ensure that apprentices and adult learners receive effective and impartial careers advice. Almost all apprentices are well prepared for their future and have clear, realistic career plans that they are working towards.

The small number of adult learners study courses that prepare them well for working in schools as teaching assistants. They attend carefully selected school-based placements and contribute well to life in their schools.

The very small number of learners on traineeships benefit from helpful support from staff to develop their English, mathematics and employment-related skills. As a result, they understand how their learning relates to their future opportunities.

Almost all apprentices and learners develop their confidence and resilience through effective support from staff. Apprentices and learners feel safe.

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

better?

Leaders have a very clear strategic vision that they work hard to realise. They offer a small number of carefully selected, well-planned apprenticeships and adult learning programmes that meet the local skill priorities well. Any expansion to the existing curriculum model is carefully considered and only implemented when leaders are certain that they can deliver a high-quality learning experience in the subject area. For example, when introducing the supporting teaching and learning in schools apprenticeship programme, leaders recruited a well-qualified and suitably experienced tutor.

Highly qualified trainers use their extensive experience to plan and coordinate programmes that enable apprentices to make rapid progress in gaining the skills that they need for their job roles. Trainers liaise very well with employers to select appropriate units. They plan on- and off-the-job training very well, so that apprentices can successfully apply their new knowledge, skills and behaviours in the workplace. As a result, almost all apprentices are highly valued by their employers and very quickly become essential team members at work.

A high proportion of apprentices complete their programme successfully; the proportion is particularly high in business administration. Trainers monitor closely the progress that apprentices make and intervene swiftly when apprentices fall behind. Apprentices who need additional support receive it quickly and catch up with their studies. As a result, most apprentices on most programmes complete their programmes within the planned timescale. However, although improving, a lower proportion of apprentices studying level 2 IT application specialist frameworks achieve within the planned timescale.

A very high proportion of apprentices remain in education, training or employment on completion of their course. A significant number of apprentices progress to an apprenticeship at a higher level. Many apprentices take on additional responsibilities at work or secure pay rises soon after completing their programmes.

Leaders have put in place highly impressive mental health support for staff, apprentices and learners. They work very well with local external organisations to ensure that there is effective support available for those who need it. A few staff are trained as mental health first aiders, and recently many staff undertook mental health awareness training. Leaders closely monitor the actions in their mental health quality improvement plan. Through this plan, they have committed to be a 'time to change' organisation that is positive about mental health.

Too many apprentices, particularly on IT application specialist and management pathways, do not improve the quality of their written work over time. While trainers provide helpful feedback about how apprentices can improve their work, it often focuses solely on ensuring that the work meets the required standard rather than identifying the skills that apprentices need to develop. As a result, too often apprentices make the same mistakes in their work.

Tutors do not routinely check the quality or effectiveness of apprentices' off-the-job learning. Apprentices diligently record the amount of time that they spend completing off-the-job training. However, they do not reflect on how this training helps them to develop their understanding of their job role or their awareness of how they can apply the knowledge and skills that they have developed in their everyday work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers place high importance on keeping learners and apprentices safe. They deal with safeguarding concerns and disclosures well. The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) and deputy DSO are appropriately trained. Managers responsible for recruiting new staff follow safe recruitment guidelines. Pre-employment checks are thorough and carefully recorded before any new employees start working for HTBC. Leaders have a detailed 'Prevent' action plan that carefully reflects local risks and challenges.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that the proportion of level 2 IT application specialist apprentices who complete their programme within the planned timescale continues to improve.
- Trainers should ensure that they provide apprentices with clear, helpful feedback on their written work that enables them to improve the quality of their work over time, particularly around spelling, punctuation and structure.
- Trainers should ensure that apprentices reflect sufficiently on the effectiveness of their off-the-job training and how this directly relates to their job roles.

Provider details

Unique reference number	52402
Address	2 Charlotte Street Mews Hull HU1 3BP
Contact number	01482 211714
Website	www.hbtc.co.uk
Principal/CEO	Johanna Rudd
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	6 October 2015
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the second short inspection carried out since Hull Business Training Centre Limited was judged to be good in October 2015.

The inspection team was assisted by the managing director, as nominee. We took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. We carried out the inspection using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. We 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

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