

Short inspection of Straight A Training Limited

Inspection dates:

22–23 January 2020

Outcome

Straight A Training Limited continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

Straight A Training Limited was founded in 1999 and is based in Camberley, Surrey. It works with a number of large hospitality organisations as well as other employers to deliver apprenticeships across a wide range of locations in England. Around two thirds of all apprentices are based in London and the south east of England. There are currently 83 apprentices on programmes, with almost half studying at level 3 and the rest studying at levels 2, 4 or 5. The largest subjects are hospitality and business. Almost all apprentices are over 19 years old.

Straight A Training Limited offers apprenticeship programmes in hospitality and catering, as well as business administration, customer service and facilities management. Approximately one third of the apprentices are studying frameworks and two thirds are on standards-based programmes.

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

Apprentices value their learning, they are ambitious and understand how important the apprenticeship programme is for their future careers. They benefit from consistently strong support from their tutors focusing on their individual needs and abilities. Many start their studies in hospitality settings with little previous experience, but they quickly develop confidence and pride in their work.

Tutors have high aspirations for their learners. Learners develop vocational, English and mathematics skills beyond the minimum required as a result of their supportive tutors. Almost all of the learners who have completed the business administration standard programme have achieved at distinction level.

Apprentices enjoy learning about wider society and how they can keep themselves safe, as well as being alert to any risks or concerns in their communities.

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

Leaders work with a range of employers, industry specialists and other partners to plan and deliver a curriculum that is highly relevant to their apprentices. Almost all employers value the close working relationship and the opportunity to contribute to the planning and review of their apprentices and their learning. A small number of employers do not routinely participate in reviews of their apprentices' learning. This results in apprentices not being able to apply their off-the-job learning at work.

Apprentices quickly apply their new knowledge and skills to their workplaces. As a result of shadowing senior colleagues, business administration apprentices deepen their understanding about what can affect their business. For example, they develop their understanding of how environmental and competitor factors shapes business decisions. Apprentices improve their confidence and learn more about professional behaviours with different partners within the business.

A small number of apprentices do not receive their full entitlement to off-the-job training in a timely way. This results in them not being able to reflect on their on-the-job learning and develop the knowledge they need to complete their job to the level they want.

Leaders ensure that tutors are well qualified and experienced in their specialisms. Tutors benefit from frequent training and industry updates so that they are fully aware of changes within their sectors. As a result, apprentices benefit from the industry-standard training they receive and develop new knowledge and skills quickly. For example, professional cookery apprentices enjoy developing additional skills such as cooking offal and game.

Tutors use their vocational knowledge well to deliver the curriculum in a sensible order so that apprentices build on previous on- and off-the-job learning. They adapt new learning to meet the needs of individual learners and the different contexts they work in. For example, learners discuss different communication skills required in varied contexts such as dealing with a customer who is being aggressive compared to speaking to a staff member about an important business matter.

Apprentices produce work that is of a good standard. Their tutors provide very constructive and detailed feedback which helps them to make further improvements. Tutors also provide helpful feedback on English skills so that apprentices are able to improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Apprentices studying on business related apprenticeships benefit from good careers advice and guidance to help them make informed decisions about their futures. A small minority of hospitality apprentices do not receive impartial advice and are not aware of wider job and career options available to them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff benefit from frequent training so that they are confident in their support for learners. They report any concerns they have and monitoring of safeguarding issues is effective.

Learners feel safe and demonstrate a very good awareness of risks that may affect them personally or professionally such as county lines, female genital mutilation and child exploitation.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders must ensure that all apprentices receive their full entitlement of off-the-job training in a timely way so that they have more regular opportunities to reflect and build their knowledge and skills.
- Leaders must ensure that the small minority of apprentices who do not currently benefit from careers advice and guidance do so. This will support them to develop their awareness of the wide range of career paths open to them.

Provider details

Unique reference number	54640
Address	Suite 2.14, Building 3 Riverside Way Watchmore Park Camberley GU15 3YL
Contact number	01276 469020
Website	www.straighta.co.uk
Managing Director	Jayne Raftery
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	25–28 October 2016
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since Straight A Training Limited was judged to be good in October 2016.

The inspection team was assisted by the Managing 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

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