

# Inspection of Access Training (East Midlands) Ltd

Inspection dates: 21–24 January 2020

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Education programmes for young people	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Information about this provider

Access Training is based in Nottingham, with a further site in Derby. It has provided training in the East Midlands for over 30 years. Most apprentices are on standards-based apprenticeships at levels 2 to 4. The largest subject areas are child development, health & social care and administration. Managers have recently introduced construction and housing apprenticeships.

Access Training also offers full-time programmes for young people and part-time programmes for adults. Young learners mostly study animal care, childcare or construction at levels 1 and 2. A subcontractor provides a further full-time programme in creative & digital media. Adult learners access government-funded advanced learner loans to pay for their programmes. They mainly study child development or classroom learning support at levels 2 and 3.

At the time of the inspection, there were almost 600 apprentices, just over 60 full-time young learners and 50 adult learners. Around one third of apprentices were aged 16 to 18.

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

Most learners and apprentices gain the knowledge and skills they need to progress at work or move on to further study. For example, housing apprentices can better advise customers because of their apprenticeship programme. However, a minority of young learners do not develop their knowledge and skills to the same high standard.

The large majority of learners and apprentices benefit from Access Training's strong links with voluntary organisations and employers. For example, experts from industry ensure that the construction apprenticeship programme meets industry needs. Learners and apprentices develop a broad understanding of employment sectors and job opportunities linked to their career plans. In a minority of cases, young learners do not receive enough work experience. They are unsure how their programmes link to future job opportunities.

Learners and apprentices behave well and have a positive attitude towards their studies. They develop confidence and character, for example through chairing meetings or being part of the learner council. Young learners benefit from a well-contextualised personal development programme. This includes a focus on topics that help keep learners safe, such as bullying and knife crime.

Learners and apprentices say they feel safe at Access Training, and inspectors agree.

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

Leaders have developed an effective delivery strategy and offer subjects where there are local skills gaps, such as health & social care and construction. Leaders focus on addressing social disadvantage through full-time programmes. As a result, many vulnerable and hard-to-reach young people enrol on these programmes.

Leaders and managers have developed effective links with apprentices' employers. Trainer assessors frequently carry out employer visits to ensure that apprentices obtain the most from their learning. Reviews support apprentices to prioritise work and complete assignments on time. Employers value the additional contributions apprentices make, such as improving the communication between staff and patients in medical practices.

The large majority of tutors and trainer assessors are knowledgeable within their subject areas. Leaders provide support for their ongoing training to keep subject knowledge up to date. However, a few trainer assessors lack teaching knowledge and experience. For example, they do not use questions to challenge apprentices or to gain an in-depth understanding of what apprentices know and can do.

The large majority of learning programmes are ambitious and contain suitably relevant practical aspects. Consequently, learners and apprentices develop skills which relate well to their work or future work goals. For example, level 2 health care

support worker apprentices confidently care for patients on hospital bays. Young learners on animal care programmes learn how to prevent the spread of disease when caring for animals.

In most cases, tutors and trainer assessors develop well-organised learning programmes and take into consideration learners' and apprentices' starting points. They identify the most difficult subjects and plan activities, such as quizzes, to recap learning. As a result of this careful planning, learners and apprentices confidently recall details of these most challenging topics.

In a minority of cases, young learners do not benefit from the same carefully considered programmes. Learning is disjointed and does not include adequate opportunities to recap key topics. In mathematics classes, learners cannot use key terminology or carry out calculations they covered earlier in the year.

Learners with special educational needs receive appropriate support. Leaders have introduced a diagnostic assessment to identify learning difficulties more rapidly. Managers and tutors arrange helpful support for learners and apprentices with education, health and care plans. For example, learners with autism spectrum disorder receive useful additional support travelling to and from the provider and during breaks. Learners who feel anxious receive support that helps them better attend and remain in class.

The large majority of learners and apprentices produce high-quality work. For example, learners on the level 3 child development programme produce informative and well-designed booklets about caring for a baby's brain. Young learners on the subcontracted level 2 digital & creative media programme work confidently with clients and produce high-quality digital marketing and advertising materials.

Most learners and apprentices achieve well at Access Training. The large majority of apprentices remain in their jobs and a few quickly gain promotion. Most adult learners gain jobs within the sector. Young learners who remained on programme in 2018/19 progressed on to further education or work. However, too many left their programmes early.

Adult learners and apprentices receive good personal development opportunities. For example, trainer assessors link equality to apprentices' workplaces. Trainer assessors also ensure that learners and apprentices consider British values when at work. For example, apprentices linked the rule of law to the storage and administration of controlled drugs.

Apprentices receive appropriate support to prepare for the next stage in their career. They also benefit from shadowing opportunities at their workplaces. However, too many young learners do not receive adequate careers guidance. They do not always benefit from work placements or employer visits, and they do not feel well supported in preparing for work. Leaders are working to rectify this.

In too many cases, feedback on learners' and apprentices' work does not help them to make improvements. Trainer assessors frequently use feedback to record the units that apprentices pass, rather than to provide supportive or developmental comments. On programmes for young people, tutors do not frequently correct basic spelling and grammatical errors. As a result, learners continue to make the same mistakes in their work.

Although the large majority of apprentices work to a good standard, not all apprentices know that they can achieve a distinction grade. A few trainer assessors are also unaware of this. Consequently, apprentices miss out on the opportunity to maximise their potential.

Young learners do not benefit from consistently high-quality programmes. Managers do not monitor attendance levels closely enough, and tutors do not manage learners' punctuality well. Teaching on these programmes is not of a consistently high quality. Tutors do not benefit from detailed performance information to help them improve.

Those with responsibility for governance have not focused closely enough on improving programmes for young people. They understand well the challenges that some young learners face, but they have not sufficiently challenged leaders to improve performance. Leaders and managers have recently begun to introduce improvements in this area.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers prioritise the safety of both apprentices and learners. Staff benefit from regular updates on emerging safeguarding issues. They are proactive when supporting learners and apprentices with safeguarding issues.

Learners and apprentices know how to keep themselves safe, and who to contact if they have safeguarding concerns. They can identify the signs that an individual may be at risk of radicalisation. However, learners' and apprentices' understanding of radicalisation and extremism does not focus enough on their area of study or work.

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

- Governors, leaders and managers should ensure that programmes for young learners are ambitious. Managers and tutors should ensure that the curriculum is well designed and delivered, and that it offers sufficient opportunities for work experience.
- Leaders and managers should closely monitor the attendance and punctuality of young learners and take prompt action where there are concerns. They should ensure that tutors have high expectations for learners' attendance and punctuality.

- Trainer assessors and tutors should ensure that written feedback to learners and apprentices supports them to improve their written work, including their spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Managers and trainer assessors should ensure that apprentices know they can achieve a distinction grade on their programmes. Where relevant, trainer assessors should challenge apprentices to work towards this grade.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	50080
<b>Address</b>	Cawley House 96 Cliff Road Nottingham NG1 1GW
<b>Contact number</b>	01159 587 257
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.atem.co.uk">www.atem.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Corrina Hembury
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 November 2015
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	R.E.A.L. Education

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality 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 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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