

# Inspection of Azesta Limited

Inspection dates: 4–6 March 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>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this provider

Azesta Limited is based in Pateley Bridge, near Harrogate. It provides apprenticeships in leadership and management in a range of sectors in response to employer need for specific managerial and team-leading skills. At the time of the inspection, 16 apprentices were on standards-based programmes. Of these, eight were on a level 3 team leader/supervisor apprenticeship and eight were on a level 5 apprenticeship for operations/departmental managers. All apprentices are over the age of 18. Azesta Limited works with three employers. The company is owned and led by one director. Azesta subcontracts with three organisations for the supply of its facilitators.

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

Apprentices are enthusiastic advocates of the distinctive and innovative experiential learning approach that underpins their apprenticeship. They benefit greatly from the growth mindset approach to learning and high-quality teaching methods used by their course facilitators. As a result, they are highly motivated and engaged in their learning.

Apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours during their programmes. They acquire management skills and knowledge that enable them to lead teams well in a variety of contexts. For example, they learn valuable project management skills that help them to prioritise tasks effectively and efficiently. They enjoy the level of challenge presented by their programmes and are proud of their new achievements both in learning and at work.

Apprentices develop skills of resilience, empathy and self-awareness. They increase their confidence and self-esteem as a result of their courses. They gain new knowledge and understanding of the importance of psychological well-being at work. This in turn helps them to become more effective in their roles as team leaders and managers.

Apprentices thrive in a safe, supportive and egalitarian learning environment. They learn about issues such as unconscious bias, which helps them become aware of the subtle ways in which discrimination can occur. They demonstrate appropriate professional behaviour and consistently high levels of respect for others. They treat people from a wide variety of backgrounds with courtesy and consideration.

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

Leaders and facilitators sequence and deliver the curriculum thoughtfully so that apprentices learn effectively. They sequence the topics from the Institute of Leadership and Management diploma logically to help apprentices build securely on their existing knowledge and experience. Apprentices develop skills of self-evaluation first, and then apply analytic and evaluative techniques to their businesses. They then apply what they have judged to be the most effective techniques in their own work. For example, level 5 apprentices use 'PESTLE' analysis at work to improve driver training.

Leaders collaborate closely with employers to devise an ambitious, imaginative and effective curriculum that successfully prepares apprentices for employment. Facilitators use examples and case studies from a broad range of settings to challenge apprentices to think about circumstances beyond their immediate experience. Senior managers participate in sessions on project management to add their expertise and knowledge. This prepares apprentices very well for the next steps in their careers at their current employer or elsewhere. Most apprentices who complete their studies attain high grades, and most gain promotions.

Apprentices who have dyslexia benefit from prompt and effective support from facilitators to help them to make progress in line with their peers. For example, they learn how to use assistive technology to improve their writing skills. This enables them to undertake confidently tasks such as producing scoping documents that they previously found difficult.

Facilitators design and deliver well-planned activities that encourage apprentices to embed knowledge and skills securely over time. Apprentices revisit key concepts regularly and through a wide range of different activities, including card sorting activities and research. For example, when learning about mindsets, apprentices use a card sort activity to consider the research underpinning mindsets, thereby deepening their understanding. Apprentices become adept in using and applying what they have learned in different situations at work.

In a few cases, apprentices have not completed their apprenticeship within planned timescales because leaders and employers did not ensure that enough time was devoted to the programme. Leaders and managers have addressed this issue and have robust plans in place to ensure that any new apprenticeships will be given increased time allocations.

Leaders have effectively identified problems that impacted on progress and achievement and have taken steps that have begun to have an impact. A significant proportion of apprentices who do not complete their apprenticeships within the planned timescales have been affected by unstable employment at one employer. Leaders decided not to take any new apprentices from that employer. Staff and managers have worked together to improve their monitoring of apprentices' progress, and apprentices who had fallen behind have caught up or completed their programme successfully.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding officer is appropriately trained and experienced in the role. Leaders and managers carry out appropriate background checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with apprentices. Leaders ensure that staff and apprentices receive training that helps them identify safeguarding concerns. This includes the 'Prevent' duty and how to stay safe online to minimise risks of radicalisation and grooming. A few apprentices are not aware of local risks such as county lines. Leaders and managers provide staff and apprentices with a very safe learning environment. Leaders ensure that appropriate risk assessments are in place for training premises that they use.

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

- Ensure that all apprentices develop robust awareness of local issues affecting their communities, such as county lines, in order to support them in protecting themselves from risk.
- Ensure that increased time allocations for apprenticeship programmes are realistic and sufficient to enable apprentices to develop the full range of new knowledge, skills and behaviours they need.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	1278568
<b>Address</b>	7 Kings Court Pateley Bridge Harrogate HG3 5JW
<b>Contact number</b>	01423 711 904
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.azesta.co.uk">www.azesta.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Shirley Gaston
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	Calamander Consulting Limited Maoni Business Solutions Limited Elmdon Training and Consultancy Services Limited

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the 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

Cath Jackson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rebecca Clare

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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