

Inspection of The National Logistics Academy Ltd

Inspection dates: 10–13 March 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

The National Logistics Academy Limited (the academy) was established in 2015 to provide training courses for the logistics industry through a network of partners across the country. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of Mantra Learning Limited, which is an established independent training provider. The academy became a levy-funded training provider in May 2017. The academy delivers most of its levy-funded apprenticeships through subcontractors.

At the time of the inspection, all of the academy's 254 apprentices were enrolled on standards-based programmes, with 197 apprentices enrolled on level 2 large goods vehicle (LGV) driver programmes, 46 apprentices enrolled on level 2 supply chain warehouse operative programmes and 11 apprentices on level 3 team-leading programmes.

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

Apprentices across the country enjoy their learning experience at the academy. Apprentices who speak English as an additional language quickly improve their literary skills, which helps them in their work and personal lives. Tutors of English support them effectively to help them to develop strategies to assist them in developing their literary skills. Several apprentices have broadened their skills and passion for learning beyond their programme. For example, they now visit their local library to read and write in their spare time.

Apprentices improve their confidence, develop their motivation and enhance their communication skills throughout their programme. Apprentices are rightly appreciative of the life-changing opportunities that the apprenticeship provides. The apprenticeship allows apprentices to gain the skills to be employed in a sector where there are national skill shortages. Apprentices have high aspirations, which ultimately results in raising their earning potential significantly and improving their self-esteem.

Apprentices feel safe while at work due to the extensive training that they receive as part of their apprenticeship. They are fully aware of the risks associated with the transport and logistics sector. These include the dangers of working at heights in warehouse environments, the safety checks they must complete on their vehicle prior to starting their shift, and the procedures they should follow if they have concerns about stowaways illegally entering their vehicle.

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

Leaders are ambitious to provide high-quality training programmes for the transport and logistics sector. They are passionate about enhancing social mobility through schemes such as the 'warehouse to wheels' programme. This programme allows apprentices to progress from warehouse operative roles to fully qualified LGV drivers, significantly improving their earning potential.

Leaders and managers have nurtured very effective links with an extensive network of training partners across the country. The academy provides a good standard of professional development to support partners in further developing their training practice to benefit apprentices and their employers. The academy's managers provide substantive support to partners to ensure that training is of a high standard. Where partners do not meet the standards expected, their partnership is terminated.

Development coordinators and tutors use their extensive knowledge and industrial experience effectively to plan and deliver training to meet the specific needs of apprentices and their businesses. For example, they develop bespoke learning programmes for a national builders' merchant that needs drivers to understand how to operate a vehicle-mounted lifting device effectively. Supermarket distribution companies benefit from their apprentices completing training in safe urban driving to protect themselves and other road users.

Managers have worked very closely with sector specialists and employers to develop a meaningful curriculum with up-to-date content. They ensure that learning is ordered in a logical way so that apprentices incrementally develop substantially new knowledge, skills and attitudes and meet the objectives of their employers' businesses. The curriculum now includes content such as how to load and drive vehicles safely with a significant payload, the impact of lorry driving on the environment, and maximising commercial savings when driving LGVs.

Development coordinators and tutors use a range of assessment strategies to ensure that apprentices learn more and remember more as part of their apprenticeship. Apprentices are able to recall knowledge assuredly on the impact of incorrect loading on fuel efficiency, knowledge that they learned five months earlier in one of their apprenticeship masterclasses. The effective development of the curriculum and the good standard of training that apprentices receive contributed to all apprentices in 2018/19 successfully passing their end-of-programme assessments, with around one in five apprentices gaining a distinction grade.

Leaders and managers have invested in the development of a range of well-structured online and off-line workbooks linked to the curriculum. These learning resources include thought-provoking scenarios and interesting exercises that are contextualised to the transport and logistics sector. Apprentices are rightly appreciative of these resources and use them to progress through their apprenticeship programme.

Apprentices use their new English, mathematical and digital skills very effectively in their job roles and in their personal lives. For example, apprentices use the skills they have developed in English lessons to write and send emails, something they could not do prior to starting their apprenticeship.

Leaders and managers ensure that British values are integrated throughout the curriculum. Apprentices have a good appreciation of these values and can confidently articulate how these relate to the transport and logistics sector. For example, apprentices understand the importance of how working time regulations link to the rule of law. They can confidently explain how this legislation keeps them and the public safe because they do not drive for excessive periods of time.

Leaders do not ensure that development coordinators use the results of assessments completed at the start of the programme consistently, in order to challenge the most able apprentices to achieve their potential and gain higher grades.

Careers advice and guidance are not good enough. Supply chain warehouse operative apprentices progress to more advanced roles within their organisation. However, LGV apprentices do not receive the careers advice that they need. They are not aware of the wider opportunities open to them in the logistics sector, such as promotion to transport managers or procurement professions. This limits their continued progression.

Leaders and managers have put in place an advisory board. However, they do not challenge senior managers sufficiently in relation to the quality of education that apprentices receive. They are too reliant on what managers tell them, without sufficient checks on the accuracy and relevance of the information. For example, the advisory board uses achievement rates as a proxy for the quality of education that apprentices receive, without enough qualitative discussion and review.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have put in place appropriate policies and procedures that staff and managers use effectively to safeguard apprentices. Staff at all partners have received the appropriate training. Furthermore, the designated safeguarding lead and their deputies have received appropriate training to execute their role effectively. Apprentices are fully aware of how to remain safe at work and when learning, and how to report any concerns in relation to safeguarding.

Leaders and managers do not systematically identify the risks that are prevalent in the local areas that apprentices work. Apprentices understand the risks associated with working in the transport and logistics sector. However, they are not fully aware of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism in their communities.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Improve the advice and guidance that apprentices receive, particularly those on level 2 LGV apprenticeships.
- Improve the use of assessments completed at the start of the programme to challenge all apprentices to achieve their potential and gain the grades of which they are capable.
- Improve the knowledge and skills of the members of the advisory board to ensure that they can hold leaders and managers to account for the quality of apprentices' education.
- Collate local intelligence about safeguarding or other risks in the different localities in which apprentices work. Managers should ensure that this information is used to provide up-to-date training to safeguard apprentices.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1276505
Address	Greengate Middleton Manchester M24 1RU
Contact number	0333 220 6646
Website	www.logisticsacademy.co.uk
CEO	Mark Currie
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	2Start Limited Automotive Transport Training JLD Driver Training Mantra Learning Limited Merlin Academy Somax (Weston College) South Essex College Trans Plant Mastertrain Tyneside Training Services Teesside Training Services Limited (Gateshead College) Viamaster Wallace School of Transport

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the chief executive officer, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous 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, subcontractors and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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