

# McCrory Training Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 2636532

**Name of lead inspector:** Helen Whelan, Her Majesty's Inspector

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**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

From March 2019, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of adult learning provision which began to be funded from August 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

McCrorry Training Limited is a rail training company that delivers a range of regulated and trade-specific qualifications. They began to offer publicly funded training for adult learners from September 2020. At the time of the visit, 73 learners were on a level 2 rail engineering (track maintenance) course. A small number were on short courses at level 1 or 2 in personal development for employment. Learners are based in Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland.

The impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgements below.

### Themes

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant adult learning provision that has a clearly defined purpose?      Insufficient progress**

Leaders and managers do not have enough oversight of the progress that learners make. They do not intervene when learners make slow progress and are at risk of withdrawing from their course.

The management of employability courses is poor. Assessors do not plan what or how they will teach in enough detail. Learners do not attend timetabled lessons, either online or face to face. They are set tasks from a course workbook and ask assessors if they need support. Only one learner has completed the course so far and the vast majority have withdrawn. Assessors recognise they need to make considerable improvements to employability courses.

The railways maintenance course is more logically structured and begins with a compulsory health and safety component. COVID-19 restrictions caused considerable disruption to training, particularly the development of learners' practical skills. Managers have plans in place to introduce maintenance activities in a real-life environment on a heritage railway.

Leaders recruit with integrity. They work well with external partners, such as voluntary organisations, to target disadvantaged adults in the local area. These include unemployed and low-income adults. However, managers do not track or monitor the progress that these learners make.

Managers do not use quality assurance processes to improve the standard of training. Leaders are now working with an external consultant to support their governance, with a particular focus on the quality of education. It is not yet possible to judge the impact of these arrangements.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aim and/or personal goals?      Insufficient progress**

Managers and assessors do not plan how to teach the curriculum in sufficient detail. Course plans do not take into account the skills and knowledge that learners need to gain. Learners' prior knowledge and experience is not fully understood by managers and assessors. In too many cases, learners repeat topics they already thoroughly understand.

Assessors do not focus closely enough on assessing learners' progress during the course, for example through formative assessment. This includes understanding the gaps in learners' knowledge that have emerged following breaks in learning due to COVID-19 restrictions. New assessors have introduced a more effective approach to learner assessment which learners find useful. It is too early to measure the impact of this on learners' progress.

Assessors do not understand the progress that learners make as they do not carry out reviews or set targets with them. They rely too heavily on learners' own assessment of progress.

There are insufficient links to employers on the employment-related courses. Assessors recognise that this needs further development. Current careers guidance informs learners of job websites they can access.

Assessors have suitable qualifications and experience. They use this expertise well to ensure that health and safety modules include an appropriate focus on the dangers and risks within the railways sector.

Courses involve limited opportunities for learners to develop their English and mathematics skills. Within written work, learners make basic spelling mistakes which are not picked up by assessors.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Reasonable progress**

Managers have in place appropriate policies and procedures to safeguard learners. They recruit new staff safely and train them in safeguarding and health and safety matters.

Assessors make sure learners understand the health and safety issues key to their role. They provide useful training at the start of courses to ensure that this is suitably emphasised. This includes a focus on manual handling, personal protective equipment, and fire safety as they relate to the roles that learners plan to undertake.

Assessors address safeguarding-related risks associated with learners' job roles. For example, the potential impact that extremist activity may have on the railways. However, learners only have a vague understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism in relation to their future roles.

Learners feel safe and identify who they would contact if they have a safeguarding concern.

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