

# Inspection of CMS Vocational Training Limited

Inspection dates: 13–16 July 2021

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|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b>              |
| <hr/>  |                          |
| 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

CMS Vocational Training Limited is based in Batley, West Yorkshire. In 2017, the company began training apprentices through the apprenticeship levy. At the start of 2018, it added apprenticeship provision for non-levy employers. At the time of the inspection, 162 apprentices were on standards-based programmes. Most were on apprenticeships at level 3 in business administrator, human resource practitioner, early years educator and assistant accountant, or at level 2 in early years practitioner and finance assistant. A small minority of apprentices were on level 4 programmes in professional accounting and business consultant and level 5 programmes in operations/department manager.

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

Apprentices value the training that they receive. They benefit from up-to-date and relevant training that broadens their skills and prepares them well for new responsibilities. For example, apprentices on the human resource practitioner programme have received training on the government furlough scheme and have learned how to process flexible working requests in response to the significant rise of these during the pandemic.

Apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours during their programmes. For example, business administration apprentices learn how to devise useful scorecards for recording their companies' sales. Early years apprentices widen their knowledge of different cultures and learn how to plan activities for young children about religious celebrations. Human resource practitioner apprentices know how to look out for potential signs of bullying and harassment when considering risks in the employee investigations that they manage.

Apprentices improve their confidence because of their training and recognise how their communication skills have developed. This helps them to become more assured when working with colleagues and customers at work. Apprentices in business administration confidently present information to their fellow employees on topics that they have learned about. Assistant accountant apprentices research and deliver presentations to their peers on topics such as grooming, following their participation in safeguarding training.

Apprentices feel safe and comfortable in their learning and workplace environments. Tutors encourage apprentices to value diversity and respect others. Apprentices use the equality, diversity and inclusion training that they receive to improve working relationships with colleagues and customers. For example, apprentices adjust their ways of working with colleagues with hearing impairments to communicate with them more effectively.

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

Leaders and managers ensure that apprentices and employers abide by the apprenticeship agreements that they enter into. Employers provide apprentices with sufficient time for their studies and give them ample opportunities to apply their newly acquired skills and knowledge in their job roles.

Leaders ensure that tutors teach effectively, both remotely and face to face. Tutors are confident in teaching using remote means, such as videoconferencing and online annotation of apprentices' assignments. They are proficient in carrying out reviews and assessments online. Apprentices appreciate the flexibility of this online model. However, a few employers say that they would prefer more face-to-face contact time with tutors through visits to the workplace.

Managers and tutors plan and teach a well-structured curriculum across the apprenticeship programmes that they offer. In business administration, for example, tutors begin by exploring how the apprentices' organisations operate. Tutors then deepen apprentices' understanding of their businesses' external environments and the regulatory

context in which they work. Apprentices finish by developing their business management skills through the design and implementation of a project at work. As a result, apprentices successfully build their knowledge and skills in a cumulative way.

Tutors thoroughly assess what their apprentices know and can do throughout their programmes. They identify accurately apprentices' existing knowledge and skills before enrolling them onto an appropriate apprenticeship. Tutors use milestone assessments at the end of each block of training to check apprentices' understanding of theoretical knowledge. They use feedback from employers and apprentices' own personal statements to assess how apprentices are applying their skills at work. Tutors support apprentices who have additional needs, such as dyslexia, to review their draft work to help identify what is going well and what they need to improve.

Most apprentices are well prepared for their next career steps due to the knowledge and skills they develop. They know and understand the roles that they can progress to on completion of their apprenticeship. For example, early years apprentices know about the range of childcare roles that they could move into, including teaching, becoming special educational needs coordinators and managing early years settings.

Tutors work effectively to develop the English, mathematical and digital skills of most apprentices. Apprentices work on any gaps in their English and mathematical skills, including those apprentices who are exempt from taking functional skills examinations. Tutors ensure that apprentices understand the need to be proficient in these subjects to help them progress at work.

Governance is effective. Those responsible for governance understand their responsibilities. They know the provider well, and they support and strengthen the provider's leadership. They provide challenge and support leaders to focus on key aspects of quality assurance processes to enhance the effectiveness of the provider.

In a few cases, tutors do not ensure that apprentices have the study skills needed to process significant amounts of information at the beginning of their programmes. Consequently, these apprentices struggle to develop the independent research skills that they need to access the curriculum and are not equipped well enough to approach assignment work without significant extra help.

A small number of apprentices have made slow progress in developing their English and mathematics skills to enable them to pass their functional skills examinations and be ready for their end-point assessments. In mathematics, some tutors enter apprentices too early for their examinations before they have been sufficiently prepared to succeed.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and tutors ensure that apprentices know how to stay safe online and in their workplaces. Apprentices know who to contact if they have any issues or concerns about their well-being. Leaders use effective links with external agencies to support looked after

apprentices transitioning from care. Leaders have established links with the police so that they understand and can communicate the potential for and nature of local threat. Tutors develop apprentices' understanding of safeguarding well, including issues of gender identity, bullying and harassment, and radicalisation and extremism.

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

- Ensure that tutors support apprentices to develop the study skills that they need to access the curriculum fully and become independent and successful learners.
- Ensure that apprentices make rapid progress in developing their English and mathematics skills, so that they are well prepared to take their functional skills examinations.

## Provider details

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | 51201   |
| <b>Address</b>                     | Parr House<br>26 Station Rd<br>Batley<br>WF17 5SU       |
| <b>Contact number</b>              | 07792 759 860   |
| <b>Website</b>                     | <a href="https://cmsvoc.co.uk">https://cmsvoc.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Principal/CEO</b>               | Gareth Luke   |
| <b>Provider type</b>               | Independent learning provider                           |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | Not previously inspected                                |

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality 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 |
| Sarah Lonsdale               | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Chloe Rendall                | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Charles Searle               | Her Majesty's Inspector |

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
M1 2WD

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