

# Inspection of Knights Training Academy Limited

Inspection dates:

17 to 19 August 2021

**Overall effectiveness****Good**

The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Apprenticeships

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

**Information about this provider**

Knights Training Academy Limited (KTAL) was established in 2009 and provided a range of employment-focused qualifications, as well as acting as a subcontractor for other training providers. KTAL received its first directly funded contracts for apprenticeships in 2017. KTAL received a new provider monitoring visit in August 2018. At that time, inspectors judged the provider to be making reasonable progress under the three themes.

At the time of this inspection, KTAL had 113 learners on standards-based apprenticeships. Of these, 26 apprentices were studying level 3 housing and property management, 25 apprentices were studying level 4 senior housing and property management, 18 apprentices were studying level 3 business administrator, seven were studying level 5 operations/departmental manager standards, seven were studying level 4 assessor coach and seven were studying either level 2 or level 3 customer services standards. The remaining apprentices were studying a range of courses in retail or leisure. At the time of the inspection, seven apprentices were on a break in learning.

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

Most apprentices are keen to learn and grow professionally. They develop the knowledge and skills they need to be effective employees. For example, level 5 operations/departmental manager apprentices used their understanding of change management theory to lead their employer's response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. As such, most apprentices make good progress, achieve well and gain extra responsibilities at work.

Most apprentices value their training. They describe the frequent training sessions, where they learn new skills and knowledge, as useful and supportive. Consequently, most apprentices attend well. Most apprentices appreciate the significant experience and knowledge of staff, which helps them make progress quickly. The vast majority of apprentices produce high-quality work. They improve their literacy and numeracy skills rapidly. For example, level 4 assessor coach apprentices become adept at writing formal development plans for sports people. Most apprentices are well prepared for their final assessments.

Apprentices develop the professional behaviours they will need for employment swiftly. They learn how to conduct themselves confidently and courteously. For example, level 3 housing and property management apprentices learn how to resolve conflict effectively. Level 3 business administrator apprentices understand how to apply professional standards when giving advice to clients. Consequently, apprentices become more confident and resilient employees.

Apprentices feel safe and know who to speak to if they have concerns. They understand the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Apprentices know how to look after their physical and mental health. They learn how to identify the signs of work-related stress and coping strategies. Too few apprentices enjoy opportunities to develop their wider interests and talents. Too many apprentices do not understand the role of fundamental British values and the impact these have on their job roles.

Apprentices have a good understanding of the employment opportunities available to them.

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

Leaders have high expectations of apprentices to make good progress, become better employees and achieve well in their courses. Most staff have high aspirations for apprentices to produce high-quality work and achieve merit and distinction grades in their final assessments, which many do. Leaders and staff have introduced additional qualifications and resources so that apprentices develop more advanced knowledge and skills to become better at their jobs. For example, level 3 business administrator apprentices study the certificate in mortgage advice and practice which enables them to better advise clients.

Leaders and managers have a clear vision for the apprenticeships they offer. They design programmes to meet local and regional business needs well. For example, staff designed courses in property management to meet new statutory regulations for this sector.

Leaders and governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They have logical actions in place to deal with the weaknesses. However, leaders acknowledge that they have been too slow in resolving issues in a small minority of courses, specifically level 2 and level 3 customer services. As a result, the very small number of apprentices on these courses make slow progress and do not achieve well. Leaders ensure that apprentices benefit from off-the-job training and produce good work as a result. However, they do not monitor this closely enough to allow them to intervene rapidly where apprentices may fall behind with their work.

Leaders ensure that the vast majority of staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Leaders support staff well. The majority of staff benefit from useful professional development which improves their teaching and helps them remain vocationally up to date.

Most employers value the impact that apprentices' training has on their organisations. Staff work closely with most employers to plan and structure courses sensibly so that apprentices develop the skills they need for their work. For example, level 5 operations/departmental manager apprentices now study emotional intelligence modules first as these are crucial to their development as managers. However, staff do not ensure all employers understand apprentices' progress, training or preparation for their final assessments thoroughly enough. Consequently, a few apprentices do not make as rapid progress as their peers.

Most staff plan carefully and teach high-quality training sessions that enable apprentices to develop new and substantial skills. They ensure training is current and relevant to the apprentices' role and business. For example, level 3 housing and property management apprentices learn about upcoming legal changes within the rental sector. As a result, most apprentices develop the sector-specific knowledge and skills they need for their role quickly. Most apprentices benefit from high-quality, on-the-job training that is well planned and supports them to make good progress. As a result, the proportion of apprentices who achieve their apprenticeship is high.

Most staff use assessment well to review apprentices' progress and to help them develop. Staff provide useful feedback so that apprentices understand how to improve their work, which many do. For example, level 4 assessor coach apprentices use feedback well to improve fitness and motivational plans. Most staff carefully monitor apprentices' progress through frequent review meetings that enables them to intervene swiftly where an apprentice may fall behind.

Most staff support apprentices to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, level 5 operations/departmental manager staff give apprentices accurate and clear feedback on their written work to help them develop these essential skills.

The vast majority of apprentices value the positive impact this training has on their professional and personal lives. Staff support those apprentices who need mathematics or English qualifications as part of their courses well.

Staff ensure that learners receive appropriately detailed and impartial information about their next steps. They work well with external agencies and organisations, for example Surrey Alps, University of Portsmouth and Learning Curve, to help apprentices know about their potential future careers.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The well-qualified designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy use suitable safeguarding policies effectively to help keep apprentices safe. They monitor safeguarding concerns and incidents thoroughly.

The DSL ensures that staff are appropriately trained to keep apprentices safe. For example, staff recently completed training on the 'incel' movement. Leaders follow safe recruitment processes when appointing new staff.

Staff check that apprentices are safe at their workplace. They teach apprentices how to keep safe, including when online. Staff teach apprentices about risks specific to their jobs. For example, apprentices within estate agency courses learn how to stay safe when viewing houses with clients.

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

- Leaders should intervene swiftly to improve the quality and experience of training on level 2 and level 3 customer service courses so that all apprentices are able to make rapid progress and achieve well.
- Leaders should monitor the impact of apprentices' off-the-job entitlement to enable them to intervene more rapidly to support those who may fall behind.
- Leaders should ensure that all employers understand apprentices' progress and learning, as well as requirements for the final assessments, so that they can support apprentices to achieve.
- Leaders should ensure that all apprentices have opportunities to extend their learning and development beyond the apprenticeship curriculum, including opportunities for social action.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	1276254
<b>Address</b>	Unit 21 Trafalgar Way Camberley Surrey GU15 3BN
<b>Contact number</b>	01276 681248
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.knightsacademy.co.uk">www.knightsacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Yvonne Worner
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the training 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 inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

## Inspection team

Peter Cox, lead inspector

Ann Monaghan

Gail Shenton

Colin Smith

Her Majesty's Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
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