

# DRL Services Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 2626867

**Name of lead inspector:** Linnia Khemdoudi, 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 October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and/or the apprenticeship levy. 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.

DRL Services Limited (DRL) is an independent training provider based in East Tilbury, Essex. It was established in 2015. It started delivering apprenticeships as a main provider in March 2021.

DRL focuses on the food, logistics and manufacturing sectors. The geographical spread of provision currently covers Hull, Doncaster and Scunthorpe. At the time of the monitoring visit, DRL had fewer than five apprentices studying towards the level 2 food and drink process operator standard, nine apprentices studying the level 3 team leader standard and a further 32 apprentices studying the level 2 lean manufacturing operative standard.

### Themes

#### **How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?**

#### **Reasonable progress**

Leaders have developed an effective curriculum that meets the needs of employers in the food manufacturing industry. Leaders are keen to help employers improve the retention rates of staff by offering them meaningful training. Apprentices value the opportunity to gain qualifications while working. However, it is too early to judge the impact on staff retention as apprentices have yet to complete their studies.

Leaders and staff have developed productive relationships with employers. Assessors frequently update employers on the progress of apprentices. Leaders and assessors work flexibly with employers to ensure that high-pressure work periods due to seasonal demand are well managed. This ensures that apprentices continue to learn while also managing demanding workloads.

Leaders have not ensured that apprentices understand the requirements of their final assessment. Despite apprentices being on programme for some months, they do not

know the detail of what this entails. Leaders rely on assessors discussing the final assessment with apprentices when they think apprentices are ready.

Assessors do not ensure that the small proportion of apprentices who have additional learning requirements develop longer term coping strategies to help them learn more effectively. Leaders identify the additional learning requirements of apprentices at enrolment appropriately. However, they have not ensured that staff are appropriately qualified to help apprentices appropriately.

Leaders have ensured that apprentices who need to study English and mathematics qualifications do so. Apprentices articulate how they are applying new knowledge to their work. This includes accurately calculating the resources they need to complete a given job. However, the impact on apprentices' achievement is not yet evident, as apprentices have yet to take their exams.

Leaders do not have suitable governance arrangements in place. Leaders recognise that this is something that would help them improve the quality of training, but have yet to identify a suitable way of implementing this.

**What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices?**

**Reasonable progress**

Leaders have developed an effective curriculum to ensure that apprentices develop new skills and knowledge. Most apprentices can articulate how they are getting better at their jobs. They can, for example, identify how to reduce waste and therefore save money when carrying out their job roles. Employers value the new skills that apprentices are gaining to help improve their businesses.

Apprentices develop effective work-related skills. They understand how the work they do contributes to the efficiency of their employers' business. Most plan and use their time at work effectively because of their training. Their line managers readily promote them to more senior roles when a position becomes available. Assessors monitor the progress that apprentices are making effectively.

Leaders identify accurately apprentices' prior skills and experience through a detailed skills scan. However, assessors do not always use this information to help apprentices develop higher level knowledge effectively. Consequently, apprentices who are more motivated and capable make slow progress relative to their starting points.

Leaders have not ensured that assessors' teaching skills are good. Assessors, for example, cover similar topics in isolation to each other. They do not link key concepts to help apprentices develop deeper understanding. Consequently, too few apprentices can apply their new skills and knowledge to contexts outside their current job roles.

Leaders do not give apprentices ongoing, impartial careers advice and guidance. Assessors ensure that apprentices understand how the apprenticeship will help them in their current job role. However, assessors do not discuss what wider careers are available to apprentices outside the job opportunities within their own organisations.

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

Leaders have developed a culture of safeguarding. Apprentices complete relevant online learning activities at the start of their apprenticeship. This ensures that apprentices have the information they need to stay safe. Apprentices feel safe and know how to report concerns, should these arise.

Leaders have ensured that apprentices learn about a wide range of safeguarding themes over time. Apprentices work through a well-thought-out 'Welfare essentials guide'. This covers a good range of topics, such as extremism, forced marriage, modern slavery, online safety and cyber-bullying. Assessors check apprentices' understanding at their quarterly reviews effectively. However, leaders have not developed apprentices' knowledge and understanding of sexual harassment or workplace bullying.

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