

# Inspection of Strive Training (London) Limited

Inspection dates: 2–5 November 2021

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this provider

Strive Training (London) Limited (Strive) is an independent learning provider based in Edgware, north London. Strive was established in 2010 and delivered adult learning as a subcontractor, prior to gaining its own direct delivery contract in 2017.

Strive offers a range of qualifications, including employability, business administration, customer service, hospitality and catering, health and social care and warehousing and storage. Most of their learners attend short online courses with a smaller proportion of learners studying longer distance learning programmes. At the time of the inspection, 140 adult learners were studying online programmes varying from entry level to level 2. There were 330 adult learners on level 2 distance learning programmes.

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

Learners at Strive enjoy their training, which they know helps them to prepare for future employment. Learners value the skills and knowledge that they develop, and they recognise that these strengthen their ability to perform the job roles for which they apply. Most learners increase their confidence and are motivated to progress into further study or employment.

Learners work hard at Strive and are keen to meet the high expectations that staff set for them. They know that staff genuinely care about them and want them to be successful.

Learners on distance learning programmes appreciate the high-quality and well-structured learning materials, which help them to work independently. Learners feel that staff go 'the extra mile' for them. Tutors return learners' work promptly and respond positively to requests for further support. Although most learners value the flexibility of online and distance learning, learners miss the social aspects of learning in a classroom setting.

Learners feel safe and secure knowing that they learn in an environment that is based on a culture of respect.

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

Leaders and managers have set a clear vision to support unemployed learners to gain employment. They have established strong working relationships with prestigious employers and nationally recognised stakeholders. As a result, the curriculum meets local and regional priorities. Leaders use these partnerships innovatively to provide learners with links into employment or on to further study.

During the pandemic, leaders stopped teaching face-to-face and moved to online and distance learning to meet the requirements of partner organisations. Leaders recognise the challenges that distance learning has given them and have taken appropriate actions to continue to improve the quality of these programmes. Leaders are now considering moving back to face-to-face teaching for some courses.

Leaders monitor the quality of teaching thoroughly. They visit lessons and provide valuable feedback to tutors which helps them to improve their practice. The chair of governors provides rigorous challenge and scrutiny to the senior leadership team. Recent changes in the management information system have provided leaders and governors with more useful data. Although they have a broad understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, leaders and managers do not use the wealth of data available to them to accurately evaluate their performance or to set targets for improvement.

Leaders consider carefully the curriculum that they offer and thoroughly know their business partners. As a result, they offer courses that provide learners with the skills and knowledge that they require to work in industries including transport and logistics. Leaders review the curriculum frequently to make sure that it is relevant, and they respond swiftly to employers' requests to teach specific industry-related programmes. As a result, they match learners well to job vacancies that become available. Employers highly value the courses that Strive run for their potential employees.

Leaders have established an employer engagement team that increases learners' chances of being successful in their search for employment. For example, the team arranges visits for learners to employer sites, such as warehousing and storage centres. Learners talk with employees and, as a result, understand the environment in which they plan to work. Learners on customer service courses learn how to deal with challenging situations by applying the employers' values. For example, delivery drivers learn how to let customers know and to apologise if they are going to be late delivering goods.

Tutors use effective activities to check that learners understand and remember what they have been taught. They use questioning well to check that learners can recall what they were taught early in the course. They require learners to apply their knowledge to different situations, for example through role play. Learners on distance learning programmes benefit from a well-structured learning platform with a range of useful resources, such as videos and knowledge quizzes.

Tutors support learners well to understand the job opportunities available to them when they finish their course. Learners on short employability courses swiftly learn to structure applications for jobs, to write cover letters and to adapt their curriculum vitae when applying for different roles. Learners who do not gain employment immediately after their course, receive valuable support to study other courses or apply for jobs. Staff provide guidance on developing their skills further to match specific roles and advise them about other suitable opportunities.

Learners produce work of a high standard. Most tutors provide learners with detailed and helpful feedback on their work so that they know how to improve. As a result, learners become skilled at checking their own work, including their spelling and grammar, more thoroughly. Learners on a few courses, such as childcare, do not routinely benefit from helpful feedback on their work.

Tutors provide effective support to learners who declare a learning difficulty or disability. Learners use software to check their spelling and grammar and are given additional time to complete their work. Tutors provide learners with specific resources, such as colour filters and on-screen captioning. Learners with a declared learning difficulty or disability achieve as well as their peers.

Tutors ensure that learning takes place in a well-organised and professional environment. Learners take responsibility for their learning. In business administration, learners chair discussions in breakout rooms, and report back to the

group on their findings. Tutors promote and model professional behaviours. For example, learners on level 2 certificate in information, advice and guidance learn professional language and the importance of personal presentation at work.

Nearly all learners who complete their course achieve their qualification, but too many learners do not remain on their courses. Leaders have identified reasons why learners leave their courses and have put relevant interventions in place. They have invested in learning support assistants who meet with learners on distance learning programmes early on in their course. They make sure that learners understand the commitment needed to study distance learning, and they provide ongoing support for learners during their programmes. As a result, retention for recent cohorts has improved.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. They have put in place relevant policies and procedures which they use effectively to keep learners safe. The designated safeguarding leads are well trained and competent in their roles. Leaders provide training for staff at induction and make sure that they receive frequent update training so that they have a good understanding of current legislation.

Leaders carry out detailed pre-employment checks to make sure that staff are suitable to work with learners.

Learners feel safe and know who to go to if they have concerns. They know how to keep themselves safe while working online.

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

- Governors, leaders and managers should use the wide range of data available to them to gain a detailed knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and to secure improvements.
- Leaders and managers should improve the retention of learners on programmes so that they remain in education and achieve their qualifications.
- Managers and tutors should ensure that learners on all courses benefit from helpful feedback so that they understand how to improve their future work.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	1270921
<b>Address</b>	64 New Cavendish Street London W1G 8TB
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<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Jonny Phillips
<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 director of quality and operations, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. 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

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