

Inspection of Derwent Training Association

Inspection dates: 9 to 11 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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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

Derwent Training Association is a private training provider that specialises in the delivery of engineering apprenticeships from its training centre in Malton, North Yorkshire. At the time of the inspection, there were 97 apprentices, of whom 93 were studying the level 3 engineering standard in one of three pathways: machinist, mechatronics and metal fabrication. Four apprentices were on the level 4 engineering manufacturing apprenticeship standard. Just under half of the apprentices are aged 16 to 19 years.

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

Apprentices are prepared well for learning. Leaders and trainers have created an inclusive environment in which apprentices from diverse backgrounds work well together. The small number of female engineering apprentices confirm that the environment is inclusive, and that this is aided by having a female trainer. Apprentices appreciate working in a supportive environment in which they can thrive and learn.

Apprentices are highly motivated to achieve their apprenticeship. Their attendance at work and in the training centre is good. Trainers and employers have high expectations of what apprentices can achieve. Apprentices understand that the training centre is an extension of their workplace, and they demonstrate the same values and commitment to their training there as they do at work.

Apprentices benefit from being taught by highly skilled and knowledgeable engineering trainers who have the confidence and ability to allow flexibility in learning. They challenge apprentices well to find their own solutions to complex engineering scenarios. For example, trainers pose questions and facilitate group discussions with apprentices to explore their understanding of topics such as data analysis and fault-finding.

Apprentices work in a safe learning environment where health and safety is a high priority. They learn about the theory of safe working practices in the classroom before they are allowed to go into the workshop. Trainers demonstrate how to use machines such as lathes, milling machines and welding equipment safely. Apprentices wear appropriate personal protective equipment such as steel toe-capped boots, gauntlet gloves and eye protection, and they behave appropriately in the workshop. They understand how to keep themselves safe online by, for example, not disclosing personal details when using social media and by using safe passwords.

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

Leaders and managers have carefully structured a curriculum that enables apprentices to develop the new knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need in order to progress their careers as engineers. Managers have invested in good-quality training resources, machines and technology that support apprentices in developing the necessary skills to be successful on their apprenticeship. The skills that apprentices acquire through their training complement well what they learn at work. These skills include producing new tools and fault-finding on electrical circuitry and industrial cabinets. All apprentices progress through to completing their qualification in a timely manner.

Leaders and managers have positive working relationships with engineering employers, including small- and medium-sized enterprises and multinational companies. Many employers have taken on multiple apprentices over time, and

many apprentices take on new areas of responsibility or gain promotion at work. Apprentices develop precision skills that contribute to the work that their employers carry out. These include manual machining skills that enable apprentices to use manual lathes as well as programmable lathes.

Leaders have a clear overview of the progress that their apprentices are making and take appropriate action to help apprentices catch up if they fall behind. However, the reviews of apprentices' progress do not record fully enough the actions that apprentices need to take to improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours. As a result, apprentices and trainers cannot easily refer back to previous learning, which slows the progress of a few apprentices.

Trainers support apprentices very effectively to develop their mathematical skills. Apprentices use complex mathematical formulas to calculate the weather temperature variations needed to predict power generation. They use standard variations to draw conclusions about negative and positive correlation. For example, apprentices studying electrical power generation calculate and plot results into graphs so they can decide whether there is a need to generate additional or less electricity. However, a few trainers do not consistently check for spelling errors and mistakes in grammar to help apprentices avoid making the same errors again.

Trainers support apprentices well to prepare for end-point assessment. They have undertaken professional training to become end-point assessors and they use these skills to hold mock assessments for apprentices to practise before their graded assessment. Apprentices are prepared well for their end-point assessment and fully understand what they need to do to be successful. As a result, they achieve their final assessments at the first attempt.

Managers and trainers assess apprentices' existing knowledge and understanding of topics comprehensively at the start of their programme. However, trainers do not use this information well enough to plan an individualised curriculum. The few apprentices who need to take English and mathematics examinations do not benefit from learning that focuses specifically on developing their weaker areas.

Most apprentices are clear about their career goals and ambitions. These include progressing to more senior roles at work, setting up their own business or studying at degree level. However, apprentices often receive information about career options from their employer rather than through a well-planned, impartial careers programme offered by the provider. As a result, too many apprentices are not aware of the wider opportunities that are available in the engineering sector, and their ambitions are often limited to gaining progression within their organisation.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and governors at the provider are well trained to recognise a wide range of signs that indicate that apprentices may be at risk. Staff undertake annual

safeguarding update training and teach short briefings to apprentices during their day-release classes.

Trainers provide apprentices with morning briefings on a wide range of helpful and informative topics. These include equal pay and equal rights, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues, the impact of drink-driving, and how to check for prostate and testicular cancer. The briefings also include reminders about what constitutes consent in healthy sexual relationships. In addition to the briefings, apprentices recognise the posters around the training centre, which have helpful contact numbers about abuse and gambling issues. Most apprentices can recall discussions about radicalisation, extremism and the signs that someone might be being radicalised. However, only a minority of apprentices can outline the risks in their local area, such as county lines activity.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that all apprentices benefit from clear and precise target-setting at reviews, which they can revisit between meetings to enable them to identify the areas that they need to improve.
- Ensure that all apprentices benefit from independent careers advice and guidance so that they are aware of the full range of career opportunities.
- Ensure that trainers use the results of apprentices' initial assessment to plan a programme of learning that helps all apprentices to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Ensure that all trainers consistently correct the spelling and grammatical errors that apprentices make so that apprentices avoid repeating these errors.
- Ensure that all apprentices understand local risks and how these risks could impact on them.

Provider details

Unique reference number	51531
Address	Hertford Way York Road Business Park Malton North Yorkshire YO17 6YG
Contact number	01653 697698
Website	www.derwenttraining.co.uk
CEO	Claire Gavaghan
Provider type	Independent training provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality 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

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