

Inspection of Marshall of Cambridge (Holdings) Limited

Inspection dates: 9 to 11 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Marshall of Cambridge (Holdings) Limited started providing directly funded apprenticeships in 2017. It offers engineering apprenticeships from level 2 to level 6. The apprentices specialise in aircraft engineering and land-based systems engineering. At the time of the inspection, there were 133 apprentices. Apprentices study engineering apprenticeships, with under a quarter studying the aerospace engineer (degree) apprenticeship. Most apprentices work at the Cambridge site. Marshall of Cambridge (Holdings) Limited uses one subcontractor to deliver the level 6 aerospace engineer (degree) apprenticeship.

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

Apprentices are very proud and passionate about the standard of their work. They demonstrate exceptional professional behaviours. In every element of their work apprentices complete, they demand perfection. This helps them develop the high standards expected of them at work.

Apprentices benefit from a good range of specialised industry-relevant training at their workplace. For example, they complete confined space training and mobile elevated working platform training. This enables them to develop the specifically required industry-standard skills quickly and confidently.

Apprentices demonstrate excellent teamwork practices. They listen and act appropriately to the views of team members. They readily take on additional responsibilities to help the team complete tasks in a timely manner. Apprentices are proactive and eager to contribute their ideas to the team. As a result, they become highly valued team members.

Apprentices are safe. They know that they must be careful about whom they talk to about their work. They are cautious with the information they share on their social media pages. This helps them to remain safe at work and in their personal lives.

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

Leaders and managers have designed a curriculum that is highly valued globally by the aviation industry. Leaders have secured contracts with major defence departments and airline companies. This provides apprentices with the opportunity to work on cutting-edge aircraft technology, ensuring that they gain highly sought-after knowledge and skills.

Employers work extremely effectively with leaders and trainers throughout the apprenticeship programme. Employers match the duties they give apprentices exactly to the skills they need to practise and refine. This helps apprentices to secure their knowledge and become highly skilled professionals.

Apprentices who need extra help with their studies perform as well as or better than their peers. The help they receive enables them to ably balance their work and studies. Trainers are adept at amending their practice and teaching resources to accommodate, for example, those with a sight impairment.

Trainers plan and teach the curriculum effectively. Apprentices build seamlessly on their prior learning. They develop basic but essential hand skills before moving on to more complex subjects. Apprentices complete simple tasks such as setting out and cutting metal sheets. They learn to join it with rivets using more complex machines and working collaboratively in teams.

Apprentices receive informative and detailed feedback from their trainers. This helps them to be able to check their work and make appropriate improvements. Apprentices are highly evaluative and self-critical of their own work. They become resilient and are committed to continual improvement.

Most apprentices develop and improve their English skills. Trainers accurately check and identify errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Apprentices learn and use more complex technical language over time. As a result, they improve their written skills and produce accurate work.

Apprentices benefit from a highly inclusive workplace. They have mutually respectful relationships with their managers, supervisors, trainers and peers. Apprentices have a good understanding of equality and diversity and how to treat people with respect. Apprentices are confident to challenge inappropriate behaviour and are clear about their duties. They quickly become valuable members of the teams they work in.

Trainers have not ensured that apprentices and their managers have a good understanding of their final examinations. Trainers do not routinely support and prepare apprentices effectively. Apprentices are apprehensive and only have a basic understanding of what to expect.

Trainers' use of assessment is variable. In the level 3 engineering technician programme, trainers use assessment information effectively. They check apprentices' starting points and ensure that apprentices do not repeat learning that they already know. However, for aerospace engineer (degree) apprentices, assessment is less effective, with apprentices repeating topics that they already have a comprehensive understanding of.

Leaders do not ensure that apprentices receive effective and ongoing careers advice and guidance. Apprentices receive careers advice limited to career options within the company. Consequently, apprentices are unaware of how they can use their transferable skills and knowledge beyond their immediate employer and the aviation industry.

Leaders and managers have effective oversight of the quality of education. They take swift and decisive actions to make appropriate improvements. Leaders and managers recognise that assessment of learning and knowledge on the level 6 aerospace engineer (degree) is not yet good. They are working closely with their partner organisation to improve this. However, it is too early to judge the impact of their actions.

Governance arrangements are insufficient to challenge leaders to provide an outstanding education. Leaders are taking appropriate action to remedy this oversight. However, at the time of inspection, it was too soon to judge the impact of leaders' actions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding team maintains effective partnerships with external stakeholders to meet apprentices' needs. Apprentices, including those who are at risk of self-harm, receive prompt and appropriate specialist help. This enables apprentices to manage the pressures of work and their personal lives.

Tutors and managers promote an active, healthy lifestyle. During COVID-19, tutors and managers provided well-being packages to apprentices. This included cooking ingredients, healthy eating recipes, exercise activities and other resources. Apprentices have completed mental health first-aid training. They feel well supported in their studies and their work.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers need to ensure that trainers assess the starting points of aerospace engineer (degree) apprentices effectively to help apprentices build appropriately on what they already know without repeating elements they are fully competent in.
- Leaders and managers need to ensure that apprentices receive ongoing and impartial careers advice and guidance to enable them to make informed choices beyond their immediate employer and the aviation industry.
- Leaders and managers need to ensure that governance arrangements are strengthened to challenge them further to secure outstanding education.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53257
Address	The Airport Newmarket Road Cambridge CB5 8RX
Contact number	01223 373737
Website	www.marshallskillsacademy.com
Principal/CEO	Dan Edwards (General Manager)
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	Blackpool College

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the apprenticeship 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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