

Inspection of Crosby Management Training Ltd

Inspection dates: 22 to 25 March 2022

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

Crosby Management Training Ltd (Crosby) was established in 1997. The provider has held a contract to provide apprenticeships since May 2017. Leaders and managers led on the development of six apprenticeship standards. At the time of the inspection, 542 apprentices were in learning. Precisely 161 were studying standards in human resources at levels 3 and 5, 101 were studying butchery and food preparation at levels 2 and 3, 67 were studying learning and development at levels 3 and 5 and a further 61 were studying the senior people professional apprenticeship at level 7. The remaining apprentices were studying apprenticeships in payroll, business administration, teaching, coaching and aviation.

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

Apprentices have positive attitudes to their learning and are motivated to develop their skills in the workplace. They quickly gain more responsibility at work because of their apprenticeship.

Apprentices contribute to society well. They support their peers and other communities effectively. For example, level 5 coaching professional apprentices support a charity offering coaching and counselling services.

Apprentices develop the behaviours identified in their standard. For example, butcher apprentices demonstrate effective customer service skills, including giving advice on how to cook particular joints of meat.

Leaders ensure that apprentices have opportunities to develop their wider skills. For example, some apprentices participate in an outdoor residential activity, during which they build resilience, character and confidence to communicate with their peers. Apprentices deploy these skills well in their day-to-day job roles.

Apprentices feel safe at work. They enjoy working in harmonious, inclusive work settings, and know how to report concerns, should they arise. Apprentices know how to keep themselves safe online. For example, they know not to share personal information and know how to protect their personal and professional reputation.

Too many apprentices do not have a well-developed understanding of British values. In the standards where these are taught well, apprentices' understanding is reinforced effectively. This is often from well-thought-through 'topic of the month' conversations. However, too few apprentices can explain how these values relate to their day-to-day work activities.

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

Leaders have developed a specialist curriculum which focuses precisely on their areas of expertise while supporting national skills needs in subjects such as human resources, butchery and aviation. As Crosby owns a large shareholding in an apprentice employer - Walter Smith Fine Foods - they have led trailblazer employer groups for the development of butchery, human resources, learning and development and level 7 senior people professional apprenticeships. As a result, they have developed an ambitious curriculum based on current research, demonstrating high aspirations for apprentices' skills development, and preparation for their next steps.

Leaders ensure that trainers are well supported to enhance their teaching and vocational knowledge through a programme of professional development and - in the case of butchery - annual practical skills refreshers and seasonal work experience.

Since the monitoring visit, leaders have strengthened the function of governance to include representatives from both staff and apprentices in addition to the two existing governors who bring appropriate educational backgrounds, to enable them to hold leaders to account. Governors receive regular reports on business performance; however, the reports do not yet provide sufficient focus on the quality of education apprentices receive. Governors have rightly challenged this and are now receiving more helpful information. However, the impact of the challenge this information has allowed them to provide cannot yet be seen.

In the majority of cases, the curriculum is logically sequenced. As a result, the majority of apprentices are quickly able to use their classroom learning in the workplace. For example, level 3 learning and development practitioner apprentices use the theory they have been taught on learning needs analysis to conduct these in their workplace.

The majority of apprentices engage enthusiastically with online teaching sessions. They contribute well to online group work and feedback activity. For example, in a level 3 human resource apprenticeship workshop, the trainer skilfully encouraged apprentices to relate the changes in the professional code of conduct to the behaviours in the standard.

Trainers check apprentices' understanding well. They identify and correct apprentices' misunderstandings during progress reviews and regular workshop sessions. In addition, trainers provide clear and constructive written and oral feedback. As a result, apprentices are using this feedback to improve their work.

Apprentices are largely well supported in understanding and preparing for assessment. For example, the level 7 senior people professional apprentices benefit from coaching sessions which provide guidance in addressing previously identified areas for development. However, a small number of apprentices do not have a clear enough understanding of the assessment requirements and as a result are confused about portfolio content and assessment dates.

Although apprentices have a good awareness of their progress against the required knowledge, skills and behaviours within their apprenticeship standard, some are not aware of the grades available to them and as a result do not know how to achieve the higher grades.

Following the recent appointment of new English and mathematics trainers, apprentices studying functional skills have a better focus on developing the specific skills. Trainers use initial assessment and a diagnostic test to identify areas of weakness for apprentices. Trainers subsequently use ongoing assessment well, to reassess gaps in knowledge, and plan sessions to tackle these. As a result, apprentices are beginning to make good progress in functional skills; however, it is too soon to measure the impact on their achievement.

The majority of apprentices are developing significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours, making strong links between theory and implementation in the

workplace. For example, apprentices on the level 5 human resource consultant standard undertake additional roles at work and some gain promotions as a result of their learning. Where this is done less well, such as the level 5 coaching apprenticeship, apprentices feel less confident about their skills and the application in the workplace.

In the majority of cases, trainers work effectively with employers to identify gaps in apprentices' workplace skills. Employers then provide additional opportunities in the workplace to ensure apprentices have the opportunity to close these gaps rapidly. In the small minority of cases where this is less effective, apprentices are not able to make strong links between theory and workplace practice.

Leaders and managers do not always prepare apprentices for their next steps well enough. Too few apprentices receive impartial careers guidance, and consequently they do not fully understand the wider opportunities the successful completion of their apprenticeship offers them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have appointed a suitably qualified and experienced designated safeguarding lead (DSL). They also ensure that all staff undertake annual training in safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, equality and diversity, and a wide variety of related topics.

The DSL carefully selects a 'topic of the month', which is based on current affairs. They provide resources and support to trainers to equip them to enable effective review of these topics with apprentices - particularly where these are sensitive or difficult to discuss. As a result, trainers feel better prepared to have discussions with apprentices when developing their understanding of difficult topics.

Leaders do not ensure they receive relevant information on local risks to share this with apprentices and trainers to broaden their knowledge of the risks specific to the areas in which they live and work.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that all apprentices have a clear understanding of the grades available to them, so they can achieve their full potential.
- Ensure that trainers plan and give focused training to support apprentices to fill gaps in their English and mathematical skills.
- Ensure that all apprentices have access to impartial careers advice and guidance, beyond that of progression opportunities in their current workplace, so that they are aware of the full range of progression opportunities available to them.
- Ensure that apprentices' understanding of life in modern Britain and the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism are continually developed throughout their apprenticeship, so that they can apply this to their daily lives.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1278609
Address	Technology Centre University of Wolverhampton Science Park Coxwell Avenue Wolverhampton WV10 9RU
Contact number	01902 837452
Website	https://crosbytraining.co.uk/
Principal/CEO	Paul Cadman
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of central operations and company secretary, 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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