

NTG Training Limited

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

NTG Training Limited was inspected in July 2021. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in addressing the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

NTG Training Limited (NTG) was registered as a training company in 2008. NTG offers apprenticeship training in six vocational areas. These areas are health and social care, business administration, customer service, team leading, digital marketing, and warehousing. NTG started training apprentices funded through the apprenticeship levy in December 2017. In February 2018, the Education and Skills Funding Agency awarded NTG an apprenticeship contract.

The provider currently has 277 apprentices. The vast majority of these are on standards-based apprenticeships at levels 2 to 5. Most apprentices are adults, with a few aged between 16 and 18. Just over half study health and social care apprenticeships and around a third study business administration, customer services, and team leading apprenticeships. The remainder are on digital marketing, textile care, and warehousing apprenticeships.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring tutors use assessments at the start of the programme to identify apprentices' starting points and develop an ambitious individualised curriculum? Do tutors use these assessments to set aspirational targets and help apprentices improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours over time?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have taken action to identify apprentices' starting points more accurately. They have introduced a 'skills matrix' at the start of the programme to identify apprentices' existing knowledge, skills and behaviours and use this information to plan a challenging curriculum. Tutors help apprentices to develop these attributes through effective coordination of on- and off-the job training. Tutors monitor the progress that apprentices make on their apprenticeship at progress reviews.

Tutors use a range of assessments to gain an accurate oversight of apprentices' starting points and ensure apprentices are on the most appropriate apprenticeship. They plan and develop an individualised curriculum with apprentices and their employers to fill the gaps in apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. As a result, apprentices develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours incrementally

throughout their programme. For example, apprentices on the 'leader in adult care' programme select the 'principles of supporting young people with a disability to make the transition to adult life' topic because their employers are about to extend their service offer to young people. Others select 'leading and managing infection prevention and control' because of the impact of COVID-19. Employers often ask tutors to teach this unit early in the programme to provide vital knowledge, skills and behaviours relevant to the current situation in the care sector.

Tutors provide apprentices with clear developmental feedback on their assignment work that helps them improve the quality of their work throughout their apprenticeship. They know what they need to do to improve and receive useful hints and tips on how to gain higher grades and improve the quality of their written English. Apprentices aspire to achieve 'distinction' grades. Most produce work of at least the expected standard.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that tutors plan, record, and review on- and off-the-job training with employers so that apprentices apply their new learning in work? **Reasonable progress**

Managers monitor the quality of on- and off-the-job training effectively. Apprentices demonstrate how they apply their training at work. For example, healthcare apprentices use recently learned knowledge in self-awareness and managing staff to deal with professional practice and behaviours more effectively. They develop confidence in their care practice discussing medication with general practitioners. Consequently, employers benefit from well-trained and conscientious apprentices taking care of their residents.

Tutors and employers design projects that support the knowledge sessions and help learners practise and apply their new knowledge and skills. For example, apprentices act on regulatory requirements and audit reports to improve working practices in their settings. As a result, apprentices contribute to business and workplace improvements.

Tutors and apprentices work together to plan on- and off-the-job training effectively. Apprentices work with their line managers to ensure they can practise their new learning at work to the benefit of themselves, their business, and their service users. For example, apprentices following the 'leader in adult care' programme use their new learning about communication styles to practise different approaches needed to deal with their teams of multiple staff. Apprentices liaise with their line managers to facilitate opportunities at work to shadow colleagues in roles of greater responsibility, such as completing stock control of medicines. They gain access to care planning software and take part in disciplinary investigations. Apprentices rightly value and become better at their jobs because of their training.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that tutors receive training, so they can support apprentices to develop their English and mathematical skills? **Reasonable progress**

Leaders have holistically reviewed the delivery of the English and mathematics curriculum. They have retrained staff, using external expertise, to help staff feel more confident about teaching the functional skills curriculum, both in the classroom and online. Tutors have taken responsibility for their own development in English and mathematics. For example, in addition to the training provided by leaders, they have attended courses in mathematics pedagogy and in understanding the mindset of mathematics learners. As a result, tutors are more confident and more effective in their ability to teach English and mathematics.

Tutors teach English and mathematics in one-to-one sessions that are valued by the apprentices. Leaders and managers have designed a suite of online guides that assist tutors to teach English and mathematics more effectively. Tutors use a new bank of resources to target gaps in apprentices' learning on topics including fractions and probability.

Apprentices benefit from well-planned English and mathematics teaching that helps them contextualise their learning and make progress in areas they have previously struggled with. For example, apprentices who have failed their mathematics examinations in school explain how to solve complicated fractions. They say that the way the teacher explains the subject makes it easier for them to learn. Apprentices new to management roles explain how new learning on effective communication helps them to think about their approach, body language, and demeanour before speaking to their staff. As a result, apprentices develop their confidence and improve their performance at work.

Although tutors are well prepared for their teaching sessions, they do not all have a solid knowledge of English and mathematics in their long-term memories. For example, some tutors forget how to end formal letters using faithfully or sincerely. They were unable to answer apprentices' mathematics-related questions without referring to the answer sheets. As a result, a few apprentices do not make swift progress in the development of their English and mathematical skills.

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring their self-assessment process is rigorous and accurately identifies the strengths and weaknesses in their provision? **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers used their most recent inspection report as the starting point for their self-assessment and quality improvement planning. They revised the format and structure of their self-assessment processes to better evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their provision. Governors, leaders and managers have a more

accurate and improving oversight of the strengths and weaknesses in the training their apprentices receive.

Leaders and managers use a range of measures to identify areas for improvement and take actions to enhance the quality of training for apprentices. For example, they recognise the need to improve the use of assessments to identify apprentices' starting points and plan their learning more effectively. They now ensure that all tutors collect an appropriate range of information about apprentices' knowledge and skills in their vocational area, but also in English, mathematics, and digital literacy, to plan learning that fills gaps in apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. As a result, apprentices benefit from a well-planned programme that helps them develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to be successful.

Leaders use a standardised approach to check on the quality of training in all subject areas. They conduct quality reviews using lesson visits, scrutiny of work and learner records, progress monitoring and learner and employer surveys to gauge the quality of their provision. Where they find differences in quality, they use risk assessment and targeted actions to provide tutors with the training they need to improve the learning experience for apprentices. Consequently, most apprentices make their expected levels of progress.

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