

Inspection of Quest Training South East Ltd

Inspection dates: 5 to 8 July 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

Quest Training South East Limited (Quest Training) began to offer apprenticeship programmes in 2011 as a subcontractor for two general further education colleges. Since 2018, it has offered apprenticeships directly under its own contract. Quest Training works with a large number of small employers in the care and early years sectors. Almost all apprentices are studying care or early years specialisms.

There are currently 278 apprentices studying with Quest Training. Forty-three are aged 16 to 18 and the remaining 235 are over 19 years of age. Approximately 170 study functional skills mathematics and 135 study functional skills English as part of their apprenticeship programme. A small number of apprentices have an education, health and care plan.

There are 170 apprentices on early years programmes, with 104 apprentices studying the level 3 early years educator, 41 studying the level 2 early years practitioner and 25 studying the level 5 early years lead practitioner standards. There are approximately 65 apprentices studying care specialisms, including 16 on the level 2 adult care worker and 37 on the level 3 lead adult care worker standards. Other apprentices are studying on a range of standards, including nine studying level 3 business administrator.

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

Apprentices benefit from the plentiful care and support their tutors provide. Tutors know their tutees well. They respond promptly to any concerns or questions that apprentices raise and they implement appropriate support strategies to meet their needs. For example, tutors support apprentices with dyslexia, those with anxiety or those who are combining study with being a lone parent.

Apprentices gain significant and valuable vocational skills to help them make a good contribution in their settings, as well as to progress on to further learning or gain promotion at work. Most apprentices benefit from helpful information and advice to plan for their next steps. For example, many early years apprentices gain promotion as a result of their apprenticeship and become room leaders and others take on additional responsibilities such as supporting children with additional needs.

Apprentices value the inclusive and respectful culture at Quest Training. They are respectful of each other and their tutors. Tutors use a variety of activities to effectively promote apprentices' understanding of fundamental British values, and many demonstrate their awareness of how to be a good and active citizen. For example, these apprentices enjoy getting involved in fundraising for charities linked to their sectors. However, not all apprentices participate in wider learning or additional activities and so do not develop their broader skills.

Apprentices feel safe. They have a good understanding of safe working practices and are confident to apply their knowledge of safeguarding to their settings so that the children and clients in their care are safe. For example, early years apprentices develop a good awareness of the importance of food hygiene and care apprentices recognise and know how to identify and report any signs of abuse of their clients, particularly those who are more vulnerable such as those with dementia or those who are non-verbal.

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

Leaders and managers have a well-considered rationale for their apprenticeship offer. It meets the needs of local employers who consist mainly of small adult care or early years settings. Leaders and managers work closely with these employers to plan and review the curriculum. They have introduced newer apprenticeships, such as the level 3 business administrator standard, to meet the skills gaps in the employers' business support functions.

Leaders and managers value the role and contribution of their staff. They have implemented a range of thoughtful and sensible strategies to support their staff for the benefit of learners and their learning. For example, new tutors work with a 'buddy' who is a more experienced member of the team. All staff benefit from a consistent focus on their well-being and have access to counselling and other support measures. Leaders and managers provide feedback to staff on their teaching and their overall performance. However, leaders and managers have not

ensured clarity on responsibilities and specific targets so that all staff are clear on the steps they need to take to achieve the intended quality improvements.

Tutors have significant experience in the specialist sectors with some still being current practitioners. Apprentices benefit from this vocational expertise, and they develop highly relevant workplace skills that their employers value. For example, tutors support business administrator apprentices to understand the importance of accurate application of relevant legislation when collecting clients' personal data so that their employer is compliant with data protection law.

Apprentices become increasingly confident as their knowledge and skills develop. In particular, they become skilled communicators and understand the importance of effective communication in their professional roles. For example, level 2 adult care apprentices learn about different methods of communication according to their clients' needs. They implement alternative methods of communication to allow clients to make their own choices as part of the 'no decision about me without me' protocol. This also helps apprentices better understand the concept of individual liberty.

Tutors check apprentices' learning effectively. They set carefully designed assessment tasks to challenge apprentices to research and learn new knowledge and then apply it to a practical task. Tutors share in detail what the apprentice has done well and why. They also provide very clear guidance on what would improve the work further. As a result, apprentices have a good understanding of their strengths and can explain how they will apply their learning in subsequent assessments and their roles at work. For example, level 2 adult care apprentices articulate what they need to do to achieve high grades in their imminent final assessments.

A minority of apprentices attend voluntary, online taught sessions which cover a range of highly relevant topics. For example, early years apprentices who attended a session on phonics learned about activities to try out with the children in their care, including a game sounding out words such as the 'shush' of the trees. However, very few apprentices attend these sessions and so miss out on valuable and highly relevant learning.

Leaders and managers have implemented a very wide range of quality assurance mechanisms to help them monitor the quality of provision. However, they do not interrogate the information they gain so that they can accurately measure the impact of their actions. For example, leaders and managers do not have an agreed measure of attendance or predicted final achievements. This limits their ability to assure themselves that their key improvement priorities are being achieved in a timely way.

A small team of governors offer a level of scrutiny and challenge which helps to strengthen the provision. However, they are actively seeking to recruit additional members to add rigour to their scrutiny. In addition, the reports they review do not always allow them to have the data or information they need to fully support and

challenge leaders and managers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers implement safer recruitment practices. The designated safeguarding lead, and her deputy, are appropriately trained. They ensure that all staff attend relevant external safeguarding training. They also hold frequent refresher sessions so that all tutors are confident to identify and report any safeguarding or welfare concerns. Tutors use the weekly Monday News bulletins to discuss topics of relevance with their tutees. This ensures that apprentices feel safe, and they develop a good awareness of staying safe in their working lives and their personal lives. For example, apprentices are supported to sustain positive mental health and resilience. This has helped apprentices to cope with the pressures in their sectors during COVID-19.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should review how they monitor and measure the progress they are making against their improvement priorities, for example attendance, so that they are assured the actions they have put in place are working.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that governors are provided with the information they need to carry out their roles of support and challenge.
- Leaders and managers should provide tutors with clearer targets, and feedback against these targets, so that they can continue to improve their teaching and their support for apprentices.
- Leaders and managers should take steps to ensure that apprentices benefit from the full range of learning opportunities open to them.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1270885
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Website	www.questfortraining.com
Principal/CEO	Elaine Wain
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 curriculum 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.

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