

# Inspection of Ignite Training Limited

Inspection dates:

27 to 29 September 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**

Ignite Training Limited is an independent learning provider located in North Shields. It first received funding to deliver apprenticeships in March 2019 and provides specialist provision in gas training in the north east of England. There are currently 54 apprentices enrolled on the level 3 gas engineering apprenticeship. Around half of the apprentices are aged 16 to 18. The provider works predominantly with small businesses that need skilled and qualified gas engineers who are able to service, repair and install heating appliances in homes and commercial properties.

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

Apprentices receive good support to develop their confidence. They start their training with very limited knowledge of the gas industry, but quickly develop a range of highly valued gas installation skills such as servicing and repair of boilers, cookers and extraction systems. Apprentices quickly become confident in their ability as gas engineers and take on additional responsibilities such as installing and commissioning gas-fired boilers with minimal supervision.

Apprentices benefit from good peer support within their small class groups. They frequently share their ideas about the challenges that they have at work. Apprentices enjoy comparing and contrasting new ideas about how to be more effective at work, such as how to use technology to research gas regulations and manufacturers' information.

Apprentices understand the importance of workplace safety. They undertake training sessions that rigorously test and reinforce safe working practices in the gas industry. They complete activities such as safe isolation of gas supply and systematic tightness tests to ensure that there are no gas leaks when repairing gas fires and cookers.

Apprentices feel safe. Staff teach apprentices the importance of online safety and the dangers associated with the internet, such as grooming and abuse through social media. They also teach apprentices about the importance of keeping passwords protected and keeping customer information confidential. Apprentices clearly understand to whom they should report concerns that they may have about their safety, including dealing with difficult or abusive customers at work.

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

Leaders have a very clear understanding of the gas engineering sector. They work closely with small businesses and local authorities to deliver high-quality apprenticeship training that meets the needs of the gas sector. Leaders have developed a curriculum that is fully informed by their expertise as gas engineering specialists.

Leaders have employed highly skilled gas engineers as tutors. Many staff have previous experience of working in well-known and prestigious gas industry businesses. Those in teaching roles continue to work in the gas sector, which helps to keep their industrial skills highly relevant and up to date.

Leaders have invested in high-quality resources to support apprentices in their training to become skilled gas engineers. Workshops are well equipped with boilers, cookers and heating equipment that reflect current industry standards, as well as older appliances that customers may still have in their homes. Leaders have also responded to the changing energy market, and have adopted air source heat pump training as well as purchasing alternative heat-exchange products so that

apprentices are aware of the emerging technologies that will influence the future of the industry.

Leaders provide staff with helpful training and support to improve their teaching practice. They accurately evaluate the quality of teaching. They implement useful activities such as observations of teaching, standardisation sessions and liaison with employers to ensure that staff are teaching current industry practices. Leaders provide staff with time to develop their teaching and commercial practice further by, for example, attending manufacturers' training.

Staff teach apprentices well about the diverse experiences that they will have at work. They train apprentices how to be respectful and meet their customers' individual needs. Apprentices learn that it is important to install thermostats at a suitable height for customers who use a wheelchair. Staff teach apprentices how to use translation software when working with customers who speak English as an additional language to remove potential barriers to high-quality customer service.

Teachers accurately assess apprentices' work. They provide apprentices with useful feedback on assessed work and on their performance at work. Apprentices appreciate the guidance that they receive from their teachers following assessment as it helps them to prioritise what actions are the most important. For example, teachers provide apprentices with advice on the best ways to purge air from gas lines. In the few instances where apprentices fall behind, teachers agree targets with employers to help apprentices to catch up.

Teachers help apprentices to develop the English and mathematics skills that they need in their work. They provide apprentices with learning aids including spell checkers and provide tips on how to formalise their writing when producing job reports for customers. Staff also teach apprentices how to calculate gas flow rates accurately and in compliance with manufacturers' safety guidance. The few apprentices who need to achieve functional skills qualifications do so successfully.

Teachers prepare apprentices well for end-point assessment. Apprentices know that there are high expectations at every stage of the apprenticeship, including in their practical and theory examinations. They know that they must achieve 'gas safe' accreditation to progress to end-point assessment and that to achieve a distinction requires passing at a very high percentage in all their examinations. A high proportion of apprentices achieve a distinction grade.

Staff prepare apprentices well for their next steps. All apprentices have a specific careers session at which teachers inform them about what is needed to run a successful business. Teachers use case studies to demonstrate to apprentices what is realistic and achievable in their future career. They enthuse apprentices about the gas industry by exploring future training considerations with them on topics such as hydrogen gas boilers and other heat exchange technology.

Staff value and are appreciative of the support that leaders provide to them in relation to their well-being. Leaders provide an environment that encourages

collaboration and teamwork without overburdening staff with unnecessary assessment, planning or workloads. Staff have manageable caseloads but are held to account for their apprentices' performance through a range of effective monitoring activities, including observations, regular performance reviews and management meetings.

In a few instances, apprentices do not get sufficient access to the full range of gas installations that they need to know about early enough in their training. This causes delays to their progress towards completion of their training. For these few apprentices, other factors, such as employers not releasing them for training, slows their progress further, as they miss important teaching sessions about the gas industry.

Leaders have not successfully developed a comprehensive personal development curriculum to enrich apprentices' lives beyond the apprenticeship. Apprentices have limited opportunity to become aware of and involved in activities to develop their understanding of their role as a citizen in their local communities.

Leaders currently have no accountability arrangements in place beyond the requirements of funding and regulatory bodies to assure themselves that all aspects of their leadership are of high quality. They do not have in place any arrangements to identify the few weaknesses in their leadership such as the arrangements to ensure that appropriate pre-employment checks take place when staff are recruited.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are well trained and knowledgeable in safeguarding. They provide appropriate support for apprentices who are vulnerable or at risk of being overwhelmed, such as those coping with family bereavement or becoming parents at a young age.

Leaders ensure that staff complete annual update training in safeguarding, so they have the most recent knowledge of local and regional risks. Staff teach apprentices about people trafficking in Darlington and Berwick so that apprentices have greater awareness of potential signs that they may encounter in customers' homes.

Staff teach apprentices that there may be increased threats from customers who incorrectly blame employees in the gas sector for the increase in global energy prices. They help apprentices to understand how to deal with such situations.

## **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Ensure that all apprentices receive training in the full range of gas installations early enough in their training so they can become skilled gas engineers within the planned timescale.

- Ensure that all apprentices are able to attend day-release sessions so their progress is not delayed.
- Implement a comprehensive personal development curriculum that includes a wider range of enrichment activities for apprentices.
- Put oversight arrangements in place to enable the few existing weaknesses in leadership and management to be identified accurately.

## **Provider details**

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<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Emma Garrick
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director, 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

Ian Frear, lead inspector

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