

PLT Training Limited

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

Unique reference number:	2626824
Name of lead inspector:	Sharon Dowling, His Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	10 and 11 January 2023
Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	Fallings Park Industrial Estate Park Lane Wolverhampton WV10 9QB

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

PLT Training Limited was inspected in April 2022. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

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

PLT Training Limited is an independent training provider based in the West Midlands. It mainly provides apprenticeships in care, business and management to employers in the health and social care sector. At the time of the visit, 117 apprentices were in learning, of whom 40 were on the level 2 adult care worker, 23 were on the level 3 lead adult care worker, 20 were on the level 5 leader in adult care, 23 were on the level 3 team leader or supervisor, seven were on level 3 safety, health and environment, three were on the level 5 operations or department manager and one on the level 3 customer services specialist apprenticeship. All apprentices are aged 19 or over. The provider does not work with any subcontractors.

Themes

What progress have leaders made to ensure that apprentices are supported to develop the full range of knowledge, skills and behaviours required for the apprenticeship they are studying, including English and mathematics? Reasonable progress

Since the previous inspection, leaders have restructured the content of their apprenticeships to focus more clearly on all elements of the apprenticeship standards. In contrast to the previous qualification-led curriculum, there is now a stronger focus on apprentices' development of the specific knowledge, skills and behaviours identified in the apprenticeship standard. The majority of apprentices develop the full range of skills they need to be successful in their final assessments. Most apprentices who complete their apprenticeship achieve high grades.

Leaders have put appropriate processes in place to track the development of apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. Skills coaches use assessment effectively to inform teaching throughout the apprenticeship. Apprentices are aware of the progress they are making towards the achievement of their apprenticeship.

Leaders and skills coaches have put in place a range of flexible training opportunities for apprentices, including group sessions and regular one-to-one meetings. Apprentices are able to access training and support flexibly, which allows them to balance the demands of their work with those of their apprenticeship. Apprentices

who have fallen behind or had a break in learning receive the required additional support to catch up.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have reviewed the curriculum teaching model for English and mathematics, enabling apprentices who require functional skills in these subjects to start them earlier in their apprenticeship. Skills coaches focus on developing these skills over time and offer support and resources. As a result, a high proportion of apprentices achieve their English and mathematics qualifications on time.

What progress have leaders made to ensure that employers are involved in progress reviews, and how well does this support the planning and implementation of on- and off-the-job training, ensuring that apprentices develop the skills they need to be effective in the workplace? **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and skills coaches have taken steps to increase employer participation in progress reviews to support the planning, coordination and implementation of on- and off-the-job training. They have introduced a new enrolment process to ensure that both the employer and the apprentice understand their commitment to the apprenticeship. Where this engagement has been successful, employers are able to describe the expectations on them and are now proactively participating in the planning of the apprenticeship and the monitoring of their apprentices' progress.

Leaders have taken the decision to cease recruitment of apprentices with employers who fail to show the appropriate level of commitment to the apprenticeship. In these circumstances, they have made a strategic decision to support current apprentices until they complete and achieve.

The majority of apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours and practise these in the workplace. They are supported to make clear links between the theories they are learning and their workplace practice. For example, level 3 safety, health and environment apprentices develop their learning on risk assessments in the workplace, using the taught knowledge to write and implement more complex and useful risk assessments.

Most apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job training. Skills coaches use this to good effect to support apprentices' development of new knowledge and skills. Team leading and safety, health and environment apprentices have allocated time and quiet workspaces in which to complete work. They meet with their skills coaches on a regular basis to enhance their knowledge and develop their skills further.

What progress has been made by leaders to take steps to ensure that they benefit from external **Reasonable progress**

challenge and scrutiny to support improvement of their apprenticeships?

Leaders have recruited and work closely with a suitably experienced person to provide external scrutiny, to support improvements on PLT's apprenticeships. With significant experience in the further education sector, they provide valuable support and insight into the apprenticeship and quality assurance processes.

The external person has a sound understanding of the areas for development and is already providing suitable guidance and challenge. They have initially worked closely with leaders to develop the quality improvement plan further. They have scrutinised and provided feedback on the revised process for planning apprentices' learning against the knowledge, skills and behaviours criteria within each apprenticeship to initiate swift improvements.

While this work has started relatively recently, it is already having a positive impact on the quality of training that apprentices receive. For example, following feedback about the practicality of leaders scrutinising the progress that apprentices are making at an individual apprentice level, leaders have implemented headline reporting to record and monitor the progress of all apprentices, putting in place additional support where needed.

What steps have leaders and skills coaches taken to ensure that apprentices understand the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism in their everyday lives? Reasonable progress

Leaders and skills coaches are implementing a range of strategies to help apprentices gain an understanding of the risks of extremism and radicalisation and how this affects their everyday lives where they live and work. The designated safeguarding lead is developing contacts across regions to gain a greater understanding of local risks to apprentices. This information is being used in a new newsletter, which identifies local risks across the regions where apprentices live and work.

Skills coaches have included safeguarding and radicalisation throughout the apprenticeship delivery plan to help secure apprentices' understanding of these topics. Most apprentices have an increased awareness of how to identify concerns. For example, level 2 care apprentices describe how, as parents, they are aware of the risks and the signs to look out for if their children were being exposed to radical or extremist views when online.

Most skills coaches skilfully include questions and discussions regarding these areas in their lessons with apprentices. Apprentices who have recently started on their apprenticeship develop an early understanding of these risks. Team leader

apprentices develop an understanding of safeguarding early in their apprenticeship and use this knowledge to good effect to change working practices. For example, following initial safeguarding training, team leading apprentices implemented a second stage of action for their team when encountering minors who are alone when visiting the home of clients. Now, in addition to 'record and do not enter', the information is passed to the local authority.

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