

Inspection of Salford and Trafford Engineering Group Training Association Limited

Inspection dates:

24 to 27 January 2023

Overall effectiveness**Inadequate**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Salford and Trafford Engineering Group Training Association Limited (STEGTA) is an independent learning provider that provides training to apprentices across the country. STEGTA provides apprenticeships from levels 2 to 4. Almost all apprentices study engineering and manufacturing or construction apprenticeships.

At the time of the inspection, there were 318 apprentices in learning. Almost all apprentices follow standards-based apprenticeships. The largest numbers study the level 2 engineering operative, level 3 civil engineering technician, level 3 engineering fitter or level 3 maintenance and operations engineering technician apprenticeship. The remaining apprentices follow a range of apprenticeships, including building services engineering technician, engineering design and draughtsperson, engineering technician, railway engineering design technician, and science manufacturing technician at level 3, and engineering manufacturing technician and information manager at level 4. STEGTA works with 16 subcontractors that teach either mandatory or employer-requested qualifications on most apprenticeships.

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

Most apprentices enjoy their work and learning. They demonstrate a positive attitude towards their apprenticeship and a commitment to a career in engineering or construction. Apprentices recognise and value the knowledge and skills they gain in making them more employable and enhancing their career prospects. They are committed to their learning, know how to study effectively and take pride in their achievements.

Most apprentices benefit from additional learning and qualifications beyond the requirements of their apprenticeship. Many complete engineering diplomas. Level 4 engineering manufacturing technician apprentices study a higher national certificate before completing their final assessments. As a result, apprentices gain meaningful additional qualifications that are valued by employers across the sector.

Apprentices have high levels of attendance in training and at work. They are punctual. Training officers set clear expectations of professional behaviours, attendance and punctuality and reiterate these throughout the apprenticeship. Apprentices are aware of the impact that their behaviours and attitudes have on the reputation of their employers. Most apprentices routinely demonstrate professional and courteous behaviour.

Training officers, instructors and employers help apprentices to develop their character and confidence over time. They treat apprentices with respect and coach them to develop the resilience and aptitude they need in order to operate confidently in the workplace. Most apprentices become productive and competent employees.

Most apprentices say that they feel safe and know how and to whom they should report any concerns. They feel confident that staff will not tolerate bullying or harassment in the training centre or the workplace. However, despite this, leaders' processes and arrangements for safeguarding are ineffective.

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

Leaders outline a clear rationale for the curriculum that they offer to meet the growing demand for engineers and construction professionals in the region and nationally. This ensures that employers have a pipeline of apprentices in training to meet the requirements of their businesses. Following the completion of their apprenticeships, many apprentices gain promotion or take on additional responsibilities because of the training that they have received.

Leaders develop most programmes in partnership with employers very effectively. In level 2 engineering operations, they work with employers to teach the concept of fluid power using test rigs and hydraulic and pneumatic equipment so that apprentices can practise their skills on industry-standard equipment in the training centre. However, in level 3 civil engineering, leaders do not routinely include

employers or subcontractors in the development of the curriculum. Apprentices follow different programmes of learning provided by subcontractors, which do not always relate to their job role.

Training officers and instructors sequence and teach the majority of the apprenticeship curriculum effectively. Level 3 maintenance and operation engineers learn about health and safety and safe working practices before developing their hand skills, which they apply to wiring components and stripping down motors. As a result, apprentices develop their confidence and competence to perform tasks with more fluency at work. In civil engineering, training officers teach in the order that best fits the projects and roles that apprentices complete at work. For example, they teach sustainability earlier for apprentices who are working on environmental projects. Most apprentices develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours logically and incrementally throughout their apprenticeship.

Training officers are well qualified and experienced in the engineering and construction sectors. They benefit from regular, industry-specific update training to maintain and further develop their knowledge. Most training officers and instructors use their subject expertise effectively to coach and guide apprentices. They link apprentices' theoretical learning to their practical skills development. However, in level 3 engineering fitting, apprentices learn the knowledge components of the apprenticeship as standalone topics and do not always benefit from timely opportunities to practise these skills at work.

The majority of training officers provide useful and constructive feedback to apprentices on the qualification in the apprenticeship standard. They use assessments effectively to identify and fill gaps in apprentices' knowledge. For example, civil engineering apprentices complete several draft versions of reports and reflect on projects that they complete at work. Training officers challenge apprentices to include technical terminology and broaden their knowledge through research.

However, training officers and instructors place too much emphasis on the completion of tasks and the qualifications in the apprenticeship standard. They do not routinely challenge apprentices to develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours to a higher standard.

Most apprentices improve their English and mathematical skills during their apprenticeship. Civil engineering apprentices improve their English skills by writing technical reports using engineering terminology. They develop their mathematical skills by carrying out calculations for low-emission zones. However, in the level 2 engineering operative standard, training officers do not plan functional skills teaching early enough into the apprenticeship for those who need these. This delays the development of English and mathematical skills for a few apprentices.

Most apprentices make at least the progress expected of them. They produce an appropriate standard of work for their level of learning. In the few cases where

apprentices fall behind, training officers and employers support them effectively to catch up and complete their apprenticeship.

Leaders ensure that apprentices receive thorough advice and guidance at the start of their apprenticeship to ensure that they are on the right programme. Training officers discuss progression and job opportunities on an ad-hoc basis during the apprenticeship. However, apprentices do not routinely benefit from well-planned, impartial careers information about the full range of opportunities available to them beyond their current pathway and employer. They do not have the information they need to make informed decisions about their potential career choices.

Leaders do not provide a curriculum that routinely equips all apprentices for life in modern Britain. They do not ensure that all apprentices benefit from training on healthy relationships, healthy lifestyles or fundamental British values. Apprentices cannot recall any opportunities for trips and visits, guest speakers or training sessions on topics such as mental health. Many apprentices know how to recognise the signs of extremism, such as changes in their colleagues' behaviour at work. However, they are less well informed about the local risks in the areas in which they live and work.

Leaders' oversight of the quality of education is too reactive. They do not evaluate the overall quality of training sufficiently. Processes are disjointed and vague and do not demonstrate that leaders and managers have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their provision.

Leaders have been too slow to secure effective oversight of the quality of training that apprentices receive at their subcontractors. Plans to visit and quality assure training in the training centre and at subcontractors have not routinely been fulfilled since before the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders are overly reliant on subcontractors' own processes in evaluating the quality of training that apprentices receive. Leaders do not plan and influence sufficiently the curriculum content that subcontractors teach. Too many subcontractors choose the curriculum content without input from employers and the provider.

Members of the advisory board are suitably qualified for their roles. While they demonstrate an understanding of the quality of education, members of the board do not hold leaders to account sufficiently well to bring about rapid improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Safeguarding processes and procedures are weak. Training for staff is not sufficiently comprehensive to ensure that they have the knowledge and understanding of how to identify and report safeguarding concerns, including about apprentices, effectively. When staff have identified specific potential safeguarding concerns, they do not routinely follow these up with decisive actions to ensure the safety of apprentices. This puts apprentices at risk of harm.

Members of the safeguarding team, who are responsible for the welfare and protection of apprentices, are not appropriately trained for their roles. Board members feel that they do not receive sufficient training on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Leaders do not ensure that they regularly review their safeguarding policies and procedures to incorporate relevant updates in order to protect apprentices from potential harm.

Leaders do not always provide sufficient information to help all apprentices understand safeguarding and the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism at the start of their apprenticeship. This remains a weakness from the previous inspection. It leaves apprentices vulnerable.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should urgently strengthen their safeguarding processes and procedures to ensure that apprentices are safe.
- Leaders should urgently provide comprehensive training to ensure that all staff have the knowledge and understanding to identify, report and follow up safeguarding concerns effectively.
- Leaders should ensure that all members of the governing body and safeguarding team are appropriately trained, experienced and qualified in safeguarding to carry out their roles effectively.
- Leaders should ensure that apprentices' knowledge and understanding of all aspects of safeguarding are developed further.
- Leaders should strengthen their quality assurance processes, including for subcontractors, to ensure that they have an accurate oversight of the quality of training that apprentices receive.
- Leaders should work more closely with subcontractors to develop and provide challenging and relevant curriculum content for all apprentices.
- Training officers should focus on challenging apprentices to develop their knowledge and skills to a higher standard beyond the competencies demanded by their qualifications.
- Training officers should plan to teach functional skills earlier in the programme in order to develop apprentices' English and mathematical skills swiftly.
- Leaders and training officers should provide a personal development curriculum in which apprentices can participate and benefit from in order to broaden their experience beyond the requirements of their apprenticeship.
- Leaders and training officers should ensure that they provide impartial information, advice and guidance to apprentices throughout their programme, so that apprentices are clear about the full range of opportunities and career pathways available to them.

Provider details

Unique reference number	54249
Address	4th Floor Duckworth House Lancastrian Office Centre Talbot Road Stretford Manchester M32 0FP
Contact number	0161 877 4078
Website	www.stegta.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	John Whitby
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	28 to 29 April 2016
Main subcontractors	Luminate Education Group Leeds City College The Trafford College Group Leeds College of Building Salford City College United Colleges Group Wigan & Leigh College Activate Learning Midland Group Training Services Limited Solihull College & University Centre Riverside College

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the chief executive, 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

Alastair Mollon, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Suzanne Wainwright	His Majesty's Inspector
Robert Marshall-Slater	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Scanlan	Ofsted Inspector
Ruth Stammers	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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