

Inspection of Ioda Limited

Inspection dates: 14 to 17 February 2023

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

Ioda Limited is an independent learning provider based in Tadcaster, North Yorkshire. It provides training to adult apprentices across England, with a high proportion located in the Yorkshire and the Humber region. It began delivering standards-based apprenticeships in April 2018. At the time of the inspection, there were 101 apprentices on level 3 team leader supervisor, 56 on level 5 coaching professional and 183 on level 5 operations or departmental manager programmes. Ioda provides training both online and in the workplace.

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

Staff have created a culture of continuous learning and development. They are professional in their interactions with apprentices. As a result of this, apprentices model a calm and professional approach to their studies and job roles.

Most apprentices are highly motivated and aspire to achieve well. They adopt a positive attitude to their learning and are well prepared for the next stage in their career. For example, apprentices who demonstrate an aptitude for higher levels of study are supported to complete a level 7 professional qualification.

Most apprentices are resilient and respond well under sustained periods when they have high workloads. They persevere and continue to develop their skills, knowledge and behaviours well. Training in resilience helps apprentices to understand signs of stress and how to deal with difficult situations, both at home and at work.

Apprentices receive useful guidance on career and training opportunities. A high proportion progress into more senior roles within their current business or into new employment elsewhere, on higher salaries. Many apprentices are encouraged and supported to lead departmental or organisation-wide projects.

Apprentices feel safe both at work and during activities related to their apprenticeship. They confidently discuss their understanding of safeguarding and how to keep themselves and others safe while at work and in their lives in general. Most apprentices can recognise the possible signs of radicalisation and understand risks local to them.

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

Leaders and managers have a clear strategy to provide apprenticeships in leadership and management to public, private and voluntary sector employers. They draw on their extensive knowledge and experience in management training from the commercial sector to plan and design a curriculum that meets employers' requirements. For example, in response to employers' needs, leaders have changed the order in which they deliver 'principles of leadership' modules so that apprentices develop their knowledge about this topic early in the programme.

Leaders and managers employ trainers and coaches with significant leadership and management experience. Many have held senior roles in the public and private sectors, and are experts in their subjects. They keep their knowledge of the leadership and management sector up to date through membership and fellowship of professional bodies. They attend webinars and training sessions on topics such as inclusive workplace practices for remote teams and exploring empathy and sympathy. Trainers and coaches collaborate with peers to share knowledge on a range of topics, including motivational leadership and organisational culture.

Leaders plan and sequence each apprenticeship logically, which enables apprentices to build on their understanding and develop new skills over the course of the programme. They carefully consider the needs of employers to ensure that apprentices gain skills and behaviours that they can apply in the workplace. Apprentices studying the level 5 operations or departmental manager standard begin by learning about ethics, vision and values in their organisation and move on to learning about how to build high-performing teams.

Coaches and trainers use a wide range of methods to teach apprentices successfully, such as presentations, quizzes, group work and masterclasses. Apprentices on the level 5 coaching professional standard take part in action learning sets where they can safely practise their coaching skills. Tutors teach theories and models for coaching, such as the 'goals reality options and will' model, the 'wheel of life' and neuro linguistic programming techniques. Apprentices frequently use these coaching models in the workplace to improve their working relationships with colleagues.

Trainers and coaches use assessment well to provide apprentices with helpful evaluative feedback which helps them to improve the standard of their work. For example, level 5 operations or departmental manager apprentices are encouraged to consider the legal aspects of employment law to reinforce the content of their assignments. Level 3 team leading apprentices create a personal development plan, and coaches encourage them to consider the personal attributes that they need in their job role, as well as technical leadership skills.

Managers and coaches provide effective support for apprentices who need to pass functional English and mathematics examinations. Managers clearly identify apprentices' prior knowledge and skills, and coaches put in place personalised learning to help apprentices to develop their skills in these subjects. A high proportion of apprentices pass their examinations at the first attempt and almost all gain the qualifications that they need to succeed.

Leaders and managers have developed an effective process to identify apprentices with additional learning support needs. They work closely with apprentices and provide personalised support, including immersive text readers for apprentices with a visual impairment, adjusting learning materials for apprentices with cognitive function problems, and allowing extra time to submit assignments for apprentices with diagnosed dyslexia.

Trainers and coaches meet frequently with employers to review the progress of cohorts of apprentices on programmes. However, in too many instances coaches do not involve apprentices' line managers in progress reviews. When employers do attend, they fully understand what their apprentices are learning and know how to develop apprentices' knowledge and skills on the job. Employers who do not attend reviews are not able to provide sufficient feedback on apprentices' progress in the workplace and are not sure how to create opportunities for apprentices to apply their knowledge and skills at work.

Apprentices produce a high standard of written work which demonstrates a good understanding of the taught subject. They reference appropriately and use research and theories well to support their arguments and to link theories to their practice.

Coaches and trainers support most apprentices well in readiness for their end-point assessment. They guide apprentices towards projects that add value to their organisation, meet the course parameters and stretch them as leaders and coaches. However, in a few instances apprentices are not aware of how to achieve high grades at end-point assessment.

Leaders have effective oversight of the progress that apprentices make. They hold weekly meetings with managers and coaches to identify any apprentices who are falling behind. They task managers and coaches to put in place actions to help apprentices to catch up, such as extra coaching sessions, direct liaison with employers and additional time to complete assignments.

Leaders have established external scrutiny arrangements that provide helpful oversight of apprenticeships. External support is through experienced consultants in the further education sector who provide objective scrutiny on the quality of apprenticeships and the progress that apprentices make. They provide effective challenge to leaders and helpful advice on how to make improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have established comprehensive policies and procedures which they use to keep apprentices safe. The policies and procedures are contextualised to reflect the nature of the management programmes that apprentices follow.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy have relevant experience and have undertaken appropriate training for the role. The DSL gathers helpful information from appropriate agencies on safeguarding and emerging risks. She cascades this information to staff to inform their discussions with apprentices. Recent updates to staff include information on bullying and harassment, violence against women, gaming addiction, 'incels' and debt issues.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff are suitable to work with adult apprentices. They carry out appropriate background checks, including from the Disclosure and Barring Service, seek references from former employers, and conduct searches of staff's online presence. Staff undertake frequent training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty, including regular updates from the DSL.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that apprentices' progress reviews consistently involve their employers.
- Provide information for all apprentices on how to achieve high grades at end-point assessment.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2510888
Address	Ioda House 4 Grimston Grange Offices Grimston Park Tadcaster LS24 9BX
Contact number	01937 831414
Website	https://www.ioda.com
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Sean Stokoe
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of training and operations, 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

Jonny Wright, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Philippa Firth	His Majesty's Inspector
Steve Hunsley	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Martin	Ofsted Inspector

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