

# Training Works (NW) Limited

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

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<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Alison Cameron Brandwood, His Majesty's Inspector
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<b>Type of provider:</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Address:</b>	Unit 18, Enterprise Centre 291–305 Lytham Rd Blackpool FY4 1EW

## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Training Works (NW) Limited was inspected in September 2022. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

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

Training Works (NW) Limited is based in Blackpool, Lancashire. At the time of the visit, the provider had 353 apprentices, most of whom were aged over 19 years, and a few were aged 16 to 18. Apprentices follow 12 standards-based apprenticeships at levels 2 to 5. Just under two-thirds of apprentices study apprenticeships in adult care, around one third in early years, and a few study business apprenticeships. Leaders work with employers across five regions of England, with around three-quarters located in the North West.

### Themes

**How much progress have leaders and governors made in implementing and closely monitoring rigorous quality improvement strategies so that the inconsistency in the quality of education between the different apprenticeships is eradicated?**      **Insufficient progress**

The impact of the actions that leaders have put in place has not been swift enough to eradicate the inconsistency in the quality of education between different apprenticeships. Leaders have rightly recruited new trainers to respond to the staffing shortages and inconsistencies in quality that inspectors identified at the previous inspection. Furthermore, they have put in place actions that have reduced the number of apprentices who have fallen behind and who do not complete their apprenticeship on time. However, leaders acknowledge that this has taken a considerable amount of time. In the meantime, too many apprentices have left their apprenticeship early or have taken a break in their learning.

Governors find it difficult to hold leaders to account on the effectiveness of the actions they have put in place to ensure that the quality of education is high across all apprenticeships. Although the reports that leaders provide to governors include data and statistics about topics such as qualification achievement results, they do not inform governors about the reasons for the high or low performance of different apprenticeships. Where leaders provide governors with sufficiently informative reports, such as improvements to staffing, governors provide effective scrutiny.

**What progress have leaders made in developing the English and mathematical skills apprentices need at work and to pass their examinations? Reasonable progress**

Leaders have made reasonable progress in developing apprentices' English and mathematical skills from the start of their apprenticeship. Trainers provide individual support to apprentices, which helps them to prepare for their examinations. They set apprentices a range of activities to complete, which further develops their knowledge. For example, adult care apprentices practise percentages when completing staff rotas.

Leaders have made suitable changes to the English functional skills curriculum to better develop apprentices' literacy skills. Trainers set current affairs topics, such as the cost-of-living crisis, to develop apprentices' debating skills. As a result, apprentices are better prepared to pass the speaking and listening aspect of their functional skills examination.

Trainers embed English and mathematics into apprenticeship curriculums. In early years, trainers use mathematics to talk about childcare ratios in nurseries and the legal requirements of the early years sector. Trainers identify spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in apprentices' work. However, they do not routinely ensure that apprentices always correct the errors they make. As a result, a few apprentices continue to repeat the same mistakes.

**What progress have trainers made in setting consistently high expectations for apprentices, providing helpful feedback that supports apprentices to improve the quality of their work, and how effectively do apprentices' line managers review and plan apprentices' progress towards developing their knowledge, skills and behaviours at work? Reasonable progress**

Leaders have made reasonable progress in ensuring that trainers have high expectations of their apprentices. New staff benefit from a robust induction process, where leaders outline their expectations. Leaders provide suitable support for new trainers to undertake their roles. New trainers shadow more experienced staff to observe how they deliver the curriculum to apprentices. They are allocated a mentor to provide them with individual help and support.

Trainers benefit from the training they attend to improve the feedback they give to apprentices. They provide useful feedback to apprentices to improve the quality of their work. Apprentices produce work that is more detailed, and they use accurate terminology. However, at level 2, a few apprentices produce work that is of a lower level than expected. In a few instances, trainers do not support level 5 apprentices to develop their academic writing skills to an appropriate level.

Leaders ensure that most line managers attend progress reviews. Most employers are involved in reviewing and planning apprentices' progress towards developing their knowledge, skills and behaviours at work. For example, early years apprentices apply their knowledge about children's well-being when they prepare them for moving on to school. They talk confidently with children about their worries, and they support family members through the transition process.

**How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that apprentices learn about the wider options available to them regarding further study or job opportunities?** **Insufficient progress**

Leaders and managers recognise that they have made slow progress in ensuring that apprentices learn about the wider options available to them regarding further study or job opportunities. Most apprentices have discussions with their trainers at the start of their apprenticeship about their future career ambitions. They talk about the areas to which they would like to progress after they finish their apprenticeship. However, leaders have not ensured that apprentices receive the advice and guidance they need throughout the apprenticeship to be able to make the appropriate choices for the next stage in their career. Apprentices who are at the end of their apprenticeship are not aware of their next steps in employment or of further education opportunities.

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