

# Inspection of Intec Business Colleges Limited

Inspection dates: 11 to 14 July 2023

## Overall effectiveness

## Requires improvement

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

## Information about this provider

Intec Business Colleges Limited is an independent learning provider based in Rugby. At the time of the inspection, there were 1,034 apprentices in learning, of whom 101 were aged 16 to 18. Apprentices are predominantly employed in the business management and administration, education and training, and retail, warehousing and distribution sectors across England.

The provider offers 21 standards-based apprenticeships across four subject sector areas from levels 2 to 5. Just over half of apprentices study towards a level 3 apprenticeship across a range of vocational specialisms, including business administrator, customer service specialist, team leader/supervisor, supply chain practitioner and learning and development practitioner.

A small minority of apprentices are on level 4 apprenticeships in project management, retail management, improvement practitioner or level 5 apprenticeships in coaching professional, learning and development consultant, business partner and/or operations/departmental manager. Most teaching provided to apprentices is either face to face or online.

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

Too many apprentices do not make the progress of which they are capable, as tutors do not always use the information about their existing skills, knowledge and occupational experiences to organise challenging learning activities.

Apprentices receive good-quality on-the-job training, which helps them to develop relevant, industry-specific occupational skills. Employers prioritise apprentices' training well and support them effectively through the prioritisation of additional learning throughout their employment to enhance their effectiveness in the workplace. For example, level 2 supply chain warehouse operative apprentices benefit from training in order management systems so that they can maintain an accurate record of inventory.

Apprentices have high aspirations for themselves and are keen to learn and achieve. They take pride in their work and develop in confidence in their job roles. Some apprentices take on extra responsibilities because of their learning. Employers value the contribution that apprentices make and recognise that they improve in self-confidence and develop the skills they need to become valued employees.

Most apprentices routinely demonstrate respectful behaviours and positive attitudes to customers, colleagues and other staff in the workplace. They comply fully with guidelines for behaviour and conduct within their work settings, including adherence to safe working practices, good timekeeping, and regular attendance at work and planned learning activities.

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

Tutors do not make good enough use of the results of initial and diagnostic assessments completed at the start of the apprenticeship to plan a demanding curriculum that matches the individual needs and abilities of apprentices. Vocational skills and learning plans are not routinely revisited or updated over time to inform the ongoing planning of apprentices' learning. As a result, too many apprentices do not make good progress.

Tutors do not sequence the curriculum well enough to embed key and essential information into the long-term memory of apprentices and to aid fluency and recall of requisite knowledge, skills and behaviours into their daily practice. In addition, a few tutors are too accepting of less-than-adequate responses to questions used with apprentices to check the retention of knowledge and their understanding of what they have been taught. As a result, tutors do not always know whether apprentices have a precise insight of subject content.

Tutors do not provide effective feedback to apprentices on their work. They do not help them to fully understand those aspects of their courses they need to practise and develop further. Too often, tutors' written feedback to apprentices is overly

confirmatory and does not set out precisely what they need to do to improve and make secure gains in extending their learning.

Most apprentices receive regular off-the-job training that meets the requirements of their apprenticeship. In addition, apprentices receive useful on-the-job training from their employers that enables them to become valued and productive employees. For example, level 3 team leading apprentices benefit from skilled workplace mentors who guide their development in becoming adept at using techniques such as delegation to improve team performance in the workplace.

Apprentices who need extra assistance with their learning receive effective support to ensure that they make progress that is commensurate with their peers. Tutors ensure that any adjustments needed to support these apprentices with their learning are swiftly put in place. As a result, they can participate fully in planned learning activities.

Tutors place an appropriate focus on helping apprentices to improve their English and mathematics skills. Apprentices who start their apprenticeship without pre-existing skills in English and/or mathematics complete an assessment at the start of the apprenticeship that identifies gaps and/or misconceptions in their understanding. Following this, apprentices benefit from individualised teaching that extends their literacy and numeracy skills beyond their starting points. The proportion of apprentices who successfully achieve their functional skills assessments at the first attempt is high.

In too many cases, apprentices do not have a secure understanding of matters relating to fundamental British values and how these apply to them in their wider lives and at work. Although many apprentices recall covering such aspects as part of their induction and have access to a plentiful range of online learning materials, too many make insufficient use of these to support their independent study. As a result, they are unable to recall what they know and remember of topics such as democracy and freedom of speech, or how such aspects apply to them in their personal and professional lives.

Too few apprentices benefit from high-quality careers advice and guidance. Tutors do not systematically plan this as an integral part of the curriculum. Discussions with apprentices about their career aspirations are too often left until near the end of their apprenticeship and are limited to advice on the next level of qualification. Apprentices are not sufficiently aware of the full range of careers available to them or the relevance of the skills they have acquired to a wider range of sectors in which they may seek to work.

Leaders provide an inclusive environment in which apprentices feel valued and respected. Younger apprentices extend their understanding of what constitutes healthy relationships. They have an age-appropriate understanding regarding matters such as consent, which is developed and extended as an integral part of the curriculum.

Senior leaders have an ambitious vision for their business. They have astutely developed a range of strategic partnerships with employers to establish a vocational curriculum that is well aligned to local and regional skills needs.

Leaders and managers ensure that training staff have appropriate qualifications and industry experience. They link appraisals effectively to staff training and continuous personal development, which they record accurately. As a result, tutors benefit from appropriate professional development to update their skills, which enables them to reflect on their teaching and assessment practices.

Leaders do not rigorously assess the quality of provision. While managers use a range of tools, including observations of practice, focused curriculum reviews and the routine use of stakeholder surveys to judge the quality of the curriculum, these do not concisely evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. As a result, leaders have not recognised the extent of key weaknesses identified by inspectors or sustained many of the key strengths identified at the previous inspection.

Leaders and managers are mindful of the well-being, mental health and welfare of their staff and have developed appropriate, family friendly policies and procedures. Staff morale is high, and all are motivated. However, in few instances, operational staff report that their apprenticeship caseloads are too high.

Following the previous inspection, senior leaders introduced a governance structure. Governors have an extensive range of skills and expertise, including in education, business, and finance, which they use well to ensure that the curriculum continues to improve. Governors closely scrutinise the regular reports that they receive to help them to inform their understanding of and impact upon the apprenticeship provision. However, board members do not receive sufficiently detailed information on apprentices' in-year progress, and this curtails their ability to challenge leaders sufficiently well.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers place a strong emphasis on assuring the safeguarding and well-being of apprentices. The designated safeguarding lead and members of the wider safeguarding team are appropriately qualified, and they benefit from ongoing professional development to keep their safeguarding practice current and up to date. Leaders and managers follow safer recruitment practices, and they check applicants' backgrounds thoroughly for suitability to work with apprentices before they employ them.

Apprentices know how to report any concerns they may have. Leaders investigate safeguarding and welfare matters promptly. As a result, apprentices feel safe and benefit from appropriate help and protection.

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

- Leaders should ensure that tutors routinely use information obtained from assessments and vocational skill scans completed at the start of the apprenticeship to inform the planning of learning, ensuring it meets the needs of all apprentices.
- Leaders should ensure that tutors plan challenging learning activities and sequence learning that enables apprentices to embed key and essential information into their long-term memory to aid recall and understanding.
- Leaders should rapidly improve the quality of tutors' feedback and the targets set for planned learning activities and during reviews, ensuring that all apprentices have a precise understanding of what actions they need to implement to improve the standard of their work and achieve their full potential.
- Leaders should ensure that tutors support apprentices to develop a more comprehensive understanding of matters related to fundamental British values and how these apply to them in their wider lives and at work.
- Leaders should ensure that apprentices routinely benefit from helpful careers advice and guidance throughout their programme, which supports them well to understand the full range of career pathways available to them.
- Leaders should use available management information and data to identify when apprentices make slow progress and ensure that tutors implement swift action to bring about improvements in their learning.
- Governors should ensure that senior leaders improve self-assessment and quality improvement by ensuring that the tools they use to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the provision encompass all aspects of the apprentice's learning journey.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	52487
<b>Address</b>	Old School Pennington Court Rugby Warwickshire CV21 2BB
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<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Mr Darren Bunting
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 April 2013
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the managing 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

Victor Reid, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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