

# Together Training Limited

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

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| <b>Unique reference number:</b> | 2539272  |
| <b>Name of lead inspector:</b>  | Georgina Ager, His Majesty's Inspector   |
| <b>Inspection dates:</b>        | 12 and 13 July 2023  |
| <b>Type of provider:</b>        | Independent learning provider  |
| <b>Address:</b>                 | Business Lounge<br>West Herts College<br>Hempstead Road<br>Watford<br>WD17 3EZ |

## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Together Training Limited was inspected in October 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.

Together Training Ltd provides standards-based apprenticeship training for employers mainly in the Hertfordshire region. Together Training Ltd is co-owned by West Herts College and Oaklands College. Most apprentices are over 19 years of age.

At the time of the visit, Together Training Ltd had 181 apprentices in training. Most apprentices are studying on Human Resources (HR), coaching or career development standards. The provider had 39 apprentices studying the level 6 career development professional standard, 27 apprentices studying the level 3 HR support standard, 26 studying on the level 5 HR consultant partner standard and 31 studying on the coaching professional standard. Most of the remaining apprentices are studying the level 5 operations or department management, level 3 team leader or level 3 business administrator standards.

Together Training Ltd has no subcontracted provision. There are no apprentices in receipt of high-needs funding.

### Themes

#### **How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that they identify and support apprentices with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?**

#### **Significant progress**

Managers have provided appropriate training for learning coaches. This has included helpful training on dyslexia screening and the use of assistive technology. Learning coaches now have a better understanding of the indicators of learning needs and the support available to apprentices. Learning coaches have a good understanding of how and when to refer apprentices for additional support. Consequently, learning coaches have identified additional apprentices as requiring additional support.

Learning coaches know apprentices well. They consider apprentices' individual needs appropriately when setting work and liaising with employers. Learning coaches identify when apprentices repeat errors such as spelling or grammatical errors. Learning coaches put appropriate interventions in place to support these apprentices.

They support apprentices to check their work carefully. They refer apprentices for additional support and relevant diagnosis. Consequently, employers report that apprentices with learning difficulties/special educational needs receive the support they need. These apprentices perform confidently in the workplace.

Specialist support staff produce good additional learning support profiles for apprentices with learning difficulties/special educational needs. These profiles provide learning coaches with information on relevant support strategies. As a result, learning coaches understand better how to support individual apprentices to improve their work. Where required, learning coaches provide apprentices with notes and slides ahead of sessions. They provide useful definitions of key words and technical vocabulary in advance. Learning coaches provide apprentices with high-quality support. This support meets apprentices' needs effectively. Learning coaches support apprentices with diagnosed health concerns appropriately. This helps apprentices to develop strategies to balance the demands of their employment and their apprenticeship work. As a result, apprentices feel well supported.

**How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from a planned programme of ongoing careers advice and guidance?**

**Reasonable progress**

During progress reviews, learning coaches support apprentices effectively to think about their next steps. As a result, many apprentices understand the different options open to them. Level 6 career development professional apprentices discuss how they could obtain consultancy roles within their field. Coaches encourage team leading apprentices to research jobs with greater responsibility. Apprentices discuss with their coaches how they can develop the wider skills required for these roles. Learning coaches encourage apprentices to take on additional projects to broaden their skills. Apprentices have support to write or update their CVs to meet the higher-level job roles that they aspire to gain.

Leaders have recently provided effective training for learning coaches on the broad range of careers resources available to apprentices. Qualified careers advisers provide specialist help and advice for learning coaches and apprentices. Apprentices have a good understanding of the careers that are available to them within their own organisations. Most apprentices can discuss the careers that they have considered and the promoted posts that they feel will be their next step. However, too many apprentices do not have a detailed understanding of the broad range of roles available to them outside of their own organisation on completion of their apprenticeship.

**How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that employers are fully involved with tailoring the apprenticeship programmes to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the workplace?**

**Significant progress**

Learning coaches work closely with employers to ensure that the curriculum is carefully tailored to meet their business needs. In response to employer feedback, learning coaches on the level 3 business administrator standard have made many helpful amendments to their programme. Apprentices have learned additional information about managing conflict and time management. Learning coaches on the level 6 career development standard work closely with employers to choose relevant units to study. Apprentices study a wide range of optional units including supporting learners from different groups and facilitating group work. These units develop the apprentices' interests, meet their skills gaps and meet their employer's needs.

Employers have frequent and effective communication with learning coaches. Learning coaches work closely with employers to ensure that apprentices have the broad range of experiences they need to be successful. Learning coaches frequently discuss gaps in apprentices' understanding of knowledge, skills and behaviours with employers. Consequently, employers organise for apprentices to undertake specific tasks to gain this understanding. Level 3 team leading apprentices get involved in projects outside of their usual job roles. Apprentices line manage student interns to gain line management experience. Apprentices spend time with organisational finance teams. Employers ensure that level 6 career development apprentices are provided with additional experiences to develop their skills in networking and referrals. Consequently, employers value the knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices gain.

Learning coaches ensure that on- and off- the job training is linked extremely effectively. During progress reviews on the level 3 HR support standard, learning coaches ensure that apprentices can link the knowledge learned during masterclasses to their job roles. Coaches ensure that apprentices can explain the importance of communication skills within disciplinary meetings. As a result, apprentices can clearly apply the skills and confidence they have gained within the workplace.

**How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the significant variations in the quality of education are eradicated?**

**Reasonable progress**

Leaders have implemented appropriate quality improvement actions. They have put in place substantial additional management capacity. They now have a detailed robust system for tracking apprentices' progress. Where apprentices fall behind, appropriate actions are in place to ensure that they can catch up. As a result, leaders now have clear oversight of apprentices' progress. Following a review of the level 7

senior people professional standard, leaders identified that the quality of the training was not good enough. Leaders took decisive action to transfer these apprentices to an alternative provider, where they believed apprentices would have a better experience.

As a result of leaders' quality improvement actions, most apprentices remaining in learning are now expected to complete their apprenticeship. This includes apprentices who were past their planned end date at the time of the previous inspection. Apprentices who remain in learning are having a positive learning experience. They are clear about what they need to do to reach their final assessments. Learning coaches and employers work very effectively together to develop apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. Apprentices highly value the training they receive. However, retention remains too low overall. There remains variation in the levels of retention between different apprenticeship standards.

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