

Inspection of The Recalvi Enterprise Ltd

Inspection dates:

7 to 10 August 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Apprenticeships

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Information about this provider

The Recalvi Enterprise Limited, trading as Apprenticeship Connect, became a prime contract holder in May 2017. The head office is in central London. They teach apprentices across the country on a range of standards-based apprenticeships from level 2 to level 5. All teaching is online.

At the time of this inspection, there were 205 apprentices in learning. There were 62 apprentices studying the level 3 early years educator standard, 37 apprentices studying the level 3 business administrator standard, 35 apprentices studying the level 3 recruitment consultant standard and 25 apprentices studying the level 2 recruitment resourcer standard. A smaller number of apprentices were studying the level 3 standards in HR support, teaching assistant, digital marketer and team leader or supervisor and level 5 standards in early years educator and operations or departmental manager.

Thirty-nine apprentices were enrolled on level 2 mathematics courses, and 16 apprentices were enrolled on level 2 English courses.

The majority of apprentices were aged 19 and over. There were 30 apprentices who were aged 16 to 18.

There were three apprentices with an education, health and care plan. The provider was not in receipt of high-needs funding.

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

Apprentices have a very positive experience on their apprenticeship programme. They say overwhelmingly that the programme meets and sometimes exceeds their needs and expectations.

Apprentices thrive in a caring learning environment. This is particularly so for those on the level 3 early years educator programme. On these programmes, apprentices enjoy their studies and are proud of the progress they make at work. They feel challenged and inspired to aim for high grades.

Apprentices feel safe and well supported, which helps them focus effectively on their training. Apprentices' attendance at lessons is high.

Apprentices highly value the stimulating, interactive online lessons. They appreciate the chance to meet and learn with and from apprentices in other settings.

Apprentices benefit from access to a wide range of relevant online resources. For example, apprentices find it useful to watch recorded lessons so that they can remember what they have learned. They watch videos and read journals available on the online learning platform which help them extend their subject knowledge.

Apprentices appreciate the regular and informative reviews of progress with their tutor and line manager. They like the opportunity to reflect on how much they have learned. They welcome the chance to plan jointly their next steps in learning at work through opportunities such as shadowing their peers.

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

Many apprentices experienced severe disruption to their programmes due to COVID-19. For example, the majority of apprentices in learning during that time were in highly vulnerable occupations such as recruitment and early years settings. Over half of the apprentices on these standards were made redundant or were furloughed. Consequently, apprentices did not achieve their qualifications.

Since the previous inspection in 2021, leaders have worked diligently to increase the number of apprentices who achieve their programme within planned timescales. They have improved how they monitor and report on apprentices' progress. Leaders and managers review precisely where apprentices are falling behind. They communicate very effectively with employers to support apprentices in catching up. Consequently, leaders and managers have an accurate oversight of apprentices' progress and a high proportion now complete their training.

Leaders have developed a curriculum that deepens apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. They plan thoughtfully the order in which tutors teach topics. For example, on business administration programmes, apprentices learn how to analyse a business's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats before learning about

factors in the external environment. They apply their new-found knowledge at work later in the course when they start to manage projects. Apprentices make good progress on their course and move into positive destinations at the end of their apprenticeship.

Leaders work effectively with employers to make sure that the subject content taught is relevant and up to date with industry standards. For instance, in response to feedback from early years employers, tutors teach behaviour management much earlier in the programme. They include lessons about the impact of COVID-19 on the emotional well-being of children and parents. Consequently, apprentices have improved their awareness of how to support children and their families dealing with difficult life situations such as bereavement.

Tutors plan carefully with employers the on- and off-the-job training activities during progress reviews. For example, on the recruitment resourcer apprenticeship, line managers build in opportunities for apprentices to hold difficult conversations with unsuccessful interview candidates. On early years apprenticeships, line managers make sure that apprentices gain experience working with children in different age groups. Employers speak highly of the contributions apprentices make at work because of the skills and knowledge they learn and the behaviours they develop during the apprenticeship.

Tutors have expert knowledge and experience, which they use very effectively to broaden apprentices' understanding of specialist knowledge and skills. For example, on recruitment resourcer programmes, tutors explain with precision how arbitration services can help with solving disputes about working hours. On the early years educator apprenticeship, tutors make effective use of their own working practices to translate complex theories into real-life examples in nursery settings.

Tutors skilfully question apprentices to probe and extend their knowledge and skills. For example, after presentations on employee rights by apprentices, tutors use effective follow-up questions to check what the group has learned. In mathematics lessons, tutors check frequently what apprentices have learned. They give clear examples to apprentices on how mathematics is used at work such as calculating the average age of children in the nursery.

On a few apprenticeships, the quality of education requires further improvement. For example, employers on digital marketing programmes do not receive timely information about apprentices' progress. On a few occasions, lessons do not take place as planned. This means that apprentices miss lessons. Apprentices with more complex needs on these programmes do not receive the support they need to help them with their studies.

Over the last two years, apprentices studying functional skills mathematics have experienced disruption to their learning. As a result, too many apprentices did not achieve their qualifications or their apprenticeship within planned timescales. Leaders and managers have since made positive changes in how they teach functional skills English and mathematics courses. Recently recruited apprentices

have a more positive experience. For example, in mathematics, apprentices make progress in learning topics they previously found difficult such as calculating the diameter and circumference of a circle.

Leaders and managers provide very useful resources to develop apprentices' interests and support their well-being. Apprentices make effective use of online webinars to learn about nutrition and time management. Apprentices take part in debating clubs. They enjoy discussing wide-ranging topics such as feminism and discrimination. However, too few young male apprentices learn about topics such as healthy adult relationships. Leaders recognise the need to improve apprentices' understanding of the range of risks they face in their lives and at work in modern Britain.

Most apprentices receive useful careers information and guidance which helps them to make informed choices about their next steps. For example, tutors and employers discuss career routes and opportunities for promotion available to apprentices on recruitment resourcer programmes.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have put in place rigorous procedures for recording and monitoring safeguarding concerns. They follow through safeguarding cases appropriately to a satisfactory resolution. The well-trained and experienced designated safeguarding lead provides useful support to employers when they report concerns about apprentices' well-being. Leaders make sure, through pre-employment checks, that staff are suitable to work with children and vulnerable adults.

Apprentices know how to keep themselves safe when learning online. For example, they have a sound awareness of the risks associated with suspicious-looking emails.

While leaders and tutors share information about current safeguarding risks in their region, such as cuckooing and county lines incidents, apprentices do not have a secure understanding of how these dangers relate to them.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should make sure that they improve the quality of teaching on the few programmes that require it so that a higher proportion of apprentices achieve their qualifications within expected timescales.
- Leaders should further develop apprentices' awareness of topics related to the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. They should make sure that young apprentices have a broad understanding of healthy adult relationships.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1276410
Address	25 Cabot Square London E14 4QZ
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Website	www.apprenticeshipconnect.co.uk
CEO	Rafiq Rahman
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	10 to 13 August 2021

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the chief executive officer, 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

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