

# Inspection of Poultec Training Limited

Inspection dates:

27 to 30 June 2023

## Overall effectiveness

## Requires improvement

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

## Information about this provider

Poultec Training Limited is a large national independent learning provider, founded in 1997. It provides vocational study programmes for learners who previously were not in education, employment or training (NEET) and apprenticeships. It has two training centres based in Norfolk.

At the time of the inspection, there were 639 learners studying apprenticeship and study programme courses. 599 apprentices were in learning studying standards at level 2 to level 5. Over half of the apprentices were working towards animal and agricultural apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3. The largest of these was the level 3 poultry technician standard. The remaining apprentices were studying standards at level 2 in butcher, customer service practitioner and engineering operative. At level 3, dental nurse, business administrator and team leader. At level 4, dental practice manager and level 5 operational leaders and managers.

There were 40 learners attending study programme courses at level 1 to level 3. Around a third of learners were studying level 1 and level 2 motor vehicle, just under a third studied level 1 to level 3 hairdressing and barbering with the remainder on level 1 introductory to welding skills, level 2 exercise and fitness and level 2 professional cookery courses.

At the time of inspection, Poultec Training Limited did not have any subcontractors and did not have learners in receipt of high needs funding.

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

Learners and apprentices value the inclusive and caring environment at Poultec. They enjoy their time on their course and would recommend it to others. As a result, learners and apprentices develop effective team working skills and support their peers in a positive atmosphere.

Learners and apprentices develop the appropriate professional behaviours for their chosen area of study. Dental nurse apprentices understand the importance of gaining their clients' consent before starting treatments. Motor vehicle learners wear personal protective equipment before starting a task in the workshop. However, tutors do not have high enough expectations of learners' and apprentices' attendance at taught sessions. Too few learners and apprentices attend their lessons. As a result, they miss out on the vital training they need.

Employers value the new knowledge and workplace skills that apprentices develop. Butcher apprentices know how to produce attractive products to increase customer sales in the business. Business administration apprentices take responsibility for coordinating meetings. They consult with the chair to circulate agenda items and invite attendees. As a result, apprentices become useful employees.

Learners and apprentices feel safe at training and at work. They know who to report any concerns to. They are confident that staff will take the appropriate action. Apprentices working with livestock understand the risks that animal activists can pose. However, too few learners and apprentices have a sufficient understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism in the local area in which they live and work.

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

Too few learners on study programmes progress in their training or work in their chosen sector area. Leaders have developed effective partnerships with local stakeholders to develop a skills-based curriculum to support the needs of learners who have previously been NEET. However, too few learners remain in learning and achieve their qualifications.

Leaders have not ensured that teaching is consistently good. Tutors of apprentices frequently use questioning to check apprentices' knowledge. Questions often lack depth because too few tutors challenge apprentices to provide more detail to deepen their understanding. However, tutors of study programmes use effective teaching strategies. Tutors use step-by-step demonstrations to teach learners to cut hair. Learners benefit from this approach. They can articulate how small changes to their cutting technique will lead to an improved appearance of the cut. As a result, learners develop the skills they need for the industries in which they want to work in the future.

Leaders have not ensured that learners and apprentices make swift progress towards the achievement of functional skills in English and mathematics. Tutors do not have sufficient ambition for learners on study programmes to complete these qualifications. Too few learners who require functional skills take and achieve their assessments. Apprentices do not benefit from a logically planned curriculum for functional skills. As a result, too few apprentices pass first time.

Tutors do not provide useful or effective feedback to learners and apprentices on the work they produce. Tutor feedback is often confirmatory and overly positive. It lacks advice to apprentices and learners on how to improve or extend their work. As a consequence, learners and apprentices work does not improve over time. Too few tutors help learners and apprentices to develop their English skills. Where spelling or grammatical errors are identified, this is not consistent across programmes.

Leaders do not ensure that line managers contribute effectively to apprentices' reviews. Line managers often do not plan off-the-job activities to consolidate apprentices' theoretical learning. On occasions, tutors capture naturally occurring assessment opportunities they observe in the workplace. Yet, this is not planned with line managers.

Apprentices are appropriately prepared for the assessments at the end of their course. Tutors ensure that apprentices know how they will be assessed. As a result, apprentices who remain in learning feel confident about these assessments and most achieve high grades.

Apprentices do not benefit from a coherent planned personal development curriculum. They do not receive training on how to maintain positive mental health, healthy lifestyles or receive guidance on maintaining healthy relationships. Tutors support learners effectively on study programmes to understand the appropriate behaviours in healthy relationships. They understand the importance of consent in a sexual relationship and making healthy life choices. Learners benefit from free membership to the Poultec gym. However, learners and apprentices do not understand the broader risks of radicalisation and extremism.

Leaders have established responsive apprenticeship courses. These are appropriately designed to meet the skills of local and national agriculture, health and business industries. Leaders develop effective partnerships with industry stakeholders. Leaders have worked with key poultry industry organisations to develop the 'poultry passport'. This has helped to professionalise the standards expected for its workforce. Leaders work with dental practices to provide training to remedy the shortage of dental nurses. As a result, apprentices gain the valuable knowledge, skills and behaviours that are in high demand in these sector areas.

Leaders structure courses effectively so that learners and apprentices build on skills and knowledge incrementally. Team leader apprentices first learn about communication skills and how to use these skills effectively in team meetings. They later look at communication theories. This helps them to introduce changes and improvements to what they do. In motor vehicle, learners develop an understanding

of how to use basic hand tools. Learners develop their confidence in their operation before they complete more complex tasks such as maintaining the brakes on a car. As a result, learners and apprentices gradually build the knowledge and skills required by their chosen industry.

Learners and apprentices benefit from tutors who are highly experienced and knowledgeable in their vocational sectors. Many continue to work in the industry and have a good understanding of current practices. Leaders actively support tutors to maintain their professional updating. Tutors of poultry courses attend regional meetings to network with local farmers and hear about factors that impact the industry. As a result, learners and apprentices benefit from the expertise of their tutors.

Tutors provide appropriate support to learners and apprentices with special educational needs (SEN). In many cases, tutors use additional resources effectively to support learners' and apprentices' individual needs. As a result, learners and apprentices with SEN progress at the same rate as their peers.

Leaders do not ensure that apprentices benefit from ongoing impartial careers advice. Tutors do not develop apprentices' knowledge about the full range of options open to them after gaining their apprenticeship. However, learners on study programmes do benefit from a structured programme on careers, preparing for and finding employment. As a result, learners feel confident about their next steps and the options available to them.

Leaders do not have good oversight of the quality of education. Arrangements for the assessment of teaching and learning are ineffective. Managers observe tutors frequently. However, managers do not provide sufficient feedback to enable tutors to know how to improve their teaching practice. Leaders make little use of their available learner and apprenticeship performance data. They do not analyse patterns of non-attendance, destinations or high-grade passes. Leaders cannot target their interventions and bring about the necessary improvements.

Governance arrangements are not effective. As a result, leaders do not have the scrutiny in place to provide frequent and robust challenge to hold them accountable for improving the quality and enhancing the effectiveness of the provision.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Tutors provide learners and apprentices with the training they need to work safely in the work and learning environments. Learners and apprentices quickly develop their knowledge of health and safety in the sectors they work. Apprentices studying the butcher standard are trained to have the correct knife skills to avoid injuring themselves when trimming a joint of beef.

Leaders' oversight of safeguarding practices was limited at the time of inspection. Leaders responded swiftly to the concerns raised by inspectors, updating documentation and implementing suitable changes to their processes. Leaders have developed an appropriate action plan to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are now effective.

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

- Leaders must improve the proportion of learners on study programmes who attend well, remain in learning and achieve their qualifications.
- Leaders and managers must ensure that tutors improve learners' and apprentices' English and mathematics skills so that they gain their qualifications and are well-prepared for future study and employment.
- Leaders must establish effective mechanisms to ensure that they have good oversight of the quality of training and use management information systems effectively to target their interventions, improve attendance and bring about improvements to the quality of education.
- Leaders must implement an effective personal development curriculum for apprentices. Specifically, leaders must ensure that learners and apprentices understand the broader risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- Leaders must ensure that apprentices receive planned, ongoing impartial careers advice and guidance so that apprentices know the wide range of career options available to them.
- Leaders need to ensure that there are effective governance arrangements in place to support and hold leaders to account for the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of the provision and embed the statutory requirements for safeguarding.

## **Provider details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	53951
<b>Address</b>	South Green Park Enterprise Centre Mattishall Dereham NR20 3JY
<b>Contact number</b>	01362 850 983
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.poultec.co.uk">www.poultec.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Edward Bales
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 January 2017
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	N/A

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the 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

Robert Bamford, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Penny Fawcus	His Majesty's Inspector
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