

# Inspection of WEBS Training Limited

Inspection dates:

6 to 9 February 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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

## Information about this provider

Webs Training Limited (WEBS) has been providing training to the furniture industry since 1968. Apprentices attend a purpose-built site with workshops and classrooms at Beeston, Nottingham. Apprentices can attend training one day per week or for week-long blocks. During block training sessions, apprentices travel from across the country and stay in local hotels. A small number of apprentices are taught entirely at work.

At the time of the inspection, there were 153 apprentices, 42 of them are aged 16 to 18. Around half the apprentices study level 2 general furniture manufacturer. This includes pathways such as modern upholsterer, fitted furniture installer and wood machinist. The remaining apprentices study level 2 floorlayer, level 3 bespoke furniture maker, level 3 advanced upholsterer or a small number of business services apprenticeships.

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

Apprentices learn from training officers with extensive industry experience. In workshops, trainers provide very helpful practical demonstrations. For example, installation trainers skilfully teach apprentices to mark out materials, and relate it to how to prevent waste. Apprentices access a good range of industry-standard equipment at WEBS. They practice their skills in a safe and supportive environment before trying them out at work. Coupled with beneficial guidance from their workplace mentors, apprentices learn substantial new knowledge and skills.

Training officers structure the content of courses to meet apprentices' and employers' needs well. For example, modern upholstery apprentices, who specialise in sewing, learn additional upholstery skills such as pattern cutting. This allows them to get involved in more tasks at work and broadens their career options.

Leaders and training officers create a safe environment, they are supportive and know their apprentices well. Apprentices feel able to try new things and make mistakes. They are keen to learn and push themselves to do well. Apprentices' attendance is high.

Apprentices can participate in beneficial community projects, such as upholstering chairs for a local hospital. In personal development classes, apprentices learn about the dangers of extremism, and about consent. However, they must all complete the same sessions, regardless of their age or circumstances. Therefore, in a few cases, the topics are not relevant to them.

Leaders offer helpful initiatives to assist apprentices in their personal lives, such as how to manage the rising cost of living. Apprentices feel safe at work and in training. They know who to contact if they require any support.

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

Leaders work successfully with employers in the furniture industry. They understand fully their training needs and offer suitable apprenticeships in response. Employers are highly supportive and rightly complimentary about apprentices' experiences.

Training officers typically order the subjects they teach well. For example, installation apprentices initially learn to use several power tools. They quickly become productive at work, assisting kitchen installations. Bespoke furniture maker apprentices find design principles difficult. Trainers sensibly thread this subject throughout apprentices' studies. This helps apprentices to better understand the principles and apply them.

Most training officers think carefully about how they teach new skills to apprentices. For example, modern upholstery apprentices who are using industrial sewing machines for the first time are taught first about the key components of the machine and safety. They practise on paper, sewing lines and then circles before

using different types of materials and stitch lengths. As a result, apprentices often develop new skills quickly. Training officers build in ample opportunities for apprentices to repeat and master skills throughout their studies.

During practical sessions, training officers effectively assess apprentices' understanding. They pose thoughtful questions and challenge apprentices to explain their methods accurately. As a result, training officers know apprentices' strengths and areas for development. They use this knowledge to make suitable adjustments to apprentices' training.

For most apprentices, there are clear links between their on- and off-the-job training. Training officers, workplace mentors and apprentices complete monthly action plans. They set relevant targets for how and when apprentices will develop their skills. For example, installation apprentices need to master routing to create perfect edges and corners. They learn it in the workshop, then with their mentor on smaller jobs, progressing to full kitchen installations. In a very few cases, apprentices complete tasks at work that are too difficult for them. Training officers are quick to resolve this with employers.

Managers and training officers make suitable adjustments to support apprentices with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes extra study time, coloured overlays and the use of assistive technology.

Most apprentices develop their knowledge and skills well. Many produce work that is of a good standard and within fine tolerances. In a few cases, apprentices develop a very high standard of skill, beyond the requirements of their apprenticeship. For example, apprentices who work mainly with pre-made furniture covers can upholster more complex items, such as a wing back chair, from scratch.

Around a quarter of apprentices leave their course in the early stages. Leaders analyse the reasons for this closely and use this information to tailor their actions. Early signs are that these actions are positive, but it is too soon to judge the full impact.

Most apprentices who complete their training achieve a distinction grade. They receive helpful guidance on their future options and careers. Apprentices go on to positive destinations, either remaining in employment, starting their own business or pursuing further study. A few gain promotion to be managers or senior upholsterers.

Leaders undertake an appropriate range of activities to monitor the quality of teaching. However, their oversight of the training for the small number of apprentices taught entirely in the workplace is less comprehensive. They would not necessarily know if apprentices were not being taught what they needed to be.

Governors understand the business very well. They meet frequently with leaders and are aware of the strengths and areas for improvement in the quality of education. They provide a suitable level of scrutiny and challenge to leaders, alongside encouragement and support.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- Ensure that the personal development curriculum is relevant to all apprentices.
- Continue to reduce the number of apprentices who leave their courses early.
- Ensure that there is oversight of the quality of training for the small number of apprentices who study entirely in the workplace.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	55294
<b>Address</b>	The Poplars Wollaton Road Beeston Nottingham NG9 2PD
<b>Contact number</b>	0115 9677771
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.webstraining.com">www.webstraining.com</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Lorraine Jameson
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 to 10 March 2017
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the company 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

Emma Woods, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Kevin Williams	Ofsted Inspector
Angela Twelvetree	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Gibson	Ofsted Inspector

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