

# Inspection of Access Training Limited

Inspection dates: 5 to 8 February 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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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

Access Training Limited provides apprenticeships from levels 2 to 5 in the three main subject areas of accounting, business and management, and fire emergency and security systems. Most apprentices are based in the north east of England. At the time of the inspection, there were 248 apprentices, of whom a third were aged between 16 and 18 years. The provider does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Apprentices benefit from high-quality training delivered by experienced and caring trainers. Apprentices on the level 3 fire emergency and security technician apprenticeship quickly develop their confidence and skills in installing trunking, cabling and fire and security systems. They enjoy their training and speak highly of the support and encouragement they receive from their trainers.

Apprentices are highly committed and demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. Trainers set clear expectations for apprentices and work closely with employers to ensure that apprentices meet these expectations. Apprentices enjoy the face-to-face teaching that they receive, and they have the opportunity to work alongside other apprentices and learn from each other. Apprentices successfully build their knowledge and skills, which they apply quickly at work.

Apprentices benefit from useful information on a range of topics, which supports their personal development. These topics include equality, diversity and inclusion, mental health, and harmful sexual behaviour. Trainers encourage apprentices to celebrate different religious festivals, including Ramadan and the Chinese New Year, to develop their understanding of different cultures and faiths. Trainers use an interesting activity, in which apprentices consider a range of scenarios, to develop apprentices' understanding of tolerance and respect.

Trainers successfully develop apprentices' understanding of radicalisation and extremism, including online risks. They make apprentices aware of practical strategies to protect themselves should they see suspicious packages in public spaces.

Apprentices feel safe. They know who the members of the safeguarding team are, and they benefit from good working relationships with friendly and approachable staff to whom they would feel comfortable reporting any concerns.

Most apprentices receive guidance and support to achieve their next steps with their current employers. However, staff do not plan the provision of careers advice for apprentices well enough. As a result, a few apprentices are not fully aware of the breadth of career opportunities available to them once they achieve their apprenticeship.

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

Leaders and managers have constructed an ambitious apprenticeship curriculum that is relevant to local, regional and national employment and training priorities. Leaders use their expertise in accounting, business and management and fire emergency and security systems to provide training that employers value. The fire emergency and security systems curriculum prepares apprentices well for careers as fire emergency and security engineers. As the only provider in the locality offering

this provision, the provider makes a significant contribution to addressing the skills shortages employers face in recruiting skilled engineers.

Trainers plan and teach a well-structured curriculum across the different apprenticeship programmes. On the level 3 fire emergency and security technician apprenticeship, staff prioritise the teaching of health and safety. Apprentices are first taught how to isolate electrical supplies. They are then supported to apply this knowledge to keep themselves and their colleagues safe in the workplace. Trainers structure the curriculum for level 4 school business professional to include consolidation days to enable time to revisit topics that apprentices find particularly useful or challenging, such as negotiation skills and conflict management.

Trainers use effective teaching strategies that help apprentices to repeat or practise what they learn. They use a wide range of teaching methods very effectively to ensure that teaching is interactive and practical. This includes using ice breakers, scenario-based activities and quizzes. As a result of the effective teaching that they receive, apprentices quickly develop their knowledge and skills. For example, assistant accountant apprentices learn how to find and address errors in financial statements and year-end accounts and to check that others in their workplaces use correct VAT codes. Fire emergency and security apprentices can describe the different range of faults that typically occur, and how to rectify them.

Most trainers use effective methods throughout the programme to assess what their apprentices know and can do. Fire emergency apprentices take regular tests to check their knowledge in areas such as fire alarm sounders. Trainers revisit topics, using plenary discussions and detailed questioning of apprentices, to ensure that they fill any gaps in apprentices' knowledge. As a result, most apprentices make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills.

Apprentices take care and pride when producing their work. They produce good-quality portfolios that demonstrate how they use their new knowledge in the workplace to make a positive contribution. This prepares them well for the demands of their end-point assessment. However, in a few cases, apprentices do not receive clear enough guidance from trainers on how to improve their work, which slows the progress of a few apprentices. Most apprentices successfully pass their end-point assessments. However, in a small number of programmes, only a few apprentices achieving merit and distinction grades.

Trainers enable apprentices to make good progress in developing their skills in English and mathematics. For example, they provide activities that help assistant accountant apprentices to improve their writing skills and to communicate effectively with clients face to face or by phone. Fire emergency and security apprentices develop skills in mathematics to calculate backup battery requirements.

Trainers provide good support for apprentices with additional needs. They provide a calm learning environment for apprentices with mental health issues, such as anxiety, to experience a calm learning environment that enables these apprentices to make effective progress. Apprentices with special educational needs and/or

disabilities receive timely and useful support. For example, apprentices with dyslexia can access session resources in advance of taught sessions to help them to understand the content.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff are well trained and qualified. Staff benefit from good-quality staff development, with a particular focus on the development of trainers' teaching skills. Trainers' workloads are manageable and monitored frequently by their managers.

Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of where they need to improve the provision and focus their efforts in these areas. They recognise the challenges of recruiting staff to teach on the fire emergency and security systems apprenticeship, so they recruit staff from the industry and then support new staff to achieve teaching qualifications.

Leaders and managers have in place a board of directors. The board provides appropriate strategic oversight of the provider. The chair challenges directors to improve the quality of provision continually. As a result, there have been significant changes to the fire emergency and security systems apprenticeship, with the introduction of a greater focus on practical training.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that the outcomes of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are recorded for all relevant staff in line with their safer recruitment policy and procedure. They identified where there were gaps during the inspection and updated their records. Leaders and managers have other safeguarding measures in place, such as ensuring that they have carried out checks on the identity of staff and have references for them.

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

- Ensure that all DBS checks are in place and recorded for all members of staff in line with the safer recruitment policy and procedure.
- Ensure that trainers provide helpful feedback so that apprentices know what they need to do to improve their work and to achieve the grades of which they are capable.
- Ensure that apprentices benefit from an effective careers programme.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	50314
<b>Address</b>	Gateshead Skills Academy 8th Avenue Kingsway South Team Valley Gateshead NE11 0JL
<b>Contact number</b>	01914904646
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.accesstraining.org">www.accesstraining.org</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	David Armstrong
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 to 25 April 2018
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director of training, 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

Mark Keen, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Cath Jackson	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Elliott	Ofsted Inspector
David Sykes	Ofsted Inspector

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