

Inspection of Data Law Limited

Inspection dates: 5 to 7 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
<hr/>	
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

Data Law Limited (Data Law) is an independent training provider based in Liverpool, Merseyside. It specialises in providing training for the legal sector and works with employers nationally. At the time of the inspection, there were 199 apprentices studying standards-based apprenticeships. Around half of the apprentices were studying the level 3 paralegal apprenticeship. Most of the remaining apprentices were studying the level 7 solicitor apprenticeship with a few on the level 3 team leader or supervisor apprenticeship. The provider does not contract with any subcontractors.

The level 7 solicitor apprenticeship has two pathways; a graduate pathway which has a reduced duration of three years, taking into account previously gained qualifications, and the full six-year apprenticeship. These pathways have been running from August 2023.

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

Apprentices benefit from a flexible online learning approach to their studies. They say that they enjoy learning through online workshops, one-to-one sessions and independent study because of knowledgeable tutors linking theory to practice.

Apprentices feel that they are developing the knowledge and skills to have a lasting career in the legal sector. They are appreciative of the opportunities that Data Law offers them and are proud of the progress they are making.

Apprentices are highly motivated and display positive attitudes to their learning. As a result of their studies, they gradually develop their confidence, resilience, character and professional behaviours that are important attributes to have when working in the legal sector. Level 7 solicitor apprentices say they are more assertive in their personal lives, and family members comment on their improving self-esteem.

Apprentices feel safe because of the training that they receive. They receive a comprehensive induction at the beginning of the course and are provided with updated information periodically throughout their apprenticeship. However, apprentices say that they are not made aware of the risks in the areas that they live and work.

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

Leaders have a clear vision to provide apprenticeships in the legal sector that are guided by the principles of inclusion and social mobility. They advocate for a legal profession that reflects the society that it serves. Leaders' priority is to ensure that those who aspire to work in a legal practice, as a qualified legal professional or solicitor, can do so.

Tutors and coaches are suitably qualified and experienced, with many maintaining dual professionalism as qualified solicitors or solicitor advocates. They use their experience and technical knowledge to make clear the links between core legal knowledge and its practical application. They use their skills to contextualise learning for apprentices. However, leaders rightly acknowledge the need for their tutors to receive training on how to improve their teaching practice, which has been arranged to take place in the coming months.

Tutors complete detailed assessments with apprentices at the start of the apprenticeship to identify what they know and what they need to learn. Tutors who teach the level 7 solicitor apprenticeship take account of apprentices' prior experience in legal firms and their areas of specialism to ensure that they develop new knowledge and skills throughout their apprenticeship. For example, tutors challenge apprentices with prior experience of wills and probate to deepen their knowledge in these areas to meet the requirements of the apprenticeship and the Solicitors Regulation Authority.

Tutors sequence the topics of the apprenticeship in a logical order. Level 7 solicitor apprentices explore the principles of the legal system in England and Wales, before applying those principles in public, constitutional, tort and land law. Tutors interleave earlier topics throughout subsequent modules to test apprentices' recall of core knowledge. This means that apprentices can confidently apply the underpinning principles of the legal system accurately when completing tasks at work.

Tutors use a variety of strategies to help apprentices understand key concepts and remember more of what they have been taught. Tutors who teach the level 7 solicitor apprenticeship use picture associations to help apprentices to visualise case law and legal principles, such as using a monocle to represent the inquisitorial role of the judge in civil courts. Tutors who teach the level 3 paralegal apprenticeship use scenarios to check apprentices' retention of ideas over time, such as money laundering, and model and test their application of these to specific examples in case law. Most apprentices make sustained progress in their studies.

Most tutors provide useful feedback to help apprentices improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. Apprentices use this feedback to make improvements to their work. However, in a few instances the oral feedback that coaches provide to apprentices does not identify clearly what apprentices need to do to improve. This means that these apprentices do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

Tutors work closely with employers to ensure that apprentices can reflect on what they have been taught and apply it at work. Level 3 paralegal tutors and employers set tasks for apprentices to complete at work, including drafting letters, documents and legal research. Apprentices incrementally improve their skills of concise expression throughout their apprenticeship and provide effective briefs for solicitors.

Tutors provide effective careers information, advice and guidance to apprentices throughout their apprenticeship. Tutors explore level 3 paralegal apprentices' progression and career plans at the beginning of the apprenticeship and at review meetings throughout the apprenticeship. This provides apprentices with the information to allow them to make informed decisions about their next steps in their career. These discussions include the opportunities to progress to the level 7 solicitor apprenticeship and other forms of legal training.

Leaders ensure that managers introduce the principles of fundamental British values to apprentices at the start of the apprenticeship and in one-to-one sessions and workshops throughout the apprenticeship. They make clear connections between legislation, legal process and British values. Level 3 paralegal tutors confidently illustrate the significance of laws and legal processes, such as individual liberty, personal voice and testamentary capacity when reviewing clients' last will and testament.

Attendance by apprentices to their sessions is high. On the rare occasions when apprentices miss sessions, staff help them to catch up by having additional sessions

to support them in what they have missed. Staff provide recordings of sessions to ensure apprentices do not fall behind.

Leaders' arrangements for assuring the quality of training that apprentices receive are not rigorous enough. Too often, observations of teaching sessions focus too much on what teachers do, as opposed to what apprentices learn. This means that leaders' actions following observations and other assurance activities are not always focused on improving apprentices' learning experiences, and consequently do not fully inform leaders' progress monitoring systems.

Governance is effective. Leaders now provide more detailed reports to governors on the effectiveness of the apprenticeships that they offer. They know their strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders are challenged by external advisers who have extensive knowledge of apprenticeships to improve their provision further.

Leaders, managers and staff know their strengths and weaknesses. They have rectified most of the weaknesses identified at the previous monitoring visit through a significant programme of change. Their actions included making significant improvements to careers information, advice and guidance and using apprentices' previous knowledge and skills to develop challenging learning plans for apprentices.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that all apprentices receive clear and accurate feedback on what they need to do to improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Ensure that apprentices have a clear understanding of the dangers they may experience in their communities.
- Provide tutors with appropriate development to help them to improve their teaching practice.
- Improve quality assurance arrangements so that leaders have a clearer understanding of how well apprentices learn and use this information to inform leaders' oversight of progress.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2626843
Address	3a Bridgewater Street Baltic Triangle Liverpool L1 0AR
Contact number	0151 236 2024
Website	www.dataonline.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Charles Peter
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	16 to 18 February 2022
Main subcontractors	Not applicable

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of quality 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

Paul Cocker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Joe Poole

Ofsted Inspector

Alison Dennis

His Majesty's Inspector

David Towsey

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024