

Inspection of Raise The Bar Limited

Inspection dates: 1 to 4 October 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

Raise the Bar Limited (RtB) is an independent learning provider based in Prescot, Liverpool. RtB offers apprenticeships in team leading, operations or departmental manager and coaching. At the time of the inspection, there were 918 apprentices studying on standards-based apprenticeships. There were 433 on the level 3 team leader or supervisor (team leader) apprenticeship, 393 on the level 5 operations or departmental manager (operations manager) apprenticeship and 92 on the level 5 coaching professional apprenticeship. Ninety-three apprentices were on a break in their learning. RtB works with a wide range of employers across England. All teaching sessions are through online learning.

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

Apprentices have positive attitudes and enjoy their learning. They describe their apprenticeship as transformational. Most apprentices are highly motivated to achieve their apprenticeship. They are ambitious to be high performing leaders and managers. Apprentices are committed to achieving distinction grades where available.

Apprentices appreciate the support that they receive from their development coaches. They value the flexibility of coaches when managing their assignment submission dates with the demands of their apprenticeship and work. This has supported most apprentices to continue with their apprenticeship.

Apprentices increase their confidence because of the training that they receive. Team leader apprentices speak confidently in large groups to present findings from projects. Operations manager apprentices learn how to conduct reviews of their team's performance and coach them effectively to improve their staff's performance.

Apprentices benefit from learning in a calm, positive and professional learning environment where there is a culture of mutual respect. During workshop sessions, apprentices value discussing workplace challenges with their peers. They use these discussions to learn how to overcome workplace disputes and conflicts.

Women in leadership apprentices talk enthusiastically about how they discuss their experiences in the workplace in a safe environment. Coaching apprentices discuss ethical standards and professional conduct. This helps apprentices to work safely and consider the safety and wellbeing of their peers and colleagues.

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

Leaders plan the curriculum sensibly. Apprentices develop their foundational knowledge before moving on to more complex topics. Coaching apprentices learn the principles of self-management and self-awareness before learning how to build relationships with clients. Apprentices practise these skills before moving onto more advanced techniques such as neuro-linguistic programming.

Most development coaches coordinate on- and off-the-job training effectively for apprentices. Apprentices practise what they learn in the workplace regularly, swiftly developing their knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, operations manager apprentices learn about stakeholder mapping theory. This enables them to find more effective ways of working to create efficiencies in the workplace.

Development coaches use questioning skilfully to develop apprentices' knowledge. Team leader apprentices recall Belbin's theory of team roles. Apprentices discuss these roles in breakout groups to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their teams in the workplace. Apprentices value the use of professional discussions and

roleplays to prepare them for the workplace and their final assessments. Over half of apprentices achieve distinctions in their final assessments.

Development coaches use a range of effective assessment strategies to check and consolidate apprentices' learning. They use reflection activities, professional discussions, and verbal questioning to assess what apprentices have learned. Development coaches use this information to plan future sessions and rectify misunderstandings quickly. For example, team leader apprentices benefit from additional training on how to apply a range of tools and techniques in project management such as Gantt charts and the pomodoro technique. Apprentices apply these techniques confidently in their workplace.

Apprentices benefit from discussions about their career aspirations at the start of their apprenticeship. They set short, medium, and long-term goals that are reviewed with their development coaches. Coaching apprentices are aware of the roles that they can progress to after completing their apprenticeship. At the end of the apprenticeship, development coaches discuss further education and training opportunities. Most apprentices gain more responsibility in the workplace such as an increase in staff they are responsible for in their team. They are more confident in their management roles because of their apprenticeship.

Leaders carefully monitor staff workloads and health and wellbeing. Staff talk enthusiastically about the open culture that leaders create and that they feel valued and listened to. Managers provide support if staff feel that their workload is too high. They reduce caseloads and allow staff to work flexibly. Leaders have recently invested in and designed a bespoke artificial intelligence tool to reduce the administration burden on development coaches. This has resulted in a significant decrease in workloads.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have recruited a new quality improvement team. They now use a range of quality improvement processes such as 'deepdives' and observations to monitor the quality of education that apprentices receive. This means that most of the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been rectified. For example, leaders continue to focus on reducing the numbers of apprentices that have a break in learning and increasing the number of apprentices that remain on their apprenticeship. However, leaders do not routinely use the information to develop the teaching skills of development coaches further.

Leaders and managers have put in place effective strategies to improve attendance and participation. Attendance at workshops has improved across most apprenticeships and is high. However, attendance is inconsistent across a few workshop sessions.

Board members have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas of improvement. They receive a range of useful reports which they use to challenge senior leaders to bring about swift improvements. This has led to leaders improving the quality of education that apprentices receive rapidly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Improve attendance across all workshop sessions.
- Improve the number of apprentices that remain on their apprenticeship and achieve.
- Use the information from quality improvement processes to develop training so that all development coaches strengthen their teaching skills.

Provider details

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Unique reference number | 2539233 |
| Address | Unit 13 Tiger Court Kings Business Park Kings Drive Prescot Merseyside L34 1PJ |
| Contact number | 02031377353 |
| Website | www.raisethebar.co.uk |
| Principal, CEO or equivalent | Rebecca Bridge |
| Provider type | Independent learning provider |
| Date of previous inspection | 10 to 13 May 2022 |
| Main subcontractors | None |

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the operations manager, 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

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Alison Humphreys, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Elaine Price | Ofsted Inspector |
| Danny Braithwaite | Ofsted Inspector |
| Mark Care | 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