

NTG Training Ltd

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

Unique reference number:	1270863
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

NTG Training Ltd (NTG) was inspected in December 2023. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in resolving the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

NTG is an independent learning provider located in Chester, Cheshire. It provides a range of apprenticeships in four vocational areas. These are marketing, leadership and business, health and social care, and manufacturing.

At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 221 apprentices on a range of apprenticeships from level 2 to level 5. The largest numbers of apprentices follow the level 3 lead adult care worker, level 3 multi-channel marketer, level 3 team leader or supervisor, level 5 leader in adult care, level 3 business administrator, level 5 operations or departmental manager, and level 3 content creator standards. Most teaching is carried out online.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in improving their oversight of the quality of provision?

Reasonable progress

Since the previous inspection, leaders have changed their quality assurance, improvement and monitoring processes to gain an improved oversight of the quality of training that apprentices receive. They have invested in a bespoke electronic system that provides them with instant live access to key performance indicators including progress and attendance. Leaders use this information to have an accurate oversight of the provision and to start conversations with staff and put in place interventions to improve any areas of concern in a timely manner.

Leaders use quality meetings and reviews more effectively and thematically through the year. They review apprentices' progress and development monthly, working closely with programme leaders and tutors to target actions for any apprentices underperforming or at risk of leaving the course early. Most apprentices make their expected progress.

Tutors have greater involvement in ensuring the clear oversight and improvement of the quality of provision for apprentices. They cite the increased detail in their monthly meetings with managers. Tutors log the progress of every apprentice to identify those at risk of withdrawal and those falling behind. They are more proactive

in intervening when apprentices need help and support. Tutors devise and implement timely action plans for apprentices to catch up swiftly.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have ensured that more apprentices complete and achieve their apprenticeship. They have a greater oversight of the progress that apprentices make but recognise that some of their recent quality improvement work has yet to demonstrate impact.

How much progress have leaders made to ensure that apprentices are provided with information on and are challenged to achieve the highest grades in their final assessments?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have redesigned assessments so that they now include the grading criteria for merits and distinctions. Leaders have mapped all assessments against these criteria so that they now clearly identify how apprentices can achieve the highest grades. This supports apprentices to track their progress towards what they could achieve at their final assessments.

Apprentices are well informed about the content of and grades available in their final apprenticeship assessments. Most apprentices aspire to achieve the highest grades. Those approaching the end of their apprenticeship benefit from mock examinations, tests and professional discussions to prepare them for the style and format of their final assessments. Apprentices feel well prepared for their final assessments. Approximately half of apprentices achieve distinction grades in their final assessments, with around 8% achieving merit grades.

Most apprentices receive useful feedback from their tutors on their work. Most tutors explain what apprentices have done well and what they need to do to improve. Apprentices know that they need to develop their answers to include examples, and apply the knowledge to their own experience and workplace practices to achieve merits and distinctions. Most apprentices improve their work throughout their apprenticeship. However, feedback from a few tutors is overly positive. They do not challenge apprentices sufficiently to achieve higher grades. The targets that tutors set in progress reviews are not specific and do not support all apprentices to improve their written work. A few apprentices continue to make the same mistakes, and the quality of their work does not improve quickly enough.

How much progress have leaders made to ensure that tutors receive training on how to provide effective careers advice and guidance to apprentices?

Reasonable progress

Tutors have received training on the potential career pathways available across their sectors. This has supported them to provide relevant and effective information,

advice and guidance to apprentices about their potential next steps and career progression.

Leaders and tutors have launched a useful online careers platform that identifies career pathways and provides apprentices with a range of information about job roles in their chosen sectors. The site directs apprentices to useful information about the skills required for each job role, salaries and what they need to do to progress to higher level roles. While apprentices are aware of the new provider web pages, they do not all make use of these resources.

Apprentices discuss their careers aspirations at the start of their apprenticeship and in progress reviews. Tutors use the new careers platform to explore details of the potential roles, levels and pathways available. They signpost apprentices to external sites such as the chartered institute of managers and skills for care. Tutors provide bespoke advice and guidance based on apprentices' emerging interests throughout the course to better inform them of their potential next steps and future career development. Customer service apprentices talk about their pathways into supervisory and leadership roles while marketing apprentices highlight specific roles in search engine optimisation and content creation.

Leaders recognise that they still have work to do to ensure that apprentices receive consistent, high-quality advice and guidance. They have yet to evaluate the uptake and usefulness of the recently established careers website for apprentices. Apprentices do not all routinely benefit from the full range of advice and guidance on offer.

How much progress have leaders made to plan and implement strategies for apprentices to develop their wider personal skills? Reasonable progress

Since the previous inspection, leaders and tutors have developed a new enrichment and personal development programme of themed weeks, offering workshops on well-being, communication and listening skills, leadership and career development. They use their own expertise to broaden the experience of apprentices. Tutors record the enrichment sessions to make them available to apprentices unable to attend at the time of the event. These provide apprentices with the opportunity to broaden their learning experience.

Most apprentices are aware of the new enrichment offer, but too few have had the opportunity to attend. Apprentices who attend find the workshops useful and informative. They gain important additional knowledge and skills around topics such as time management, that they apply to their work and home lives. Apprentices learn about stress management, anxiety, and emotional intelligence. They now know how to identify the signs of anxiety and manage these successfully. Apprentices attend presentation workshops, learning how to develop slides that engage the audience and ensure they stick to time. Marketing apprentices enjoy enrichment

activities on artificial intelligence (AI). They apply these skills by creating promotional campaigns using AI software.

In training and reviews, tutors routinely discuss the topic of the month with apprentices. They link these topics to apprentices' work and life, making them relevant in helping apprentices to develop their wider personal skills to become well-rounded citizens. Apprentices learn about a broad range of issues, including peer pressure, sexual consent, menopause awareness, safer internet use, mental health, and autism acceptance. Tutors link topical incidents in the news to apprentices' own circumstances to raise their awareness of wider world issues.

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