

Re:Gen Academy Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2804844
Name of lead inspector:	Philippa Firth, His Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	Pottery Road Sunderland SR5 2BP

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Ofsted undertakes to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of adult learning provision where the provision offered is in scope for inspection. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Re:Gen Academy Limited is an independent learning provider based in Sunderland. The academy is a subsidiary of the Re:Gen Group, which carries out refurbishment, retrofit and new build works for social housing providers. Leaders of the academy started to offer a construction Skills Bootcamp in August 2023. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were eight learners enrolled. During the current academic year, 53 learners have completed the Skills Bootcamp.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant adult learning provision that has a clearly defined purpose? Significant progress

Leaders have a very clear and purposeful intent for the Skills Bootcamps in domestic retrofit that they offer. They aim to provide a skilled workforce to fill the recognised construction and retrofit skills gaps in the north east. The courses are designed to improve the employment prospects of learners who are long-term unemployed and support them into sustained employment in retrofit, customer service and groundworks occupations.

Leaders and managers work exceptionally well with employers to tailor each Skills Bootcamp to meet their specific needs. For example, where employers require carpentry or plumbing skills, leaders and managers design effective curriculums to provide learners with experience in first fix heating and gas engineering operations or carpentry preparation. For learners who aspire to be roofers, this includes asbestos awareness and ladder safety training. Learners gain the specific skills they need to work in a range of construction roles. Employers value the useful practical skills that learners acquire to enable them to work safely on their sites.

Leaders have carefully considered the wider curriculum to break down barriers that can prevent learners from gaining and sustaining employment. For example, at the end of each Skills Bootcamp, they provide driving lessons for learners who cannot drive. This enables learners to become more independent and to apply for and gain employment opportunities with a wider range of employers.

Leaders employ highly skilled and qualified tutors. They provide suitable professional development activities to make sure that tutors continue to improve their teaching practice. For example, leaders delivered training to improve tutors' feedback to learners on their written and practical work. Tutors feel highly valued and supported by leaders and managers.

Leaders have effective arrangements for evaluating the quality of their provision. They have employed consultants who have extensive experience in the further education sector and the construction industry to support them with quality assurance activities, such as lesson observations and standardisation activities. As a result, leaders are assured that tutors provide high-quality teaching activities to enable learners to gain substantial construction skills swiftly. This means learners are extremely well prepared for job interviews and employment opportunities.

How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aim and/or personal goals? Significant progress

Staff have designed and implemented a very ambitious curriculum. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum includes substantial and valuable work experience. Consequently, learners successfully apply what they have learned in training sessions to real-life work contexts. They are well prepared for the occupations in which they are interested and fully appreciate what they can expect once they gain employment.

Staff carefully and accurately assess learners' suitability for a Skills Bootcamp. They use initial assessment precisely to identify learners' starting points and plan learning that enables learners to develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Where tutors identify that a few learners have prior knowledge and experience, they adapt the curriculum so that learners do not repeat previous learning.

Tutors ensure that learners develop their mathematical and English skills. They teach learners how to calculate measurements in cubic feet and metres for use during on-site work experience. Learners learn to write professional, concise and neatly written job applications.

Leaders, managers and tutors have an accurate oversight of the progress that learners make. They swiftly put in place support for the few learners who struggle. For example, tutors provide one-to-one sessions for learners who find the health and safety unit difficult to help them consolidate learning before they sit the examination.

Tutors use their extensive experience of the construction and retrofit sector to design and teach the curriculum effectively, adapting it well to meet the needs of each learner. They use teaching strategies that break down learning into manageable tasks to help learners retain information and learn new skills and behaviours. Learners gain a firm understanding of the retrofit industry. They know how this helps

the environment and reduces the carbon footprint and how employers need to contribute towards the 2050 net-zero emissions target.

Most learners who remain on programme progress into employment or an apprenticeship. Learners are very well supported on completion of their course through a six-month aftercare and mentoring service, which helps them with further job applications and interviews.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Significant progress

Leaders are highly committed to keeping learners safe. They have ensured that the safeguarding team is suitably qualified. All staff complete safeguarding training to help to keep learners safe.

Tutors teach learners the essential knowledge and skills they need to protect themselves and keep themselves safe on construction sites. Learners who work in customer-facing roles work towards achieving safeguarding qualifications, so they are better prepared to recognise safeguarding concerns in relation to colleagues and customers.

Leaders have implemented appropriate safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty policies and procedures. Staff have attended professional development activities on 'Prevent' duty referrals, and they know how to refer learners if they have any concerns.

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