

Inspection of Achievement Training Limited

Inspection dates: 3 to 5 June 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Achievement Training Limited (ATL) operates from two training centres in Plymouth city centre, one of which is its headquarters location. ATL offers apprenticeships, and adult learning under its own contract. ATL also offers study programmes for 16- to 18-year-olds on behalf of its owner, City College Plymouth. The study programme was not in scope for this inspection.

ATL currently has 108 apprentices who are employed in around 75 public- and private-sector organisations located in the city of Plymouth and across the south west of England. ATL offers 19 apprenticeship standards ranging from levels 2 to 5. Currently, 24 apprentices are studying adult care apprenticeships, 33 are studying childcare and residential childcare apprenticeships and 32 are studying business administration apprenticeships.

Around 70 adults are using adult learner loans to complete diploma and advanced diploma level programmes in subjects including health and social care, animal care, and hair and beauty therapy.

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

Adult learners and apprentices enjoy their learning with ATL. A large proportion of all ATL's learners have had poor prior experiences in education but they mostly attend and succeed well at ATL. All learners value particularly the very strong personal and professional support they receive from all ATL staff. Teaching staff know each of their learners very well and are closely attuned to meeting each one's needs. Learners recognise that the support they receive is instrumental in helping them overcome any barriers to learning.

All learners recognise and appreciate the good standard of teaching they experience with ATL tutors. Combined with support, this ensures that learners develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours which help them to be successful in their careers.

Learners enjoy the calm and professional learning environments that tutors have created which means learners feel relaxed and able to learn. Learners maintain high standards of behaviour in the training centres and at work. Apprentices willingly participate in fund-raising activities which support charities and good causes in the local community.

Tutors treat learners fairly and successfully encourage them to be respectful of individual differences. Learners are mostly aware of key aspects of life in modern Britain, how to conduct healthy relationships, and stay safe online but their knowledge of how to recognise and keep safe from extremism and radicalisation is less secure. Learners feel safe when learning at ATL.

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

ATL's leaders and managers provide accessible and effective education for their learners. Leaders maintain strong links with key stakeholders in the region, such as the local skills improvement partnership. This informs leaders' provision of courses that meet specific skills needs in and around Plymouth, such as adult care.

A small team of City College Plymouth's senior staff provide useful support and challenge for ATL's leaders. ATL's leaders are using comprehensive management information increasingly effectively to monitor and improve the quality of provision.

Leaders and managers ensure that all its curriculums are developed, planned and modified in collaboration with employers. This ensures curriculums meet employers' and learners' needs well. Leaders have ensured that curriculums for adults and apprentices are sequenced carefully to build learners' knowledge, skills and behaviours progressively and in depth.

Staff arrange valuable curriculum enrichment opportunities to broaden all learners' interests and knowledge. They hear from guest speakers from industry and attend masterclasses. Tutors provide learners with broad experiences, such as skin cancer

awareness for non-health professionals in hair and beauty. In animal care, adult learners extend their practical knowledge of the animal care sector by visiting zoos, visitor attractions, farms and aquariums. Early years practitioner apprentices learn the essential skills needed to work safely with children from the start of their apprenticeship. They also complete additional courses in, for example, Makaton and First Aid.

Apprentices and adults are taught by qualified, skilled and industry-experienced tutors. This ensures learners are taught up-to-date, real-world techniques. For example, many of the tutors and assessors on the level 4 and 5 leader in adult care apprenticeships have managed care homes or worked directly with dementia patients. Apprentices recognise how such experience enhances their learning. ATL tutors take good advantage of the extensive opportunities leaders give them to further update their skills and professional knowledge. Leaders support assessors and tutors who are not already qualified teachers to achieve a Level 3 teaching qualification.

All learners and apprentices have a good understanding of the progress they are making and good opportunities to deepen their learning. Tutors mostly assess apprentices' coursework thoroughly and provide them with constructive feedback which helps them improve. Tutors communicate in detail with apprentices' employers and make sure apprentices have extensive opportunities for learning on-the-job. Tutors set adult learners tasks which extend their theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Tutors support adults to improve their English and learn the key technical terms they need to know for their type of employment. Adults in animal care mostly take part in useful work experience, and adults in beauty undertake work-related activities onsite. However, staff do not always ensure that learners and employers are clear about learners' objectives or personal targets during the placement.

Tutors identify apprentices' learning support needs in depth at the start of their courses. Almost half of adult learners identify as having special educational needs (SEN). Tutors work closely with ATL's SEN coordinator to implement appropriate support arrangements for apprentices and adult learners. Those with SEN achieve in line with their peers.

Learners and apprentices mostly achieve their qualifications and move on to positive destinations. Level 2 early years apprentices develop excellent knowledge and skills and nearly half progress to the level 3 early years educator course at ATL. The majority of apprentices gain their qualification and nearly all those who complete their apprenticeship progress to work within the industry. Most adult learners achieve their qualifications, with most in animal care achieving a merit or distinction grade. Almost all adults on beauty and nail courses achieve and most enter self-employment. However, leaders do not offer these learners sufficient formal training or guidance in how to be self-employed.

Experienced subject tutors mostly provide useful careers advice and guidance to apprentices and learners. Learners have access to a trained careers advisor and an online careers platform to learn about their options. However, a small minority of

adults in animal care are not clear about what they will do when they finish their qualification and have not been guided well on securing work or further training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Make sure that adults undertaking work experience have tailored objectives and know the skills they need to develop during their placement, which are shared with the employer.
- Make sure all learners receive highly effective guidance that helps them to fully consider their next steps before they complete their course.

Provider details

Unique reference number	50322
Address	Norwich Union House 2 St Andrew's Cross Plymouth PL1 1DN
Contact number	01752 202266
Website	https://www.achievementtraining.com/
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Kathy Barnes
Provider type	Independent Training Provider
Date of previous inspection	January 2020
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the managing director, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent position statement, 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

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