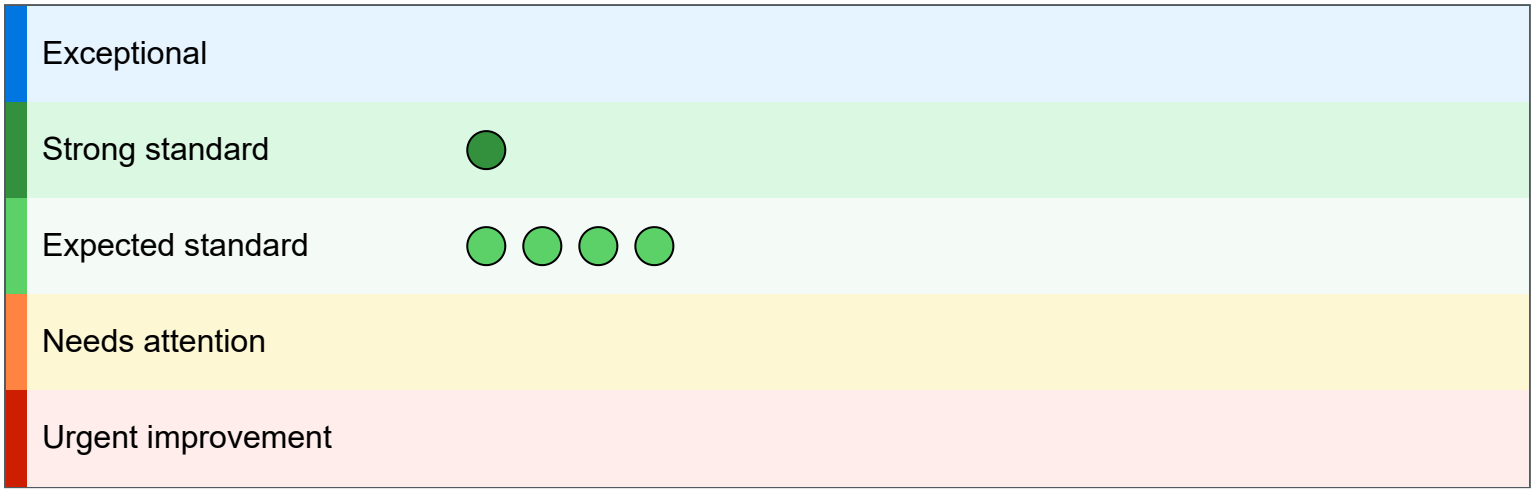
CSA (Services) Ltd

Address: 2 Esh Plaza, Sir Bobby Robson Way, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE13 9BA

Unique reference number (URN): 1278692

Inspection report: 14 April 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, learners are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect providers for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The provider has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- Not met: The provider has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

1. Inclusion, and leadership and governance

Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders have recently developed a well-considered inclusion policy that builds on their approach to providing support for apprentices who need it. The new policy highlights how apprentices with additional support needs, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), will be supported. Leaders rightly recognise they need to ensure that apprentices' support needs are shared more explicitly with staff who need this information.

Staff record relevant information regarding apprentices' backgrounds and support needs prior to enrolment as well as any specific needs that arise during the apprenticeship. This includes information about SEND, health and wellbeing, caring responsibilities, care experience, financial hardship, English and mathematics qualifications and digital exclusion. They use this information to develop appropriate individual support plans for apprentices.

Managers have a clear overview of the support apprentices receive. Staff frequently review the support provided to ensure that it is effective. Staff amend, increase or reduce support for apprentices as required.

Leaders provide useful training for staff to increase their awareness of the diverse range of needs of apprentices and how these can cause barriers to accessing the training. This includes training in autism and dyslexia awareness to ensure that appropriate support is provided for apprentices.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders co-design bespoke apprenticeship programmes with their employers in trading standards, credit control, debt advice and collection, compliance and risk, and counter-fraud investigation. Leaders focus their strategic partnerships with local authorities and other large businesses. Apprenticeships match precisely to employers' requirements. Leaders use a subcontractor to provide training to improve apprentices' readiness to present legal cases in court. They monitor the quality of training provided by the subcontractor effectively.

Senior leaders recognise the need to invest in resources required for delivering high-quality provision. As their business has grown, leaders have procured high-quality staff training, management information systems and recruited staff to meet increased business demands. This has helped ensure that staff's workloads are manageable.

Leaders undertake thorough quality assurance activities to maintain a clear oversight of their strengths, weaknesses and ongoing improvements. Leaders revisit these activities frequently to assure their efficacy.

Leaders have in place a very experienced and highly knowledgeable governance team who have expertise in either education, finance or the credit services sector. They provide effective support and challenge to leaders that help improve the quality of provision. Governors' input has resulted in a relentless focus on improving teaching and training so that it is of a consistently high standard.

In a few instances, leaders do not record or analyse the information they have available to them sufficiently well. For example, they do not track the destinations of apprentices well enough to assure themselves that apprentices move into sustained employment or into better paid roles with additional responsibilities.

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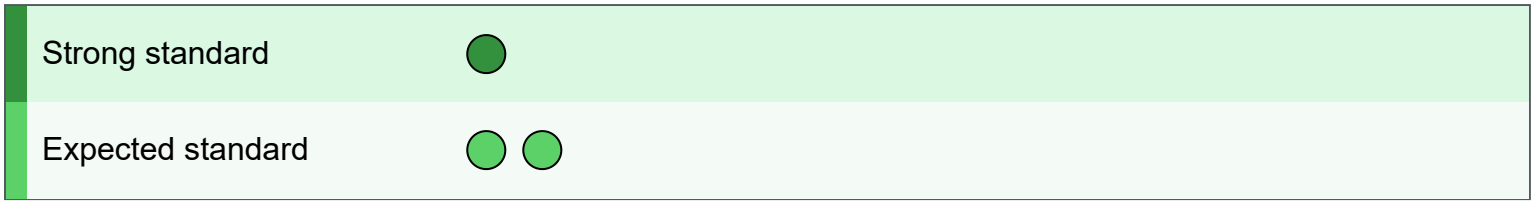
2. Apprenticeships



Strong standard

Curriculum and teaching **Strong standard**

Leaders have developed and designed demanding and relevant curriculums in partnership with their employers. The curriculums meet the needs of employers operating in fast-changing policy and legislative environments, such as housing, environmental health and gambling.

Staff have sequenced the curriculums logically to develop effectively the knowledge and skills apprentices require in their roles. For example, level 4 apprentices receive a theoretical overview of the different environments they will operate in, before studying in more detail the practices involved in the regulation of risk and compliance control.

Leaders ensure that teaching staff are well qualified and have current sector expertise, supporting new tutors with effective mentoring arrangements. They support those new to teaching to undertake initial teacher training qualifications, so they have the requisite skills to teach.

Staff assess the starting points of apprentices accurately at the beginning of each programme. They use this information well to ensure that apprentices are enrolled on the right course and pass this information to tutors who use it to plan training sessions.

Tutors use effective teaching strategies to enliven their online learning sessions. They use break-out rooms for small groupwork, dual coding and flipped learning activities to help improve apprentices' deeper understanding and memory retention of complex topics.

Tutors check frequently that apprentices understand what they have been taught. They use, for instance, question and answer sessions with apprentices at the start of new learning to discuss any common misconceptions identified during previous modules. Coaches provide

apprentices with high-quality, constructive, developmental feedback during progress reviews and on their written assignments.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Achievement on most apprenticeships is high, particularly at levels 2 and 4. Although improving rapidly, achievement on level 6 apprenticeships in the previous year was low. This was largely because apprentices left their course early due to challenging demands at work.

Apprentices make sustained progress from their respective starting points, producing work of at least the expected standard. A few apprentices, such as those on the level 4 regulatory compliance officer apprenticeship, produce well-structured, in-depth and evaluative assignments of a high standard. Many apprentices progress to positive destinations, such as gaining a promotion or pay rise.

Apprentices are well supported to develop the English, mathematics and digital skills they need. Almost all apprentices who enrol on functional skills English and mathematics courses achieve the qualification.

Although improved, the proportion of apprentices who achieve a distinction grade is low.

Participation and development

Expected standard

Leaders ensure that apprentices learn in inclusive, respectful environments. They provide apprentices with a few wider opportunities beyond the curriculum, including employee awards and nominations for sector prizes. A few apprentices also attend guest speaker events that broaden their understanding of the credit services sector.

Staff set high expectations for apprentices to attend training. In the few instances where apprentices are unable to attend, tutors rearrange training for them, so they do not fall behind.

Tutors teach apprentices about online safety including financial scams. Apprentices feel safe in workshops, at work, and know who to contact about their safety. Although apprentices do receive some training about dangers, such as county lines and petty crime, several do not understand the local risks associated with where they live and work.

Staff provide valuable support to apprentices about their wellbeing and check on them during one-to-one meetings and workshops. Apprentices benefit from a free online service that offers support for maintaining their mental and physical health. Apprentices do not experience bullying and harassment in training or at work.

Apprentices receive helpful initial, and ongoing, careers advice and guidance. They discuss how they can progress in their industries and into further training or learning.

What it's like to be a learner and/or an apprentice at this provider

Apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours that they apply effectively in the workplace. Level 6 trading standards professional apprentices confidently present business advice relating to consumer law. They contribute meaningfully to their workplace and apply learning through their professional practice. Several apprentices are working towards professional membership with the Chartered Institute of Credit Management.

Apprentices make sustained progress over time. Most achieve their qualifications and develop resilience in their roles. Level 2 collections and credit controller apprentices, many of whom were long-term unemployed, develop effective skills working with customers who display challenging behaviours when approached about the money they owe.

Apprentices thrive during the interactive, sector-informed training sessions they attend. Level 4 governance officer apprentices enjoy learning about similar industries from their peers during group discussions. They appreciate the opportunity to exchange experiences with colleagues working in the same sector.

Apprentices understand the importance of fundamental British values and apply them confidently in their workplace, showing respect to colleagues and customers from a range of backgrounds and cultures. Apprentices generally know how to keep themselves safe from the risks of extremism and radicalisation. However, a few apprentices do not receive sufficient information about the risks associated with where they live and work.

Apprentices feel very well supported by their personal coaches, who frequently check on their wellbeing during one-to-one meetings, workshops and progress reviews. Apprentices have access to an employee assistance programme if they have any concerns about their physical or mental wellbeing.

Apprentices enjoy and appreciate the flexibility of online learning. They value the opportunity to access learning at times that suit their personal circumstances and the ability to join alternative sessions if they find training times inconvenient. These arrangements ensure that apprentices benefit from continuity in their learning, resulting in sustained progress.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that all staff support apprentices to understand what they need to do to achieve a distinction grade in their final examinations.
- Leaders should provide apprentices with information about the local risks where they live and work.
- Leaders should provide apprentices with a wider range of tailored, personal development opportunities beyond the curriculum.
- Leaders should further develop and refine their approach to inclusion by improving how they identify and share more clearly apprentices' individual support needs with staff.

- Leaders should further improve their quality assurance activities, such as by analysing the proportion of apprentices who progress into promotions or better paid roles each year.

About this inspection

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with leaders, managers, tutors, apprentices, employers and stakeholders during the inspection.

CSA (Services) Limited is part of the Credit Services Association, a trade association that represents the debt collection and debt purchase industry. CSA is an independent training provider that offers apprenticeships throughout England in trading standards, credit control, debt advice and collection, compliance and risk, and counter-fraud investigation.

At the time of the inspection, there were 562 apprentices enrolled on apprenticeships from level 2 to level 6. Of these, 58 were in gateway preparing for their final assessment. All apprentices were over 19 years of age.

There were 32 apprentices enrolled to the level 2 credit controller and collector apprenticeship. There were 44 apprentices on level 3 apprenticeships; these were the debt adviser, senior credit controller and debt collection specialist, and compliance and risk officer apprenticeships. At level 4, there were 188 apprentices, most of whom were enrolled to the level 4 regulatory compliance officer apprenticeship, and at level 6, 256 apprentices were studying the level 6 trading standards apprenticeship, and 40 were on the level 6 senior compliance and risk specialist apprenticeship.

The provider mainly provides teaching and training using online learning and one-to-one coaching sessions. The provider uses one subcontractor, International Compliance Association, to deliver a very small proportion of provision.

Chief executive officer: Chris Leslie

Lead inspector:
Ian Frear, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Jonny Wright, His Majesty's Inspector
Jacquie Brown, His Majesty's Inspector
Susan Dawson, Ofsted Inspector
Chris Wiley, Ofsted Inspector
Charles Searle, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

This data is from 14 April 2026

Number of learners

Total learners

562

Apprenticeships

562

Percentage of learning aims successfully achieved

Apprenticeships overall achievement rate

Year	This provider	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	73	65	Close to average
2023/24	67	60	Close to average
2022/23	59	55	Close to average

Apprenticeships pass rate

Year	This provider	National average
2024/25	100	98
2023/24	100	98
2022/23	100	97

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other providers can learn from it.

Strong standard

The provider reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The provider is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The provider needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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