

Qube Qualifications and Development Ltd (also trading as Qube Learning)

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 54038

Name of lead inspector: Nigel Fletcher HMI

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Information about the provider

1. Qube Qualifications and Development Ltd, trading as Qube Learning (Qube), is a privately owned training provider. It moved its head office recently to Bedford, while the data and administration functions remained in Wallingford. Qube holds a single contract with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) for Train to Gain and work-based learning (WBL). Qube provides training on over 500 sites throughout England. Government-funded training is equivalent to approximately 90% of Qube's income. A chief executive, who reports directly to the board of the holding company, leads Qube. The operations director has day-to-day operational responsibility for learning. The company employs 71 full-time staff and uses a further 18 freelance learning advisors. In the past two years Qube has restructured and almost doubled the number of staff who are training and assessing.
2. Learners are employed across England and the majority of their learning takes place in the workplace. At the time of the inspection, Qube had 2,099 directly funded learners. Over three quarters of learners are on Train to Gain programmes and the remainder are work-based learners enrolled onto either an apprenticeship or advanced apprenticeship programme. Around two thirds of Train to Gain learners enrol onto literacy and/or numeracy skills for life qualifications as well as a vocational qualification. In 2008/09, 20% of learners were male and 28% came from minority ethnic groups. Qube also has a small number of learners on a European Social Fund (ESF) programme and on Stepping Stones. These were not part of this inspection, nor were the small proportion of learners on courses in health, public services and care.
3. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the provider:
 - Southend University Hospital NHS Trust (health and social care)
 - Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust (health and social care)
 - Continuum Care & Education Group (health and social care)
 - Inn Training (hospitality and catering)
 - Eglantine Catering Ltd (hospitality and catering).

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Employer provision:	
Train to Gain	2,346 learners
Apprenticeships	223 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Grade 2
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3
Subject Areas	
Hospitality and catering	2
Preparation for life and work	2
Business, administration and law	3

Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of Qube's provision is good. Learners' achievements, and the rate at which learners complete their qualifications in the agreed timescale, are satisfactory. Learners' success on Train to Gain programmes has improved considerably in the short time since the previous inspection, although improvement for the small proportion of apprentices has been slower. In the current year, learners' progress continues to improve. Learners are well motivated and enjoy the training. They develop good work skills and apply these effectively. Many learners progress further in employment or further study.
- Training and assessment arrangements are good, although learning advisors do not use outcomes of initial assessment and reviews sufficiently to develop individualised programmes for learners. Qube provides a good range of provision to meet the needs of learners and employers. Advisors ensure that learning is relevant to each learner's workplace. Support for learners is good. However, advisors do not set sufficiently specific and challenging targets in learners' action plans to enable them to make better progress. The quality of

initial guidance is good, although on-programme advice for career progression varies.

6. Directors and managers provide good leadership and set a strong emphasis on improving learners' achievement. They have managed effectively the introduction of a new management structure and demonstrate a good capacity to improve further. However, Qube has not yet fully developed its scheme for observing the quality of teaching and learning. Arrangements to safeguard learners are good and learners feel very safe. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. However, too many advisors make insufficient use of existing resources to enhance learners' understanding of equality and diversity matters.

Main findings

- Learners' outcomes are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, overall success rates have improved significantly. However, in 2008/09, they were still below national averages. Success rates for Train to Gain programmes in the current year have continued to improve significantly to around national averages. Although success rates for the small proportion of apprentices have improved, they are still low.
- Learners have made considerable improvements in completing their programmes within the agreed timescale. In 2008/09, timely completion rates improved significantly, but were still below average, particularly for apprentices. In the current year, although rates for Train to Gain learners have continued to improve to just above average, those for apprentices are still low.
- Learners enjoy the training and gain in confidence. They improve their personal skills and their skills for work, and effectively apply the knowledge gained in the workplace. Many learners gain promotion, move to better jobs or continue onto higher levels of training.
- Training, learning and assessment are good. Assessment methods are particularly flexible and responsive to employers' needs and learners' shift patterns. Advisors ensure that learning is relevant to each learner's workplace. Learning advisors' good occupational experience is used effectively and learners are motivated to progress to higher level qualifications.
- Tracking of learner achievement is inconsistent and not always available to enable learners to be informed of their current progress. Action plans and targets are insufficiently precise or challenging to impact fully on learners' success, personal development and progress.
- Qube provides a good range of provision to meet the needs of learners and employers. It maintains good partnerships with employers, other providers and agencies. These provide additional benefits to learners through employer-led training to support their current job role and career aspirations, and through effective learning and personal support where necessary.
- Initial guidance for learners is good. A thorough interview and advice process is linked to an informative induction programme. Initial assessment of learners'

individual learning needs is satisfactory. However, the outcomes of initial assessment are not used effectively to inform individual learning programmes.

- Support for learners is good. Learning advisors arrange their visits flexibly to fit in with learners' shift patterns, and respond well to learners' individual needs during assessment visits. However, on-programme advice and guidance for learners are inconsistently implemented and insufficiently recorded on visit and progress review forms.
- Strategic leadership is good. Senior managers have restructured the organisation to make it more efficient and responsive to the changing business environment. Management of change is good. Qube has implemented a number of core values and beliefs linked to its key performance indicators. These are fully shared and supported by staff across the organisation.
- The performance management of staff is good. Managers use target setting and performance reviews well to improve staff performance. Staff also benefit from quarterly reviews which support their annual appraisal and personal development arrangements. Qube provides good opportunities for staff development.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good. Learners feel safe and adopt safe working practices. The management of equality and diversity is satisfactory. However, learning advisors do not make full use of the good resources to promote learners' understanding of equality and diversity matters further.
- Self-assessment is mainly accurate and actions are in place to improve outcomes further. However, a few aspects of the quality improvement process which should inform self-assessment are incomplete. For example, observation of teaching and learning is insufficiently systematic and resulting actions for improvement are not sufficiently explicit.

What does Qube need to do to improve further?

- Improve overall and timely success rates, particularly on apprenticeship programmes, by setting specific and challenging targets in learners' action plans.
- Use outcomes of initial assessment and reviews more effectively to develop more individualised programmes for learners.
- Improve the regularity and recording of appropriate advice and guidance to enable learners to make accurate and well-informed choices for progression.
- Ensure that equality and diversity are further promoted with learners through the better use of existing good quality resources.
- Conduct regular observations of all training activities to inform self-assessment and staff development further, and to improve the consistency and quality of teaching and learning.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the good support and encouragement they receive from their learning advisors
- the flexibility of the learning advisors in being on call at any time, and arranging visits around shift work
- the time and help they receive from Qube staff in improving their skills and confidence at work and in their learning
- being able to work at their own pace
- taking a course after many years, and realising that they are still capable of learning
- gaining a qualification and being able to progress on to a higher level course
- the individual learning sessions
- being able to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

What learners would like to see improved:

- more time available for completing theory questions
- less information and paperwork at the start of the course
- better explanation of equality and diversity.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the courtesy with which Qube staff treat employers' staff and residents of the care homes, when they are assessing learners
- the good support they receive from Qube staff with their learners
- the high level of communications they have with Qube and the speed of response to enquiries
- Qube's willingness to tailor courses to suit employers' needs
- Qube's flexibility in arranging assessments at times to suit learners on shift work
- the knowledge that the learning advisors have of the industry
- the improvement in their learners' work and social skills.

What employers would like to see improved:

- more updating by the advisor on the progress of their learners.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

7. Qube demonstrates a good capacity to improve. In under two years since the last inspection, Qube has introduced improvements which have raised the standard of provision to good in two of the three subject areas inspected. In the same time, success rates and particularly timely success have improved markedly from a previously low level, although those for apprenticeships are still below national averages. Qube has successfully restructured to provide greater efficiency and flexibility and has improved the performance management of its staff. Self-assessment is thorough and the resulting report is self-critical and largely accurate. The provider recognises the need for further improvements in its quality improvement arrangements, otherwise all the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been addressed.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

8. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, success rates have improved at a significant rate. In 2008/09, overall success rates on Train to Gain programmes improved by 17 percentage points and rates for apprentices improved by 26 percentage points. However, success rates were still low compared with national averages, particularly for the few advanced apprentices. At the time of the inspection, overall success rates for Train to Gain programmes are much improved, particularly for level 3 courses which are high at 89%. However, success rates for the small proportion of apprentices are still low. Qube closely monitors learners' progress and forecasts that final success rates in the current year will be higher. There are no significant differences in the performance of different groups of learners or between geographic regions.
9. In 2008/09, the proportion of learners who completed the qualifications within the expected timescale was low, particularly for business programmes. For example, 64% of Train to Gain learners and 47% of all apprentices completed on time. At the time of the inspection, timely completion rates for Train to Gain learners have improved to 75%, but remain low for apprentices.
10. Learners enjoy their studies, improve in self-esteem, and develop their confidence and work skills well. Employers speak favourably about the benefits learners bring to the workplace through their programmes. Many learners completing the awards gain promotion or move on to better jobs; some continue onto further study. The quality of learners' work observed by inspectors was good. Learners feel safe and have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

11. Learning advisors work well with learners in one-to-one sessions and demonstrate a good knowledge of learners' individual circumstances. Individual

coaching is good as is assessment practice. Learning advisors use information and learning technology (ILT) well where they have internet access. Qube has developed imaginatively designed printed materials to further support learning.

12. Activities are frequently contextualised so that learners can see the relevance of the skills being developed. Although learning advisors support learners well during their visits, subsequent action plans and targets are frequently too general and provide insufficient clarity to what the learner needs to do for the next visit. Many employers contribute to learner reviews to ensure that relevant support is available in the workplace. However, few are involved in planning their learners' programmes, and the reporting of their learners' progress to employers is inconsistent.
13. Learners participate enthusiastically in their learning programme. Attendance at sessions is good and many learners progress to the next level of training. Learning advisors are appropriately, and in some cases highly, qualified in vocational areas. They draw on wide industry experience in developing their learners' skills and knowledge. Most learning advisors hold teaching qualifications or are working towards them.
14. Employers and learners are fully involved in the design and planning of Qube's programmes. Qualifications are closely linked to learners' job roles and employers' business needs. Learners have good opportunities to take a range of appropriate qualifications, including additional units, which are relevant to their careers and provide good progression routes into further training.
15. Partnership working is good. Learners benefit from strong partnerships with national, regional and local employers which enhances the vocational and training experience of Qube's staff. Potential apprentices are matched to the most appropriate employer through links with the National Apprenticeship Service. Qube liaises well with other providers to source suitable training, such as language support, where this cannot be provided in-house.
16. A thorough interview and advice procedure is linked to an informative induction programme. However, a few learners have experienced delays in the start of their learning programme. Initial assessment of individual learning needs is satisfactory. However, the outcomes of initial assessment are not used effectively to inform individuals' learning programmes.
17. Support for learners is good. Learning advisors arrange their visits flexibly to fit in with shift patterns and employers' needs. Learners can also contact them easily at other times, including weekends. Qube adapts information and learning materials to meet learners' needs. However, on-programme advice and guidance for learners are inconsistently implemented and poorly recorded. Qube recognises this as a weakness and is taking actions to remedy it.
18. Qube has improved its systems to identify learners at risk of leaving their programme early, and to provide early and effective support. However, tracking and monitoring of learner achievement during the programme are inconsistent.

Advisors are not always able to inform learners or their employers of their achievements to date, which impacts detrimentally on setting short, medium and long term targets for success within the agreed timescale.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

19. Senior managers have recently restructured the organisation to respond better to the changing funding environment and to improve the quality of provision. They have implemented a range of core values linked to Qube's key performance indicators, particularly for the improvement of learners' outcomes. Qube staff support the changes and fully share Qube's ethos of continual improvement. Managers use data well throughout the organisation and also in managing sub-contracted provision. Qube uses accurate management information on employers' and learners' needs to continually review its provision.
20. The management of resources is good. Qube produces high quality training resources, especially written material. Staff development is good. Staff receive good support for their continuous professional development which is linked to performance management with annual appraisal and quarterly review. Communication within the nationally widespread organisation and with its sub-contractors is good.
21. Staff who have contact with learners undergo an enhanced check with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). All staff have undergone safeguarding training and the safeguarding officer is working towards a level 2 safeguarding qualification. Appropriate records are maintained. Health and safety policies and procedures are thorough with particular attention to the protection of apprentices aged 16 to 18 in their work environments. Learners' understanding of safeguarding issues is good, including their own responsibilities for others. Qube had well-advanced plans to comply with the vetting and barring scheme due to have been introduced later this year and which was suspended during the inspection.
22. Qube has a well-articulated equality and diversity policy, which sets out the legal requirement and the organisation's commitment to equality. Staff receive regular training on equality issues. The provider has an active equality and diversity committee which monitors all aspects of the promotion of this area and contributes to the comprehensive equality and diversity development plan. Qube uses data successfully to identify and reduce achievement gaps between different groups of learners and has employed impact measures to identify under-represented groups. It has carried out an equality and diversity audit of its staff and attempts to reflect the demographic in the areas in which it operates. Learners are aware of the reporting channels for instances of bullying or harassment. Staff investigate incidents thoroughly and record appropriate actions taken. Staff have also supported and advised learners over incidents with their employers. Although advisors give learners well-produced booklets on aspects of equality and diversity, and ask questions on the content, they do not follow this up sufficiently to improve learners' understanding.

23. Employers' involvement in planning provision is a significant part of the company's comprehensive business plan to further diversify the nature of the training they offer. Employers' and learners' views are sought through the use of questionnaires and used to manage and improve the provision. However, the provider does not have an explicit learner engagement strategy to further involve learners in decision-making.

24. Self-assessment arrangements are thorough, with good involvement from staff and sub-contractors. The annual report is reviewed and updated after six months and the associated quality improvement plan addresses the identified areas for improvement well. However, observations of teaching and learning, used to inform the self-assessment process, do not grade the sessions observed and action points are not sufficiently explicit. The provider recognises this and is currently piloting a revised scheme in its skills for life provision.

Subject areas

Hospitality and catering

Grade 2

Context

25. Qube currently has 348 learners on hospitality and catering programmes. Of these, 243 are on Train to Gain and the rest on apprenticeships. The majority of learners work towards qualifications in food processing and professional cookery. Others train in, for example, hospitality supervision and leadership. All learners are employed within the hospitality industry, with 77% being female and 20% from minority ethnic groups.

Key findings

- Overall success rates are satisfactory. Rates have continued to improve over the past three years for both apprentices and advanced apprentices, and reached the national average in 2008/09. Success rates for learners on the Train to Gain programme have remained at the national average for the same three-year period.
- The rate at which learners complete their programmes on time is satisfactory, but has been inconsistent, particularly on apprenticeship programmes. However, timely completion has continued to improve. In the current year, the progress of learners and their rate of achievement are good.
- Learners continue to improve their level of skills and develop further skills during their training. Employers recognise these improvements and the increased interest learners have for their jobs. Learners' confidence is improved and learners acquire a greater knowledge and understanding of their work.
- Assessment practice is good. Assessments are planned around learners' shift patterns. Observations are recorded well and learners are provided with a good review of their performance and how improvements may be made. Learners are involved in planning of assessment. However, learners' portfolios are predominantly managed by advisors and there is insufficient involvement of learners in recording and cross-referencing evidence.
- Individual learning plans clearly record the programme and the NVQ units to be achieved. However, most units were planned for completion at the end of the learning programme and often lack stages of achievement throughout the course. Targets for learners to achieve between advisor visits do not always contain sufficient detail and are often not fully reviewed at the next advisor visit.
- Qube has developed a good range of well-produced learning materials. They include, for example, work packs related to the NVQ, equality and diversity, and health and safety. Learning advisors provide good individual support for learners to ensure that they fully understand the information, especially for those learners whose first language is not English.

- Learning programmes meet the needs of learners and employers well. Qube maintains good relationships with employers and communications are effective. Qube involves learners and employers well to ensure that programmes are best suited to employers' requirements and well matched to learners' individual needs and future career prospects.
- Learners receive good advice and guidance when starting their learning programme. Induction is effective in enabling learners to understand fully the requirements of the programme and the commitment needed to be successful.
- Initial assessment of learners' basic skills needs is effective and is undertaken by all learners. Good support is provided as appropriate. Specialist support is available from skills for life tutors when required and is provided on an individual basis at the learners' workplace. Of the Train to Gain learners, around 60% receive additional support.
- Management of the provision is good. Managers use monthly performance reviews to check learners' progress. This identifies any under performance and actions are taken to support the learner towards achievement. Managers follow Qube's quality cycle well to monitor all aspects of the provision and to identify whether actions are required to make improvements.
- Equality and diversity are satisfactory. They form part of learners' induction and are reinforced satisfactorily during training to improve learners' understanding. Training resources on equality and diversity have recently been updated and now provide learners with a wider range of information.

What does Qube need to do to improve further?

- Improve both overall and timely success rates by ensuring that learners can achieve at stages throughout the programme and to enable learners' progress against their timescale to be monitored more effectively.
- Involve learners more in the management of portfolios and promote a greater understanding of the recording and cross-referencing of evidence.
- Improve the quality of targets set at progress reviews and visits, and ensure that these are clearly monitored at the next meeting to record the progress being made by learners.

Preparation for life and work

Grade 2

Context

26. Qube offers qualifications in skills for life as part of its Train to Gain provision. Learners are identified through initial assessment of their vocational area. All training and assessment of skills for life are carried out in the workplace by Qube staff. There are currently 589 learners on programmes leading to national qualifications in literacy or numeracy at entry level, and at levels 1 and 2. Eighteen per cent of learners are male and 29% from minority ethnic groups.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Success rates are satisfactory and have shown significant improvement in the last year and in the year to date. In 2008/09 overall and timely success rates had improved to just below national averages. However, at the time of the inspection, overall and timely success rates were above national averages at 88.4% and 78.4% respectively.
- Learners make good progress on their programme. They increase their self-esteem and their confidence in social interaction, and improve their job-related skills in, for example, completing care plans and similar reports. Learning advisors provide good motivation to learners to pursue additional qualifications following their success in attaining their planned learning goal.
- Learners feel safe and secure in their work. Those learners in care homes, and those who deal with vulnerable adults, have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Advisors routinely check learners' perception of their own health and welfare, and their responsibilities to others.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory overall. Information and learning technology (ILT) is used effectively and routinely. In the better sessions, staff contextualise the literacy or numeracy skills being developed to the workplace, and learning is consolidated well. However, this practice is inconsistent across the subject area.
- Although visits are generally planned well, too many advisors do not always clearly explain what is to be covered in each session. Action plans often contain imprecise targets and do not clearly identify what the learner is to achieve by the next session.
- Outcomes of initial assessment of learners in their vocational area are insufficiently shared with skills for life staff. Learning advisors are not informed of the skills and knowledge which their learners bring to their training, and this prevents advisors from planning a more effective individualised programme for each learner.
- The programme meets the needs and interests of learners well with an appropriate range of qualifications and levels. Advisors respond to learners' assessment requests promptly and flexibly, even when this entails working unsocial hours. Employers appreciate this flexibility.

- Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Induction is satisfactory and learners are clear about the requirements and the anticipated length of their programme. Support materials are not sufficiently adapted for learners with limited literacy skills. Learning advisors treat learners with respect, encouraging them to aim for higher qualifications and to recognise the skills they have acquired.
- Leadership and management are good. Staff understand and fully support the company's values, particularly focusing on improving achievements. There is a strong commitment to continuous professional development and all staff have achieved training qualifications or are working towards them.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good. All staff have been checked by the CRB and all have undergone appropriate safeguarding training. Training advisors routinely check and reinforce learners' understanding of their rights and responsibilities relating to safeguarding in their workplace particularly, for example, with those learners working with young children or vulnerable adults.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Advisors use appropriate learning materials at each learner visit. However, they take insufficient opportunity to deepen learners' awareness of the cultural or gender diversity of their colleagues or, in the case of care homes, of their clients.
- Actions to improve the quality of provision are good. The provider is using this subject area to pilot an improved scheme for the observation of teaching and learning. Employers' and learners' views are sought through questionnaires and other means. However, arrangements for fully involving staff in self-assessment are under developed.

What does Qube need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that staff use the outcomes of initial assessment to better cater for learners' individual needs when planning their programmes.
- Improve the rigour and recording of target-setting and action-planning at learners' reviews to ensure that learners complete their qualifications in the agreed timescale.
- Ensure that the understanding of equality and diversity matters is more effectively promoted with learners.

Business, administration and law

Grade 3

Context

27. Qube has 918 learners on programmes in business and administration. Of these, 162 are apprentices, 87 are advanced apprentices and 669 are on Train to Gain programmes. Over 800 learners are working towards customer service and team-leading qualifications and the rest towards business administration and management qualifications. The majority of learners are female and 21% are from minority ethnic groups.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Success rates have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Overall and timely success rates for Train to Gain are satisfactory at 81% and 65% respectively. Rates for apprenticeships are improving but still low. In the current year, learners are making good progress; around 45% of learners have achieved their qualification ahead of the planned date.
- Learners develop good personal and social skills. They increase in confidence and in their team-building and communication skills. Many progress to higher levels of training. Apprentices improve their job-related skills, leading to enhanced roles and promotions. Many Train to Gain learners improve their basic skills, but learners and employers are not always fully aware of their progress.
- Learners feel safe. Many work with vulnerable clients, such as the young or elderly, and act safely and responsibly towards them, treating them with dignity and respect. Risk assessments of work placements are thorough.
- Coaching and learning are satisfactory. Learning advisors have good occupational knowledge, which they use effectively. The better coaching sessions are lively and exciting, and help learners to produce well-presented portfolios. Learner experiences are used effectively to contextualise their evidence. However, this good practice was not seen consistently across Train to Gain learning sessions.
- Learning resources are satisfactory. Qube uses effective work packs to develop background knowledge and understanding for all subject training, and for safety, employee legislation, and equality and diversity. All printed material is professionally produced and written in accessible language. However, insufficient use is made of e-learning and e-portfolios.
- Assessment is flexible and thorough. Advisors make good use of questioning and digital recorders. They give constructive feedback to learners on how to improve. Learners participate well in the assessment process, although too few learners are involved sufficiently in the completion of their evidence grids. Initial assessment to identify learners who need additional learning support is satisfactory.
- Target-setting for learners in reviews and learning plans is inconsistent. Too few targets are sufficiently task-related, specific, time-bound or challenging. Too

many learning plans are also incomplete. However, where employers are involved in the reviews, they motivate learners to make faster progress towards their qualifications by providing extra support and further training opportunities.

- The range of provision is good. Qube works well with employers to identify their needs; many learners take additional qualifications. Qube liaises well with other providers to source additional training, for example for language support and with the National Apprenticeship Service to match potential apprentices with appropriate employers. Advisors plan their visits flexibly to fit learners' work patterns.
- Initial advice and guidance are satisfactory and improving. In the current year, a few learners were initially incorrectly advised and others had a delayed start. Support is effective in helping learners to complete their programme on time. There are good links with support agencies. Learning advisors are flexible and will change options to suit learners' and employers' needs. Learners feel well supported.
- Operational management is good. The subject area has recently been restructured, providing clearer lines of responsibility and accountability. Managers and advisors focus on learners' progress and closely monitor and support learners at risk of leaving. Internal communications are good and teams regularly share information and best practice. Staff development is good, although too few staff have training qualifications.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Learning advisors reinforce equality and diversity matters satisfactorily at induction and most learners have an acceptable level of understanding. Learners are aware of their roles and responsibilities at work and in training. However, there is insufficient reinforcement of equality and diversity within assessment and reviews.
- Systems and actions to improve the quality of the provision are good. Managers monitor and support the monitoring of coaching, assessing and training well through regular observations and better use of data. Learner files are audited regularly for compliance. Internal verification is thorough and is moderated regularly.

What does Qube need to do to improve further?

- Improve assessment practice by involving all learners more fully in mapping evidence to the qualification criteria.
- Improve the rigour and recording of progress reviews and target-setting to ensure that learners complete their qualifications in the agreed timescale.
- Ensure that staff provide effective initial advice and guidance and use the outcomes of initial assessment so that they cater for learners' individual needs appropriately in planning their programmes.
- Ensure that equality and diversity are further promoted with learners through the better use of existing, good quality resources.

Information about the inspection

28. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's operations director, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from funding bodies, the previous inspection report, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
29. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the college. They also observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Qube Qualifications and Development Ltd (also trading as Qube Learning)
 Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; 16-18 Learner responsive: FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; 19+ responsive: FE full- and part-time courses; Employer responsive: Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners		
Full-time learners		
Part-time learners	2,099	2,099
Overall effectiveness	2	2
Capacity to improve	2	
Outcomes for learners	3	3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3	
How well do learners progress?	3	
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2	
How safe do learners feel?	2	
Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*	N/A	
How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*	N/A	
Quality of provision	2	2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2	
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2	
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2	
Leadership and management	2	2
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2	
How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*	3	
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2	
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3	
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2	
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2	
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3	

*where applicable to the type of provision

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