

Inspection of E.Quality Training Limited

Inspection dates: 29 November to 2 December 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Education programmes for young people	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

E.Quality Training Limited is a private company established in 1999. It provides vocational training for young people, apprentices, and a small number of adults at centres in Hanley, Stafford and Newcastle-under-Lyme, in Staffordshire.

One hundred and thirty-one young learners are enrolled on study programmes. These learners study courses at levels 1, 2 and 3 in health and social care, childcare, hairdressing, barbering and business administration. All of the 14 adult learners are in receipt of adult learning loans and study on health and social care courses. The large majority of the 40 apprentices study health and social care apprenticeships at levels 2 to 5. A few apprentices follow programmes in early years care and education, teaching assistant and business administration. Most apprentices are aged 19 and above.

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

Learners enjoy attending courses in an environment conducive to learning. They receive individualised, sensitive support from dedicated staff. Tutors, assessors and managers work with learners, supporting them with any pastoral concerns. They involve external support agencies where required. Learners on study programmes receive good support for their mental health. Learners and apprentices who fall behind with their work receive individualised academic support to help them catch up. They grow in confidence and motivation to learn and achieve.

Learners and apprentices value the culture of fairness, equality and diversity. Most learners and apprentices understand fundamental British values and equalities. Learners attending study programmes feel protected from discrimination and bullying. They are confident that staff will respond to any incidents quickly and effectively. Apprentices link these values with the professional values of social care. In residential care settings, apprentices respect users' freedom of choice, dignity and independence.

Tutors prepare learners and apprentices well for their next steps. Learners enrolled on study programmes gain useful careers advice and attend relevant work placements. They understand the different career and educational pathways available to them. Learners receive the information they need to make informed choices. Most young learners progress to higher-level courses or other positive destinations. Adult learners progress to roles with more responsibilities at their workplace.

Apprentices do not receive sufficient, unbiased careers advice and guidance. They receive little information on the breadth of career development opportunities available to them. They are not able to explain alternative careers and pathways open to them after they have completed their apprenticeship. However, many apprentices gain promotion at work or take on extra responsibilities.

Learners and apprentices have a broad awareness of radicalisation and extremist behaviour. They know how to keep themselves safe and how to identify risks and report concerns. Adult learners and apprentices do not know enough about the risks in their local community.

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

Leaders have extensive links with employers and other partners. They work with them to design ambitious curriculums that meet local and regional skills needs. For example, flexible study helps employers in care to fill skills gaps while ensuring that apprentices receive a high standard of training. Managers work with local hairdressing salons to keep up to date with what they are looking for in their stylists.

They incorporate these skills into the curriculum. As a result, most learners develop the skills they need to gain employment in the region. The curriculum is not ambitious enough for adults and apprentices who have many years of experience in the care sector. A few apprentices say that they find the work too easy.

Leaders and managers plan and teach the curriculum in a logical order. Tutors adapt the order of what is taught to meet the needs of learners and employers. They introduce speaking and listening skills early in the English functional skills curriculum. Learners on study programmes apply these skills in work placement applications and interviews. As a result, they gain confidence in their speaking and presentation skills. Learners studying adult care learn about equality and diversity at the start of their programme. They then move on to more complex learning about legislation and the importance of the application of policies such as safeguarding. As a result, they build their learning in meaningful steps over time.

Leaders ensure that staff hold appropriate teaching qualifications. New, unqualified teachers receive training to achieve qualifications in education and training. Leaders identify staff training needs carefully. They enable staff to undertake a wide range of useful professional development. For example, tutors who teach adult learners receive training in assessment, questioning skills and how to set aspirational actions for learners. As a result of their improved subject and teaching knowledge, tutors are better able to support learners and deliver high-quality education.

Managers are very aware of the importance of staff well-being. They have good access to speak to centre managers and more senior managers. For example, tutors value leaders' recruitment of an operations manager. This has reduced the workload and stress for tutors. Staff feel listened to, and they feel they get a response to any concerns or suggestions that they raise.

Leaders have established thorough arrangements to evaluate the quality of experience for learners on study programme courses. They respond promptly to areas of underperformance. They are quick to share good practice between centres. For example, they introduced popular 'tea and chat' sessions at the centres to support learners' mental health.

The quality assurance of apprenticeships and adult learning is less robust. Leaders have insufficient understanding of the quality of coaching and assessment. They do not have an overview of the progress that apprentices make from their starting point. Leaders do not use data well enough to analyse the impact of courses on different groups of learners and apprentices.

Leaders bring external expertise into the organisation through a range of external partnerships. These enable them to keep up to date with external developments. For example, they work closely with the local authority to test policies and practices in

relation to safeguarding. They have not yet established a formal governance structure to provide expertise, challenge and support to senior leaders.

Tutors are knowledgeable in their subject area. Learners value the support and insights they bring. Tutors on study programmes are skilful in their teaching. They demonstrate skills well, ensuring that learners develop practical skills quickly. They encourage learners to use technical language during practical lessons. Frequent questioning and repetition from tutors reinforce learners' recall about specialist language.

Tutors on adult learning programmes and apprenticeships provide highly supportive individual coaching. They provide apprentices with resources, including textbooks, web links, presentations and videos. Learners understand the theory behind the practical tasks they carry out at work. In a few cases, assessors are too supportive of apprentices. These apprentices are not always empowered to take ownership of their learning.

Tutors use a range of assessment methods to check learning. They use discussion and questioning well to test learners' and apprentices' understanding. Tutors use paper tests and digital quizzes to test learning. As a result, learners remember what they have learned and can apply this knowledge in the workplace.

Tutors have high expectations of learners, who respond well to this challenge. Tutors give useful feedback to learners and use praise to good effect. This motivates learners to improve their attention to detail in their assignments. Learners on study programmes aspire to incrementally improve their skills, progress to higher levels of qualifications and qualify as hairdressers. Learners on higher-level courses receive effective challenge in lessons and assignments to produce high standards of practical and written work.

Tutors support most study programme learners to develop their English and mathematical skills. In vocational classes, learners practise and apply these skills. For example, in level 2 hairdressing, students need to calculate the percentage of peroxide in colour solutions. They learn about the impact that different concentrations have on hair. As a result, learners gain the mathematical skills they need to succeed in employment or future education.

A few apprentices start the apprenticeship with the required level of English and mathematical skills. These apprentices do not receive support to develop their skills further.

Tutors know their learners exceptionally well. Learners receive highly effective individual support. Tutors on study programmes use personal learning plans well to plan support for learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They adapt their teaching using strategies such as the use of tablets, overlays and

individualised feedback. As a result, learners with SEND and those who require additional support make the same progress as their peers.

Learners on study programmes who miss lessons receive helpful individual catch-up sessions. Apprentices and adults receive support sessions alongside their shift working hours. As a result, learners continue to make good progress during disrupted learning periods. A few apprentices and adult learners make slow progress.

Apprentices complete a skills scan at the start of their programme. Tutors do not use this information well enough to identify starting points accurately. This means that apprentices do not reflect on their learning during the programme. However, functional skills tutors on study programmes use assessments completed at the start of the programme to plan individual learning effectively.

Tutors focus too much on apprentices' and adults' completion of assessment tasks. They pay less attention to apprentices' and learners' development of knowledge and skills. They do not relate knowledge and skills enough to their application in the workplace. However, those in care roles can identify how their learning has enhanced their work-based skills and knowledge.

Tutors on study programmes are ambitious for learners to achieve high grades. Learners produce work of a high standard throughout their course. Learners in hairdressing develop skills beyond what is required to complete their qualification. This helps them to progress on to work placements.

Adult learners and apprentices increase in confidence throughout their studies. They are more capable and confident in applying for new roles. They take on promoted and higher-level roles in the care industry. They produce work of a standard equal or greater than that expected of the level of the course they are studying.

Most learners entered for functional skills examinations pass on their first attempt. This gives them qualifications they need to progress on to further training and education. However, too many apprentices do not complete their qualification. Too many adults do not complete in a timely manner, which can slow their progress at work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders use comprehensive policies and processes to safeguard learners and staff. Designated safeguarding officers and 'Prevent' duty leads are appropriately trained. Leaders complete the safe recruitment of staff to ensure that staff are safe to work

with learners. Learners and staff are safe and know who to contact if they have any concerns.

Well-trained staff understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities and are informed about risks related to the local area. They ensure that learners understand how to keep themselves safe through regular updates. Learners know who to go to and how to raise a concern, including concerns about sexual harassment or abuse. They feel confident that staff will deal with concerns promptly and effectively. Apprentices follow safe working practices.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that the curriculum for apprentices is ambitious and challenging for all apprentices.
- Leaders and tutors should use the results of assessments completed at the start of an apprenticeship to plan coaching and assessment to meet apprentices' individual learning needs. They should review apprentices' progress during their programme, reflecting on their development of skills and knowledge as well as their completion of assessment tasks.
- Leaders and tutors should support apprentices who have the English and mathematics qualifications required for their apprenticeship to continue to develop and apply their knowledge throughout their apprenticeship.
- Leaders should strengthen their quality assurance of apprenticeships to improve the quality of education that apprentices receive. They should make greater use of the data available to them to evaluate the impact of their programmes on different groups of learners.
- Leaders should establish a governance structure to provide expertise and challenge to support the leadership team.

Provider details

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Website	www.equality.training
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Majella Cocks
Provider type	Independent Learning Provider
Date of previous inspection	29 March 2017
Main subcontractors	Not applicable

Information about this inspection

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