

Personal Track Safety Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1270913

Name of lead inspector: Robert Hamp, Her Majesty's Inspector

Inspection date(s): 23–24 January 2019

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: Westleigh Office Park
Scirocco Close
Northampton
NN3 6BW



Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

From October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and/or the apprenticeship levy. 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 'Providers newly directly funded to deliver apprenticeship training provision' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Personal Track Safety Ltd (trading as PTS Training Academy) is based in Northampton. It was established in 2012 to provide nationwide vocational training courses including apprenticeships, traineeships and bespoke workplace training. Initially acting as a subcontractor to a range of prime contractors, PTS Training Academy (PTS) achieved main provider status in March 2017. It secured a direct ESFA contract in October 2017, enabling the direct delivery of apprenticeships and short courses. Its head office is in Northampton, with training centres in London, Doncaster and Somerset.

Short course programmes provide training in health and safety, mental health awareness, dementia care, customer service, functional skills in English and mathematics and non-regulated engineering (rail), leisure and recreation, and logistics. In May 2018, the direct delivery of apprenticeships commenced in partnership with Sodexo Justice Service (Sodexo).

PTS has 168 apprentices funded through the levy on the level 3 custody and detention officer standard, which is a 12-month programme. It has 182 learners on short programmes. The large majority follow level 2 in dementia care, and level 1 functional skills in English and mathematics.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

Reasonable progress

A new part-owner has recently joined PTS. This has resulted in structural changes and the appointment of new staff. A new managing board will soon be operational. This will provide additional oversight of the business and further clarity of the company's mission and vision.

PTS and Sodexo have a strong partnership and a very close working relationship. Sodexo is the levy-paying business and has appointed PTS as its training provider. In turn, PTS

uses Sodexo as its subcontractor and its staff to deliver the apprenticeship, apart from functional skills.

Sodexo employs all the apprentices in private prisons in Peterborough, Salford, Ashford (Middlesex) and Northumberland. Almost all apprentices are new to the prison service, and, on completion of the apprenticeship, they have guarantees of full-time permanent employment.

The focus of the partnership is on the national initiative to improve the quality of prison officer training and the retention of prison officers. PTS staff manage the apprenticeship programme. They ensure the quality of delivery of Sodexo's highly competent and experienced specialist staff. For example, the learning and development teams in the prisons deliver effectively key aspects of training in relation to the control and restraint of residents, searching techniques and self-harm. PTS ensures that training and development are of a high standard and meet the requirements of the apprenticeship.

As part of their induction, and before taking up their duties on the prison wings and working with residents, apprentices have to take a 10-week comprehensive skills, knowledge and behaviour programme. On successful completion of the programme, apprentices receive their Ministry of Justice licence to practice, and take up an active role in the prison.

The apprenticeship meets the Institute for Apprenticeships requirements. Sodexo is committed to off-the-job training and provides sufficient time during the week for apprentices to work on their studies. Assessors provide on-the-job support for apprentices that allows them to produce work that is appropriate to their level of study. Managers work well with the end-point assessment organisation to prepare apprentices for their final tests.

Directors and managers are right to be aware that they need to learn from the early cohort of apprentices, to improve the programme. For example, they have trained additional staff to help with reviewing and monitoring apprentices' progress, particularly after the 10-week, off-the-job training period. In months nine, 10 and 11 of the programme, they agree additional off-the-job time with Sodexo, to help apprentices prepare for their end-point assessments.

PTS staff quality assure all aspects of the programme, including the observations of teaching, learning and assessment. These are frequent and identify improvement actions that PTS staff monitor during subsequent observations.

The self-assessment process makes good use of feedback from apprentices and employers to support judgements about the quality of provision. The self-assessment report focuses clearly on the delivery of the standards. The quality improvement plan includes challenging timescales and responsibilities but does not include impact measures to improve the quality of provision.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? Reasonable progress

Almost all apprentices make at least their expected progress in gaining occupationally specific skills and knowledge and developing professional behaviours. The 10-week initial training course prepares them well for the role of prison custody officer. The programme includes keys and locks training, suicide and self-harm awareness, hostage and incident response, and personal protection and searching. As part of the searching module, apprentices demonstrate effective techniques, including the use of dogs to find and confiscate contraband.

High-quality training resources support learning and development well. For example, model cells provide realistic environments in which apprentices can practise their searching skills through role play. Trainers place a very high priority on apprentices' personal safety and ensure that they develop safe working practices from the start.

Trainers and assessors are highly experienced and knowledgeable. They provide apprentices with real-life examples of how to apply their new skills, knowledge and behaviours effectively on the wings and landings of the prison.

Following the mandatory training, apprentices receive good support from line managers and workplace mentors, who make particularly good links between theory and practice. As a result, apprentices quickly understand how to apply their training to their job roles, adding value to their employers' businesses early in their apprenticeships. For example, apprentices speak confidently about their use of pro-social modelling that focuses on positive engagement and the removal of barriers when interacting with residents.

Apprentices receive good information, advice and guidance at the start of the programme. They understand that their apprenticeships can lead to further qualifications, promotion or different job roles within the prison and throughout Sodexo.

Training plans include mock professional discussions and project assignments to prepare apprentices for their end-point assessments. However, staff have not tested these plans fully since the first cohort of apprentices are not due to enter the gateway until June 2019.

The thorough off-the-job training programme ensures that apprentices have a good awareness of the work they must complete for their apprenticeships. They understand that they can attain different grades in their apprenticeships, and that they must pass the end-point assessments.

Apprentices undertake initial assessments to assess their English and mathematical skills, but staff do not use these routinely to develop apprentices' individual skills. Leaders and managers recognise this in their self-assessment. As a result, an additional functional skills specialist has been appointed and plans are in place to ensure that apprentices continue to develop these skills to the appropriate level for the apprenticeship. It is too soon to judge the impact of these initiatives.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares the well for their intended job role, career aims and/or personal goals?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have developed a wide range of links in London with Jobcentre Plus, local community organisations, recruitment agencies and local authorities, from which they receive most referrals. In response, they have developed a suitable programme of short courses that help and support adults to improve their skills and support their progress towards employment or further training.

Most learners enjoy their learning and, as a result, raise and realise their aspirations. For example, a learner who had a passion to work in mental health, but struggled to obtain work without having qualifications, gained employment in the health care sector after completing level 2 diplomas in customer service and dementia care.

Learners speak confidently about their programmes, and how their personal and vocational skills development supports them to progress towards their chosen careers. For example, learners following the transportation operations level 2 qualification learn to calculate driving hours accurately, read and interpret maps, and learn basic maintenance of a range of vehicles.

Most learners achieve their qualifications. This helps them to access new careers in retail and logistics, and to work as mental health care professionals. Others overcome barriers to employment by completing vocationally relevant qualifications, and by gaining qualifications in English and mathematics. A high proportion move on to employment and/or further education destinations.

Learners' work is of the standard expected for their levels of study. Tutors make accurate assessment decisions on the quality of the work that learners produce.

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

Reasonable progress

Directors and managers ensure that appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures are in place. They update them frequently. The designated safeguarding officer has suitable qualifications and is knowledgeable about safeguarding matters. Managers carry out appropriate checking of all staff to ensure their suitability for their roles. They maintain an up-to-date single central register. Managers monitor the incident recording process closely. They have dealt effectively with all the logged incidents.

A comprehensive safeguarding and risk assessment action plan is in place. Directors and managers ensure that all members of staff complete frequent training to refresh their understanding of safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, British values, and equality and diversity. Trainers and assessors receive information, advice and guidance training. As a

result, all apprentices have a good awareness of the 'Prevent' duty and of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

Safeguarding is at the centre of all activities. Staff reinforce apprentices' understanding of safeguarding issues rigorously during the mandatory off-the-job training, and throughout the whole apprenticeship programme. As a result, apprentices feel safe and have a good understanding of what to do if they have concerns. Apprentices' understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and when using social media is not so well developed.

Apprentices understand British values and demonstrate their understanding through their behaviour in the workplace and during learning sessions. For example, they show these values when they work sensitively with residents on the prison wings and when they attend incidents.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Learner View

Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too. To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

Employer View

Employer View is a website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too. To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019