

Netcom Training Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Richard Deane, Her Majesty's Inspector

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

From March 2019, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of adult learning provision which began to be funded from August 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. 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 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly funded to deliver adult learning provision' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Netcom Training Ltd started trading in 2009. It is a private training company specialising in information technology (IT) courses such as those offered by Microsoft, Cisco, BTEC at levels 1–3, and in cyber security. The provider delivers commercially-funded courses also. The seven learners currently on programme are on publicly-funded adult provision, are unemployed and are studying a BTEC introduction into IT course at level 1 for eight weeks.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant adult learning provision that has a clearly defined purpose? Reasonable progress

Leaders have a clear strategic plan to increase the variety of IT courses available to unemployed learners. Leaders have strong links with local technology companies and include these employers' technical and employability skills requirements in the curriculum they offer. Leaders ensure that learners start developing these skills to help them move into further learning and employment.

Leaders work well with agencies such as the local authority and Jobcentre Plus, helping them to upskill and retrain individuals to meet regional skills gaps. For example, they have secured a bid with the local mayoral combined authority to retrain adults into cyber security and related roles. The curriculum is well planned. It enables learners to develop their employability skills – such as timekeeping and working with others – as well as their technical, English and mathematical skills.

Leaders have invested in high-quality learning resources. Teachers are well-qualified technical experts in a wide range of IT qualifications such as Cisco systems. Learners benefit from their teachers' current knowledge and up-to-date equipment to help them make good progress.

Leaders monitor closely the progress of learners towards achieving their course. They ensure that teachers are provided with sufficient time to help learners to catch up when falling behind. However, leaders do not collect sufficient information about learners' starting points to enable teachers to identify and extend learners' individual skills.

Leaders monitor the quality of provision appropriately. They use external agencies to assure the effectiveness of their processes, but they have been slow to ensure that all learners achieve the grades of which they are capable. Leaders have recently introduced a governor with considerable relevant experience to strengthen the scrutiny of leaders' actions.

Leaders do not monitor sufficiently the destinations of all learners. Recently they have improved the collation of destination data and the reliability of their information.

How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aim and/or personal goals? **Reasonable progress**

Learners have a very broad range of learning experiences. Staff provide them with effective guidance and assess their starting points appropriately to ensure that they are on the right programme for their needs.

Teachers use their experience in IT creatively in learning sessions to motivate learners by including relevant and interesting examples of current working practices. This ensures that learners enjoy their training and acquire new skills necessary for them to secure related job roles in IT. Teachers provide additional one-to-one sessions for the few learners who fall behind in their work.

Teachers work closely with an organisation that supports learners with disabilities, such as acquired brain injury. They work well with the organisation's staff to deliver training and help these learners complete their programme on time. A high proportion of these learners move on into further learning.

Teachers help learners to develop their English and mathematical skills well during sessions. For example, they correct learners' spelling and pronunciation of technical language, and develop their understanding of mathematical concepts while using spreadsheets for budgets and personal expenses. However, teachers fail to identify early enough learners' individual skills needs in these subjects to help develop them.

Learners produce work of a good standard and demonstrate fluency in a wide range of IT applications within their assignments. While teachers accurately assess learners' work, they do not always give sufficiently helpful feedback or challenging targets to enable learners to achieve higher grades.

Teachers monitor learners' progress effectively to ensure that they are on target to achieve their qualification on time. However, teachers do not review and record accurately learners' progress towards developing specific English, mathematical, and digital skills. Additionally, they do not review systematically their progress towards achieving higher grades. As a result, learners do not receive the feedback to help them achieve their potential.

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

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is a high priority and is discussed at all levels in the business. For example, they promote a monthly safeguarding newsletter. Their safeguarding policy reflects recent legislative updates. Leaders have developed appropriate procedures for reporting safeguarding incidents. On the rare occasion it is necessary, staff use the procedures effectively.

Managers follow safe recruitment practices thoroughly. All staff working directly with learners have the appropriate disclosure check. Managers assign mentors to new staff until they receive the disclosure check.

Leaders ensure that resources for safeguarding learners are sufficient and appropriate. One of the designated safeguarding officers specialises in online safety. Leaders promote safeguarding themes, including the 'Prevent' duty, effectively through induction materials, learning programmes and posters in each room.

Leaders ensure that buildings and rooms are secure. Staff support well learners who seem or feel unsure. Learners rightly say that they feel safe and comfortable.

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