

Inspection of Northwest Education and Training Limited (NWEAT)

Inspection dates: 24–27 September 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

North West Education and Training Limited (NWEAT) is an independent learning provider based in Sefton, Merseyside. NWEAT offers a range of apprenticeship programmes, funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. At the time of the inspection, 130 apprentices were on apprenticeship programmes ranging from level 2 to level 5. Around half were on frameworks and half on standards. Within the current cohort, there are no apprentices with high needs or special educational needs and/or disabilities.

All of the training takes place on employers' premises across 12 different local authorities. Most apprentices work towards qualifications in either business administration, customer service, team leading or management. A smaller number are on apprenticeships in business improvement techniques and performing manufacturing operations.

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

Apprentices engage enthusiastically in their learning. They gain in confidence, independence and resilience. Apprentices readily apply their new knowledge and skills at work. Most apprentices remain in employment and many gain promotion or progress to higher levels of study.

Apprentices have high expectations for what they can achieve. Their contributions at work are valued by their employer. For example, business improvement techniques apprentices planned new processes for packaging vegetables. This resulted in improved efficiency and saving money.

Apprentices enjoy their time at NWEAT. They value the support from their employers and trainers. Apprentices feel safe in learning environments and at work. They follow safe working practices. Apprentices behave well and are highly motivated to succeed.

Apprentices gain a good understanding of equality and diversity and how these principles apply in the workplace. For example, customer service apprentices deal with customer complaints by telephone rather than by electronic means if their customers are partially sighted.

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

Trainers ensure that, for most apprentices, the curriculum is planned in a logical order. Trainers use their subject experience and vocational knowledge to set clear learning objectives. They review apprentices' understanding of key concepts and build on these effectively, so apprentices progressively know more and remember more over time.

On management apprenticeship programmes, trainers consider carefully the training that apprentices receive from their employer when planning the curriculum. Trainers delivering level 2 manufacturing programmes do not work closely enough with employers to plan the curriculum. For example, trainers do not take into account the in-house training when planning the curriculum so that apprentices can apply the knowledge they gain at work.

Training staff have relevant occupational qualifications and expertise. These help them work with employers to support apprentices well. For example, trainers on team leading apprenticeships understand the different business environments their apprentices work in. This helps apprentices to apply their knowledge in practical situations in work.

Trainers guide apprentices to use sources of information to support their studies, for example online search engines. Apprentices told us that they would like their trainer to give them more online resources to support their independent learning. Trainers do not support management apprentices to develop their academic research and writing skills to help them meet the demands of higher-level qualifications.

Trainers use assessment well to identify misconceptions and gaps in most apprentices' knowledge. Trainers support apprentices to improve their skills through vocational assignments. As a result, apprentices demonstrate increasing levels of expertise in the workplace. Trainers prepare apprentices on standards programmes well for their assessment at the end of their course. As a result, many apprentices gain distinctions.

Most apprentices benefit from effective individual coaching from trainers, which provides them with useful feedback on their work. This includes their use of vocabulary and spelling in written work. This helps apprentices improve the quality of their work and deepens their knowledge.

A minority of apprentices, especially those who speak English as an additional language, do not receive prompt enough support. These apprentices do not improve their written English skills quickly enough.

Apprentices develop good technical knowledge and skills to work in up-to-date environments. For example, customer service apprentices use social media to contact and engage with customers.

Most apprentices make a positive contribution in the workplace and improve their personal skills. For example, customer service apprentices changed the way they dealt with customer complaints. This resulted in a quicker solution to customer concerns.

Staff and employers expect high standards of behaviour. Apprentices respond to these well. They understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality at work. Inspectors saw high levels of attendance at the training sessions they visited.

Staff provide clear and helpful careers advice and guidance to apprentices. They use their commercial and vocational knowledge well when providing advice. However, not all apprentices receive impartial information about opportunities outside of their current employer. As a result, some apprentices are not aware of the transferability of their skills and knowledge.

The managing director and board of directors articulate clearly the standards they expect from apprentices and staff. Staff benefit from effective support and training. This enables them to plan and deliver high-quality apprenticeships.

Leaders and staff work well with a range of employers in the region and nationally. Through these partnerships, staff design the curriculum so that it closely matches the employers' needs to address skills shortages in the food industry. For example, staff have developed a bespoke management apprenticeship to develop employees' knowledge and skills to become team leaders.

Board members have a good understanding about what needs improving. They provide an appropriate level of support and challenge to the managing director. There is no external scrutiny to hold board members to account for their oversight and use of public funds.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have put in place appropriate policies and procedures. These have yet to be tested, as no concerns have been received. The designated safeguarding officer has received appropriate training to carry out his role. Staff receive regular training on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Leaders and managers ensure that appropriate checks are in place to ensure that staff are suitable to work with young people. Leaders have links with local agencies to gain intelligence on potential risks. Most apprentices learn about specific risks in the sectors they work in. For example, management apprentices in a salad processing company have a clear understanding of the risks of modern slavery.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should support trainers in working with employers to improve the order in which the level 2 manufacturing operations apprenticeship is delivered to take into account the skills and knowledge apprentices are acquiring in their jobs.
- Support management apprentices to develop their academic research and writing skills to help them complete higher-level qualifications.
- Leaders should ensure that apprentices who speak English as a second language get timely extra support to improve the quality of their work.
- Leaders should ensure that all apprentices receive impartial careers information, so that they know about a wider range of job opportunities.
- Leaders should establish external scrutiny on the board's decisions on their use of public funds.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1270901
Address	Unit 9, 100 Sefton Lane Liverpool L31 8BT
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Website	www.nweat.co.uk
Managing director	Angela Owens
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the managing 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 observing learning sessions, scrutinising apprentices' work, seeking the views of apprentices, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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