

# N&B Training Company Ltd

Independent learning provider

**Inspection dates****15–18 December 2015****Overall effectiveness****Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for learners	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good provider

- Leaders have managed the transition from working in a formal partnership with other providers well and have set a clear strategic direction for the company.
- All employability study programme learners achieve their qualifications and develop skills, knowledge and behaviours that help almost all progress to further education, training or employment.
- Apprentices rapidly develop good work-related behaviours and vocational skills to the standards expected by employers.
- Leaders have good relationships with employers that enable apprentices to gain the skills and knowledge that are most relevant for their employment.
- Staff provide good support for learners to overcome personal difficulties that may become barriers to learning.

### It is not yet an outstanding provider

- Not enough teaching, learning and assessment approaches are outstanding.
- Staff give insufficient priority to developing apprentices' English and mathematics to allow them to make the maximum possible progress.
- The quality of written feedback does not match the good oral feedback from which apprentices benefit.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- N&B Training Company Limited (N&B Training) is a regional independent learning provider that has a head office in Guildford and learners mainly in the South East England. The company is owned and run by a managing director, supported by a senior management team.
- The company, which formed the main partner in a previous company known as the Enlightenment Partnership, gained its own contract from the Skills Funding Agency in April 2015.
- Around 540 apprentices and 12 employability study programme learners enrol on programmes each year. The main apprenticeship subject areas include health and social care, childcare, business administration, hospitality, customer services and management. During the inspection, there were 359 apprentices but no employability study programme learners.

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all apprentices make good progress by ensuring that they benefit from consistently good and outstanding teaching, learning and assessment.
- Ensure that training coordinators always follow up the good oral feedback that they provide to apprentices with equally detailed and useful recorded feedback.
- Rapidly improve support for English and mathematics to enable learners to make the maximum progress in developing these skills and achieving at least a grade C at GCSE. Support must include an increased focus on developing learners' spelling, punctuation and grammar, with additional specialist learning support for those who need it.
- Raise learners' awareness of the dangers of extremism and radicalisation by implementing plans for further training to enable teaching staff to gain confidence in applying the Prevent strategy.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Strong leadership has ensured a smooth transition from previous partnership arrangements and has set a clear strategic direction for the company. A key focus has been to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning that apprentices benefit from continues to be good. Managers have also worked closely with the two remaining subcontractors to ensure that their N&B Training apprentices receive the support they need to complete their qualifications.
- Leaders and members of the senior management team have high expectations for apprentices and study programme learners and communicate these effectively to staff, employers and other partners. The priority leaders place on improving learners' English and mathematical skills results in the large majority of learners achieving these qualifications. However, further improvement is required to ensure that all learners make the maximum possible progress in developing these essential employment-related skills.
- Leaders work well with local employers, the local enterprise partnership and chambers of commerce to ensure that the range of apprenticeships meets local needs, and contributes to meeting regional and national skills priorities.
- Professional development of teaching staff is good and includes quarterly company training days that support the professional development of all staff well. Effective monthly standardisation meetings for training coordinators support their development and enable the sharing of good practice to improve teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders and managers know the strengths of the provision and most of the areas that need to be improved. The self-assessment process they use captures staff views well, but does not capture the views of learners and employers sufficiently.
- Managers' good use of data allows close monitoring of the quality of the provision and the progress apprentices are making. Managers oversee training coordinators well to develop and improve their ability to support learners to make good progress. Where necessary, these good levels of support include robust performance management to ensure that the required improvements are sustained.
- Managers thoroughly monitor learner destinations. They use this information to improve the programmes, for example by reviewing the choices of optional units that apprentices complete.
- Managers have ensured that learners receive good information, advice and guidance to help them make the right career decisions. Where apprenticeships or employability study programmes are not the most appropriate options, learners are signposted to impartial careers advice.
- Managers and staff provide effective learner support through additional support visits and adjustments to training programmes. The provision of support for those who need it relies too much on existing expertise and experience rather than more specialist support where required, for example, from a dyslexia specialist. Managers have not ensured that all elements of learning within planned programmes are recognised and recorded in sufficient detail in individual learning and training and assessment plans. As a result, apprentices do not always recognise the full extent of their training, learning and skills development or reflect on how they can improve.
- **The governance of the provider**
  - The company has no governors or trustees. Governance is provided through the senior management team, which meets frequently and supports the managing director well.
  - The team provides good strategic direction to managers following careful analysis of data and identification of any emerging concerns.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding are effective**
  - N&B Training and subcontractor staff in regular contact with learners are appropriately checked and well trained in their safeguarding responsibilities. Learners feel and are safe, and are well protected from bullying and harassment.

- Staff check carefully that all the employers provide safe working environments and that apprentices are aware of what to do if they have any concerns.
- Staff understand the Prevent strategy, and have started to make learners aware of the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. Appropriate policies identify the agencies to contact if concerns should arise. Further Prevent training is planned for teaching staff in order to improve their confidence in raising learner awareness.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good**

- Almost all provision offered by N&B Training comprises apprenticeships, including in subjects such as health and social care, childcare, business administration, hospitality, customer services, and management. Very small numbers of learners follow employability study programmes but none of these learners was present during the inspection period.
- Training coordinators have high expectations of apprentices, who respond enthusiastically, work hard, produce work of a good standard and make good progress towards their qualifications. Apprentices make valuable contributions to their workplaces, with many gaining promotion or taking on additional responsibilities because of their good skills and knowledge development.
- Training coordinators are well qualified and have valuable industry experience that they use well to plan training and review sessions that motivate and interest apprentices. Learning is relevant and meaningful, and training coordinators use questions effectively to help apprentices develop a deeper understanding and relate their new learning and skills to their workplace.
- Good-quality workplaces provide purposeful environments for apprentices to develop a wide range of skills and complete their assessments. Employers support apprentices well to choose optional units that best match their interests and employment needs. Training coordinators keep employers well informed of their apprentices' progress. The good relationships between training coordinators and employers are effective in supporting apprentices to gain the necessary experience to complete their assignments successfully.
- Comprehensive induction to their programmes gives apprentices a good understanding of the expectations and demands of the qualification. Initial assessment provides an accurate assessment of apprentices' current occupational skills and the starting points for their English and mathematics. Apprentices prepare well for their training and review sessions, making very good use of naturally occurring evidence from the workplace
- Training coordinators use reviews well to set apprentices clear targets for the work that they need to complete for assessment. However, they do not set sufficient personal development targets in individual learning plans to help apprentices widen their skills and experiences and reach their full potential.
- Training coordinators assess apprentices' progress frequently and accurately. They provide good-quality oral feedback that is supportive and encouraging, and point out clearly what needs to be improved. Too often, training coordinators do not follow this up with sufficient detailed or evaluative written feedback on assessed work. This limits apprentices' ability to refer back to earlier advice and guidance in order to improve their knowledge and skills.
- Apprentices benefit from good practical support from their training coordinators, who provide helpful guidance on interpreting qualification requirements and explaining terminology in the context of the apprentices' workplace. Training coordinators are starting to use a wider range of resources, including an electronic portfolio system and modern technologies, to inspire apprentices to produce work in a variety of formats and to provide individual support for apprentices between sessions in order to help them make good progress.
- Training coordinators do not develop apprentices' understanding of equality and diversity sufficiently during reviews to allow them to extend their basic knowledge and understanding. Recent training has increased training coordinators' awareness of the Prevent strategy and British values. However, they currently lack the confidence to be able to develop and support apprentices' awareness sufficiently. Childcare apprentices are starting to plan effective activities that include recognition of fundamental British values within their settings.

- Apprentices are prepared and supported well for their functional English and mathematics exams through the completion of practice papers, and the large majority of learners successfully achieve a functional skills qualification. However, training coordinators do not pay sufficient attention to the correction of spelling and grammar in apprentices' written work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

- The standards of apprentices' work and the skills they develop meet the needs of their employment well. By improving their skills and rapidly producing work to at least the required standards, apprentices improve their self-confidence and are motivated to work hard. They take pride in the quality of their work and in the frequent recognition of their improved abilities from workplace managers.
- Learners on the employability study programme make good progress in improving their work-related skills and behaviours, including responding well to the requirement for good attendance and punctuality. They benefit from substantial work placements that are tailored to match their aspirations and development needs.
- Learners feel, and are, safe and they know how to raise any concerns they may have. They are aware of the benefits and dangers of online learning and know how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Employers recognise improvement in their apprentices' levels of skills, knowledge and work-related behaviours, such as improved team working and leadership skills. As a result, many apprentices gain additional responsibility or promotion.
- Managers engage well with employers, so that the optional apprenticeship qualification units closely match apprentices' employment needs and add value. These optional units are also carefully chosen to challenge apprentices to extend their range of skills. For example, hospitality apprentices challenge themselves through choosing technically demanding units such as preparing fish courses that will extend their skills as a chef.
- Learners gain a basic awareness and understanding of British values and the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. Managers plan to provide further training for training coordinators in order to improve the level of learners' awareness.

## Outcomes for learners

are good

- Learners make good progress from their carefully identified starting points, and there are no significant performance gaps between different groups of learners. Learners enjoy learning and make good progress toward achieving their full potential. However, apprentices in the remaining two subcontractors, who are not taking on any new apprentices, have performed less well than those under N&B Training's direct provision. Close monitoring and support from N&B managers are now ensuring that the majority of these apprentices achieve their qualifications.
- Progression for study programme learners and apprentices is good. A high proportion of apprentices remain in their employment and many take on extra responsibilities or gain promotion. The large majority of study programme learners progress successfully into further education, training or employment.
- N&B Training became a prime contract holder in April 2015. Existing apprentices from previous partnership arrangements, who are making good progress, were recorded as early leavers and new starters in current data. With data adjusted to take account of the way these learners appear, a good and improved proportion of apprentices, compared with 2013/14, are successful in completing their qualifications both overall and within planned timescales. The majority of current apprentices are making better than expected progress given their starting points.
- The standards of learners' work are good and meet the requirements of their qualifications and the needs of employers. Learners develop skills, knowledge and behaviours that help them make good progress in their careers.

## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16+
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	553
<b>CEO</b>	Ms Sam Clark
<b>Website address</b>	<a href="http://www.nandbtraining.com">www.nandbtraining.com</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age</b>	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	31	125	12	188	0	3		
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
<b>Number of learners aged 14–16</b>								

**Funding received from** Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency

**At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:**

- Associated Neighbour Training

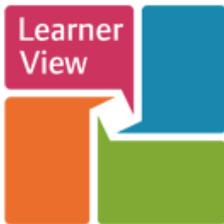
## Information about this inspection

### Inspection team

Mark Shackleton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tricia Collis	Ofsted Inspector
Dave Baber	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the senior manager, as nominee, and carried out the inspection at short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

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