

Inspection of Peterborough Skills Limited

Inspection dates: 3 to 5 August 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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

Peterborough Skills Limited trading as Peterborough Skills Academy (PSA) is an independent training provider specialising mostly in working with motor vehicle repair workshops and their administrative teams nationally. PSA provide specialised training in motor vehicle repair, service and maintenance and became an apprenticeship provider in 2019.

At the time of the visit, there were 63 apprentices on programme. Most apprentices were studying level 3 programmes in vehicle damage paint technician, vehicle damage mechanical, electrical and trim, motor vehicle service and maintenance technician or vehicle damage panel technician. There were also 10 level 3 business administration apprentices and two customer service specialist apprentices.

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

Apprentices benefit from a well-resourced training environment, which has the latest equipment to help them learn their trades. The environment is light, calm and orderly, making the workshops a safe place to learn.

Staff set high expectations for apprentices to behave appropriately and respectfully. Staff model this behaviour and treat apprentices professionally and with respect, which apprentices appreciate. Apprentices are polite and friendly and work well together. For example, they listen to each other's views with interest and discuss their on-the-job training and how they study together.

Apprentices are effectively supported by staff, who maintain apprentices' well-being through regular check-ins at progress reviews. As a result, apprentices grow in confidence over time. They are well aware of the different types of support they can access and know who to contact if they have any concerns.

Apprentices experience a range of useful activities, which develop their knowledge of the risks to their safety in their local area and nationally. For example, they are given practical advice about how to recognise the signs of grooming and how this can lead to criminal activity. Assessors use progress reviews effectively to develop apprentices' understanding and application of health and safety. As a result, apprentices know how and when to use PPE at work to remain safe.

Apprentices are supported to extend their studies beyond the curriculum to explore their interests and enhance their competency at work. For example, business administration apprentices complete qualifications in first aid at work to help them play the role of first aider in their settings. Other apprentices value visiting classic car shows to learn about custom colours and motor apprentices benefit from qualifications in hybrid and electric care awareness.

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

Leaders and managers have a strong vision to provide training for apprentices in the motor industry to be competent in their roles and succeed an aging workforce. Leaders have adopted a curriculum which meets the needs of local, regional and national employers.

Staff are proud to work at PSA. Leaders are considerate of their workload and staff feel well supported and happy in their roles. Leaders ensure that staff are vocationally competent. Most assessors have extensive industry knowledge and receive regular updates from the sector, including the suppliers of specialist products they use. However, leaders do not focus staff development sufficiently on the teaching skills of assessors to ensure that apprentices benefit from the highest quality off-the-job training.

Leaders identify apprentices with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively through induction activities. Assessors have improved their knowledge and skills in supporting these apprentices through useful training, guidance and exploring strategies for different types of SEND. As a result, they provide appropriate support to these apprentices, so that they can achieve in line with their peers.

Staff work collaboratively with employers to ensure that each apprentices' programme is highly individualised. Apprentices and employers benefit from a flexible programme which meets their needs. For example, assessors and mentors in the workplace plan the training in a logical order, which enables them to link the training with the work schedule. As a result, apprentices can apply their new knowledge quickly and improve their practical skills.

Assessors ensure that apprentices make good progress in their studies through tutorials and progress reviews. Assessors and the functional skills tutor use repetition, practice assessments and application of learning in different contexts to help apprentices remember their learning and apply it in the workplace. For example, level 3 vehicle damage and paint technician apprentices learn about the different types of paint, how the process of application is different where two coats of paint are required and how the process is different for metallic paint effects.

Assessors use assessment effectively to identify and discuss the standard of apprentices' work and set ongoing targets. Assessors provide clear marking and feedback, which apprentices use appropriately to produce work to the required standard of their qualifications.

Apprentices and employers do not know the range of potential grades apprentices may achieve. Leaders are ambitious for their apprentices to achieve the highest possible grades to improve their chances of employment in future. However, they have not ensured that apprentices know how to achieve high grades.

Apprentices studying functional skills qualifications benefit from an experienced and qualified tutor. The tutor provides a highly individualised programme, which is contextualised to the apprentices' chosen job role. As a result, apprentices pass these qualifications first time. Apprentices benefit from developing their skills in English and mathematics as part of their programmes. For example, assessors have identified areas where apprentices will need to further their knowledge, such as in business administration, time management, scheduling, producing quotes and invoices. Motor industry standards apprentices develop their mathematics skills in working out surface, volume, product density and paint mixing measurements.

Staff do not ensure that apprentices benefit from ongoing careers advice and guidance. As a result, not all apprentices know how to achieve their chosen next steps. Apprentices who seek continuous careers information, advice and guidance benefit from valuable discussions with staff to prepare for their next steps.

Leaders and managers carry out appropriate activities to evaluate the quality of the education and training they provide. As a result, they are very aware of the strengths and weaknesses and take sensible and timely actions to improve the quality of the apprentices' learning experience still further. However, leaders reporting to governors have yet to include an evaluation of the quality of education and training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that they have appointed well trained and experienced designated safeguarding leads (DSL). They have in place clear and sensible policies to ensure that apprentices and staff are safe. Staff know well the procedures for raising concerns. The DSL ensures that all concerns are considered and managed in a timely way.

The DSL has ensured that the organisation meets the statutory requirements of the 'Prevent' duty and has risk assessed and mitigated any concerns. Staff and apprentices have a good understanding of the risks to their safety locally and nationally. The DSL has in place useful links to ensure that they keep their knowledge up to date.

Apprentices feel safe and know who to contact should they have any concerns.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders must focus closely on ensuring that they continue to improve the teaching skills of assessors.
- Leaders reporting to governors must include an evaluation of the quality of education and training to ensure that governors have a complete oversight of all aspects of the education and training apprentices receive.
- Leaders and staff must ensure that apprentices and their employers know how apprentices may achieve high grades and give them advice on how they can achieve these.
- Leaders must ensure that apprentices benefit from ongoing careers advice and guidance. Leaders must ensure that apprentices know how to achieve their chosen next steps.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2539297
Address	2 Woodston Business Centre Shrewsbury Avenue Peterborough PE2 7EF
Contact number	01733 516000
Website	www.psatraining.org.uk
Principal/CEO	Ben Martin
Provider type	Independent training provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	n/a

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 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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Her Majesty's Inspector

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