

Inspection of Tendring District Council (Career Track)

Inspection dates: 22 to 24 November 2023

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	Requires improvement

Information about this provider

Tendring District Council (Career Track) is an apprenticeship provider based in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex. It has 29 apprentices on standards-based apprenticeships. 21 apprentices are studying at level 3 and eight at level 2. Around two thirds of the apprentices are female and four are under the age of 19.

At the time of the inspection, Career Track had apprentices studying standards in customer service, business administration and public services. The apprentices on level 2 are studying the customer service practitioner standard. Most apprentices on level 3 are studying the public service operational delivery officer standard.

Most Career Track apprentices are employed at borough and district councils in Essex, with the majority of these employed by Tendring District Council. Apprentices are also employed at local authorities in Kent and Suffolk. In addition, a few apprentices work in small businesses in the area.

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

Apprentices enjoy their learning and feel valued by staff whom they respect. Apprentices are highly motivated to successfully complete their training and most make good progress.

Apprentices develop a broad range of knowledge, transferable skills and professional behaviours required to work successfully with colleagues and clients. This prepares them well to undertake a range of roles in the council departments, where most are employed. As a result, most apprentices secure employment at the end of their apprenticeship.

Apprentices develop confidence in communicating with clients and are proud of how their social skills have improved. Apprentices' organisational skills and resilience are developed through projects and events they manage for example, organising and running a visit to county park day for young people in care.

Apprentices appreciate the support provided by experienced and qualified assessors who plan well-structured and logically sequenced activities that build on learning that has gone before.

Apprentices benefit from the help and encouragement they receive from their colleagues in the workplace. Many of these colleagues were also apprentices and subsequently did well in their careers. These colleagues demonstrate the opportunities available on completion of the apprenticeship, which motivates apprentices to work hard and succeed.

Apprentices feel safe. They know who to contact if they feel unsafe or have any concerns.

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

Leaders have high expectations for their apprentices. They have developed ambitious programmes that meets the needs of the employers it serves. Programmes also provide a good route to employment and further training for local residents who have low prior-educational achievement and/or low ambition.

Leaders and assessors work well with apprentices and employers to tailor courses to ensure that they best meet the needs and aspirations of the apprentices and relates well to their job roles. For example, apprentices develop skills in audit practices and data analytics. They also develop the technical skills to enable them to support clients off-site.

Apprentices' learning is well sequenced. Managers ensure that apprentices' skills and knowledge are developed logically and grow in complexity over time. For example, progressing from simple administrative tasks such as email in-box management to

more-complex tasks of using professional software systems and progressing on to developing skills in invoicing.

Managers do not ensure that employers are consistently involved in the review meetings to assist in the planning and monitoring of apprentices' progress. As a result, employers are not always aware of the work-based learning opportunities they could provide for their apprentices to support their progress. When communication between assessors and employers is effective it results in apprentices undertaking activities that support their learning while also ensuring the apprentice is an asset to the employer.

Assessors check apprentices' understanding well, correct misconceptions and provide clear feedback to them to help them improve their work. This includes helping apprentices to improve their English skills. Assessors support the development of apprentices' vocational vocabulary effectively. For example, developing apprentices' confidence in using correct technical terminology when dealing with information technology issues.

The tuition that assessors provide to apprentices is effective in developing apprentices' skills and knowledge. The teaching, which is often on a one-to-one basis is tailored to meet apprentices' specific needs. Assessors provide apprentices with a wide range of well-researched resources to support the apprentices learning. Assessors make the most of naturally occurring opportunities to develop relevant, work-related knowledge. For example, upcoming elections are currently being referenced including voting, party politics and the importance of the political landscape to themselves and their families.

Managers ensure that apprentices are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Many apprentices deepen their understanding of democracy through helping with registration and poll counts at elections. Apprentices participate in a local air show and are fully briefed on the risks and safeguarding issues, including bomb awareness associated with that event.

Assessors provide clear careers information advice and guidance to the apprentices at the start of the apprenticeship and throughout the programme. This helps to ensure that most gain employment at the end of their apprenticeship.

Leaders do not ensure that assessors receive focused and highly effective development of their teaching skills. Also, assessors are not routinely observed to identify areas for development in their practice. However, leaders do develop assessors' specialist vocational knowledge and skills to help them support apprentices' personal development. This includes training on topics such as developing assertiveness.

Governors have appropriate expertise and experience to support and challenge leaders effectively to improve the quality of education. They understand their responsibilities to enhance the effectiveness of Career Track and ensure that leaders meet their statutory responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Identify areas for development in assessors teaching and provide them with opportunities to develop further their teaching skills.
- Ensure that employers are consistently involved in the review meetings so that assessors can inform them of the work-based learning opportunities required.

Provider details

Unique reference number	54781
Address	Town Hall Station Road Clacton-on-Sea Essex CO15 1SE
Contact number	01255 686313
Website	www.tendringdc.gov.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Ian Davidson
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	3 to 5 November 2021

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the work-based learning manager, 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

Roger Pilgrim, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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