

# Inspection of London Skills & Development Network Limited

Inspection dates:

5–7 November 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Adult learning programmes

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

## **Information about this provider**

London Skills & Development Network (LSDN) is an independent training provider. Its main office is in Croydon, in south London. Formerly a part of an alliance of nine individual learning providers, LSDN now works independently as a social enterprise organisation. At the time of the inspection, there were 100 learners on level 2 programmes. The largest proportion of learners were studying a certificate in track and rail site maintenance or diploma in railway engineering track renewals. Approximately 30 learners were on certificate programmes in spectator safety and health and social care.

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

Since the previous inspection, the training that learners receive has improved and is now good. Learners appreciate their time at LSDN and benefit from the training that they receive. They speak very highly of the impact that attending LSDN has on their lives and their increased career opportunities, particularly in the rail industry.

Most learners at LSDN have had an interrupted educational background. Many have served custodial sentences or are recovering from alcohol or drugs misuse. Staff motivate and encourage these learners to believe in their own abilities and inspire them to take qualifications so that they can secure sustainable careers.

Tutors are skilled at teaching learners new skills, knowledge and behaviours. For example, on track and rail maintenance courses, learners understand how to plan and carry out maintenance on rail tracks and how to work as a part of a team to carry this out efficiently.

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

Leaders, managers and governors have established a clear vision to create a curriculum that meets the needs of learners. Leaders ensure that the programmes that they offer provide learners with highly effective training that prepares them well for future employment. All staff have high expectations of learners to be successful. They have created a culture of success and aspiration within the organisation. As a result, most learners achieve their qualifications and go into employment.

Tutors reflect frequently on the content and sequencing of the courses they teach and adapt them appropriately to meet skills needs in the related industries. For example, they have developed the transport operations qualification in response to a substantial skills gap in the rail engineering sector.

Leaders have recently improved their governance structure, including the appointment of a new chair of governors. Governors focus robustly on their role in monitoring and improving the quality of provision. They monitor accurately the performance of the organisation.

Managers ensure that learning programmes meet industry requirements. They work successfully with employers to shape the curriculum. Most learners gain useful qualifications alongside their main programme. For example, learners in spectator safety take qualifications in close-circuit television and security industry authority qualifications.

Tutors sequence the curriculum well. They teach basic concepts effectively so that learners can understand more complex concepts thoroughly. For example, learners in transport operations apply the knowledge they have of health and safety competently in complex and practical situations at work. Tutors check learners' understanding frequently through effective assessments, and they provide learners

with helpful feedback so that they know how to improve future work. Learners feel confident in their newly learned skills and knowledge.

A few learners have prior experience of work in the sectors they are studying. In these cases, tutors do not take sufficient account of the experience learners have to plan and teach the curriculum so that it is sufficiently ambitious for them.

Tutors have good experience of the industries in which they teach and most continue to work in these sectors to keep their knowledge current. Tutors encourage learners to enrol with professional bodies so that they gain a deeper understanding of the professions in which they plan to work.

Tutors make sure that learners use professional and technical language that is appropriate to the industries in which they plan to work. As a result, learners use relevant terminology accurately in the workplace and they gain confidence in their own professional ability.

Learners know about maintaining a healthy lifestyle. In transport operations and rail engineering, learners understand the importance of adequate sleep, of good nutrition and of avoiding drugs and alcohol to keep themselves and others safe. A small minority of learners, particularly those on railway qualifications, do not know enough about future job roles or additional qualifications available to them to help them to progress in their careers.

Managers and tutors have successfully rectified the poor attendance identified at the previous inspection and attendance is now good. A small minority of learners do not arrive at lessons on time.

Learners gain a good understanding of life in modern Britain. For example, they understand the benefits of a diverse workforce. Female learners feel empowered to challenge gender stereotypes within the workplace. Most learners become more resilient, which enables them to feel able to manage personal and professional challenges.

Learners who require additional support with their work benefit from very good individualised help from tutors. Learners attend catch-up classes or receive one-to-one support to ensure that they make good progress. As a result, learners who require extra help achieve as well as their peers.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding is a high priority in the organisation. Staff are well trained at induction and receive frequent update training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. The designated safeguarding leads are appropriately trained. Managers have established highly effective processes to check that tutors are safe to work with learners. Learners have a sound understanding of

how to keep themselves safe and how to apply their knowledge to their working environments. For example, learners working on the railways understand the security risks within the environment in which they work and learners on spectator safety courses understand the importance of the 'Prevent' duty in their role as stewards at events.

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

- Tutors should ensure that learners on rail engineering courses have a good understanding of the future careers available to them and the extra qualifications that they may take to help them to secure employment more readily.
- Tutors should take greater account of the knowledge and skills of learners who have prior industrial experience so that they plan a challenging and ambitious curriculum for those learners.
- Managers and tutors should ensure that learners arrive at lessons on time so that they benefit from the teaching and do not disrupt the learning of others.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	58729
<b>Address</b>	Second Floor Suffolk House George Street Croydon CR0 0YN
<b>Contact number</b>	020 3784 1294
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lsdn.org.uk">www.lsdn.org.uk</a>
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Virginie Ramond
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	October 2017

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the chief executive officer, 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 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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