

Short inspection of London Skills & Development Network

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 July 2024

Outcome

London Skills & Development Network Limited continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

London Skills & Development Network is an independent training provider based in Croydon, South London.

At the time of this inspection, learners were studying a range of accredited and non-accredited courses from level 1 to level 3. Most learners were studying multiple courses as part of a six-week sector-based work academy programme funded by the Greater London Authority. Approximately 35 learners were studying green skills courses related to the rail industry, 14 studying construction courses and six on courses related to the security sector. A further 23 learners were on teaching and childcare-related courses, with fewer than five studying English and mathematics.

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

Learners value that staff welcome them into a calm and respectful learning environment where they feel safe. Many of the learners have served custodial sentences or have a history as victims of abuse. Learners benefit from leaders' commitment to promoting social mobility by offering courses to those who need them the most. Learners appreciate the time that staff devote to give them comprehensive support to succeed.

Throughout their courses, learners build the confidence to achieve in their work and personal lives. They benefit from leaders helping their well-being by providing lunch and staff referring them to other opportunities to develop their skills.

Learners secure new career opportunities as a result of the knowledge and skills they learn on their courses. Staff equip them with the hands-on skills they need to move into sustainable employment quickly, particularly in the rail industry. Nearly all learners complete their courses. Over half of the learners move into employment, and nearly all others go on to further study.

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

Highly knowledgeable teaching staff structure the curriculum logically. For example, rail engineering tutors first introduce track components, such as ballast and fish plates, and teach learners how to use different tools safely. They then teach the correct techniques to dismantle and fit track by removing and replacing the components. Learners quickly gain new knowledge and skills to repair and adjust track.

Teaching staff use a range of effective techniques to help learners remember key concepts. For example, security tutors use role play and scenarios to clearly demonstrate how to deal with different clients. Rail learners benefit from putting into practice and honing their skills in an industry-standard training site. As a result, learners are prepared well to complete tasks in the workplace.

Teaching staff check what learners already know and can do at the start of their courses effectively. In a few cases, teachers consider this information well to adapt their teaching. However, in most instances, staff do not set suitably individualised work or ambitious targets, particularly for the few learners who have prior experience. As a result, these learners do not achieve as much as they could during their time on their course.

Tutors check thoroughly whether learners understand the course content. In railway engineering, tutors question learners effectively to make sure that they have gained thorough knowledge. As a result, learners know how theory applies in industry and talk confidently about what they have learned.

In a few instances, tutors do not check learners' progress rigorously enough. For example, they ask learners to copy text to answer questions, rather than checking what knowledge learners have retained. Feedback on learners' written work varies in quality, and tutors do not routinely correct spelling and grammatical errors learners make. As a result, a few learners do not improve or develop their writing skills over time.

Staff provide high-quality support to learners with additional needs. At the start of the course, teaching staff meet with learners to understand their needs and put in place relevant strategies to make sure they make good progress. Teaching assistants give useful support in lessons. As a result, learners who require additional support achieve in line with their peers.

Throughout the curriculum, staff share valuable careers information to prepare learners for employment. For example, learners take part in sector-based employability workshops. Learners get help to prepare for interviews and develop their CVs. Consequently, most learners are well prepared for their next steps.

Tutors explore with learners the different roles they can take on once they enter their chosen industry. Rail learners understand the different routes they can follow in

the rail industry such as track operative or controller of site safety.

Leaders and managers have focused on continuously improving the quality of training they offer since the previous inspection. They promote a positive culture of staff development. They have invested in staff, with most staff working towards high-level teaching or specialist qualifications. Leaders and governors take appropriate action where improvements are needed. For example, they have introduced incentives for learners to make sure they are punctual and have high attendance levels. This is starting to have a positive impact on learners.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Make sure that teaching staff use information about what learners know and can do at the start of their courses to set individualised targets for learners and teach a highly ambitious curriculum.
- Make sure that teaching staff provide consistently high-quality feedback on learners' written work so learners improve their work and their writing skills.
- Make sure staff consistently set suitable activities to check learners understand what they are being taught.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58729
Address	Second Floor Suffolk House George Street Croydon CR0 0YN
Contact number	0203 784 1294
Website	www.lsdn.org.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Virginie Ramond
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	5 to 7 November 2019
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since London Skills & Development Network was judged to be good in November 2019.

The inspection team was assisted by the chief executive, 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

Rebecca Jennings, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jon Bowman	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Manning	His Majesty's Inspector

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