

# Inspection of Midland Group Training Services Limited

Inspection dates: 25 to 28 June 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Information about this provider

Midland Group Training Services Limited (MGTS) is an independent learning provider specialising in engineering apprenticeships with training centres in both Coventry, Warwickshire and Redditch, Worcestershire. At the time of the inspection, there were 469 apprentices. Of these, 316 were on the level 3 engineering technician, 124 were on the level 3 food and drink maintenance engineer, 13 were on the level 3 engineering fitter, 10 were on the level 3 maintenance and operations engineering technician, four were on the level 3 machining technician, and two were on the level 2 engineering operative apprenticeship. The provider works with one subcontractor who delivers a short, regulated course in food safety to apprentices on the food and drink maintenance engineer apprenticeship.

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

Apprentices enjoy their learning. They value the opportunity to learn from industry experts and understand the opportunities this presents to their future careers as engineers. Apprentices' attendance at taught sessions is very high. They are punctual and arrive ready and motivated to learn.

When attending the training centre, staff set high expectations of apprentices' behaviour and conduct, reflecting the behaviours expected in the workplace. Apprentices embrace these expectations, and training centres are calm, positive, inclusive spaces where disruptive behaviours are rare.

Apprentices, when learning in the training centre, benefit from a weekly tutorial programme which helps them to develop their understanding of appropriate behaviours. For example, apprentices cover topics such as dignity in the workplace, gambling addiction, bullying and harassment, and banter. Early in their learning, apprentices can recall the content of these topics and how what they have learned applies in their daily lives. However, later in apprentices' learning, when they are no longer attending the training centre, training and development advisers (TDAs) do not always sufficiently check and re-enforce apprentices' understanding of these topics, and consequently apprentices' knowledge is less clear.

Apprentices develop their confidence and team-working skills both as part of the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. They participate in team-based competitions to build small, self-propelled cars from recycled materials, and they have the opportunity to attend residential outdoor expeditions.

Apprentices feel safe, both when in the training centre and in the workplace. They know who to report concerns to, should they arise, and have confidence that any issues would be dealt with swiftly.

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

Leaders and managers articulate a clear rationale for the curriculums they teach. They work well with local and national employers to ensure that the curriculums meet their needs. They work with individual employers to tailor their curriculums to ensure that apprentices develop new knowledge and skills they need in the diverse range of engineering environments in which they work.

Leaders and managers have high ambitions for apprentices. Most apprentices can study additional or higher-level qualifications alongside their apprenticeship, such as a higher national certificate. Leaders provide additional teaching through 'bridging' courses to provide opportunities to apprentices who need additional mathematics or English development before starting their apprenticeship.

In the large majority of cases, staff use the information they receive about apprentices' vocational starting points well to plan their learning and adjust their

teaching. As a result, most apprentices make rapid and sustained progress from their starting points.

Leaders have recently strengthened their governance arrangements by appointing a trustee with significant educational experience. Trustees now receive sufficiently detailed information about the quality of education to allow them to hold leaders to account. However, as these arrangements are still new, their full impact cannot yet be seen.

Leaders use a range of methods, including learning walks, curriculum monitoring meetings, apprenticeship progress meetings, and apprentice and employer surveys, to evaluate the quality of education. Leaders then put in place clear actions to improve the quality of teaching that apprentices receive, such as recruiting a curriculum leader to improve the quality of teaching and learning in BTEC National Diploma qualifications.

Apprentices develop their practical skills in industry-relevant, well-resourced training centres and benefit from workshops that mirror the world of work. In some cases, for example in food and drink, apprentices benefit from learning their practical skills on equipment donated by employers and mirroring that found in the workplace, which supports apprentices in developing a familiarity with the specific technology they will encounter. Apprentices build industry- and employer-relevant knowledge and skills.

In the majority of cases, tutors provide apprentices with helpful verbal feedback on their practical work. However, in too many cases, the feedback apprentices receive on their written work is too focused on unit achievement and is often too brief. As a result, too few apprentices receive feedback which tells them what they need to do to improve their written work or how they can aim for a merit or distinction grade.

Apprentices receive significant support from tutors to develop their mathematics skills. They are helped to close any gaps in their foundation knowledge before studying advanced, engineering-specific topics. However, while all apprentices develop their knowledge of technical terms, and receive guidance on spelling and grammar. Too often, teachers miss opportunities to support apprentices to develop the wider English skills they need to support them to progress to their potential next steps.

Teachers and TDAs use questioning and assessment well to check on learning and to adjust their teaching or target setting. They use the results of formative and summative assessments to set challenging tasks for apprentices who are making rapid progress and to identify and provide additional support to those apprentices who need it.

TDAs support most apprentices well in continuing to develop their skills in the workplace after completing their studies in the training centre. They actively involve employers in progress reviews effectively, which, in the majority of cases, include

planning activities that support apprentices in developing and practising their skills in the workplace.

In most cases, apprentices benefit from useful careers advice and guidance that supports them in making decisions on their next steps. They benefit from career-focused tutorial sessions, opportunities to attend industry events, and discussions with TDAs during reviews. As a result, most apprentices are clear on the opportunities available to them when they complete their apprenticeship.

The large majority of apprentices who complete their apprenticeship go on to secure full-time employment in engineering, and some achieve promotions or pay increases as a direct result of their apprenticeship. However, leaders have identified a decline in the number of apprentices who go on to take their end-point assessments after successfully completing the component qualifications within their apprenticeship. Leaders are working with employers to develop strategies to encourage apprentices to undertake their assessments, and there are early signs that this is having a positive effect. However, the full impact cannot yet be seen.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- Ensure that all apprentices are supported to develop their English skills throughout their apprenticeship.
- Ensure that all apprentices receive helpful feedback on their written work to enable them to improve the quality of their work.
- Ensure that more apprentices undertake their end-point assessments upon the completion of their learning.
- Ensure that TDAs continue to develop apprentices' understanding of the personal development topics they study throughout their apprenticeship.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	53373
<b>Address</b>	MGTS Gulson Road Coventry CV1 2JG
<b>Contact number</b>	02476 630333
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.mgts.co.uk">https://www.mgts.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	David Bridgens
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 November 2013
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	Reaseheath College

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality and compliance 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

Stuart Collett, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Joel Dalhouse	His Majesty's Inspector
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