

# Encompass Consultancy Limited

Independent learning provider

## Inspection dates

7–10 August 2018

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Adult learning programmes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Apprenticeships	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Outcomes for learners	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected	

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- Until very recently, leaders and managers have been slow to implement actions to bring about improvement.
- Leaders and managers do not understand fully the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and, as a result, their plans to improve its quality lack impact.
- Leaders and managers do not use information well enough to monitor the progress that apprentices and adult learners make on programmes and after they leave.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that apprentices and adult learners have access to good-quality information, advice and guidance with which to plan their next steps.
- Not enough apprentices and adult learners on programmes funded through advanced learner loans make the progress expected of them.
- Gaps in the achievement of qualifications between different groups of adult learners on loans-funded programmes persist.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not good enough to ensure that all groups of apprentices and adult learners make good progress.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Leaders and managers have taken sensible steps to change the strategic shape of the curriculum so that it focuses predominantly on management apprenticeships and employability training.
- Leaders and managers create effective partnerships with employers and subcontractors to design training that apprentices and adult learners need and that employers value.
- Adult learners on employability courses delivered by subcontractors develop vocational and personal skills that enable them to secure jobs in the security and logistics industries.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Encompass Consultancy Limited (Encompass) is a private limited company, based near Hull, that was formed in 2009 to provide consultancy and management services to businesses. In 2013, it started to deliver apprenticeships as a subcontractor. In 2015/16, it began to offer courses funded through advanced learner loans. In 2017/18, it secured its own contract to deliver non-levy-funded apprenticeships.
- Encompass currently delivers a mix of framework and standards apprenticeships, from level 2 to level 5. Adult learning programmes funded through advanced learner loans are predominantly at level 3 in beauty therapy, health and social care and business management. Two subcontractors deliver employability training. Encompass delivers the majority of its provision in the East Riding of Yorkshire and Humber region, and at two hubs in London and Birmingham.

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

- Ensure that directors harness the skills and expertise of the newly appointed management team to quicken the pace of improvement.
- Strengthen the self-assessment process so that directors and managers can evaluate the quality of the provision more accurately, and design improvement actions that will tackle the areas of weakness more effectively.
- Ensure that directors and managers use accurate and timely information on key performance indicators so that they can intervene more swiftly when the progress of apprentices and adult learners is slower than expected or the quality of the provision deteriorates.
- Increase the access that apprentices and adult learners have to impartial information, advice and guidance so that they can better plan their next steps.
- Ensure that a higher proportion of apprentices and adult learners on programmes funded through advanced learner loans make rapid progress and achieve their qualifications within their planned timescales.
- Reduce the achievement gaps between groups of adult learners on loans-funded programmes, particularly those between males and females, and between Asian and White British learners.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - ensuring that assessment is used to plan programmes based on apprentices' and adult learners' starting points
  - setting and monitoring challenging targets to enable apprentices and adult learners to make more rapid progress
  - providing constructive feedback so that apprentices and adult learners know what they need to do to improve
  - ensuring that all apprentices and adult learners develop good written English skills.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Directors and managers have been slow to take decisive action to improve the quality of the education and training that they provide to apprentices and adult learners. Plans to improve quality are too broad, and do not focus well enough on the specific actions that managers need to take to tackle weaknesses. Directors have recently recognised this and have appointed a new management team to implement improvements, but it is still too early to see the full impact of these changes.
- Directors' and managers' assessment of quality is not sufficiently self-critical and does not accurately identify all the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. The current self-assessment plan is overgenerous in its evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and pays too little attention to the delivery of the two subcontractors. As a result, the actions in the quality improvement plan do not address the main causes for the weaker areas of the provision.
- The arrangements for evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are not rigorous enough. Managers do not evaluate the quality of teaching of a minority of tutors, including those delivering courses funded through adult learner loans in Birmingham and London. Reports following lesson observations do not focus sufficiently on the impact that teaching and assessment have on the progress that apprentices and learners make. Consequently, too often the proposed actions in observation reports do not help assessors and tutors to improve their practice.
- Directors and managers do not have access to timely and accurate data with which to monitor the performance and quality of the provision. For example, they do not collect and analyse data on where adult learners progress to once they have finished their courses, so they are not able to evaluate fully the effectiveness of the provision. When managers do collect information, such as that for attendance, they do not analyse it. As a result, they have not identified that sporadic attendance on a significant number on loans-funded courses is causing too many learners to make slow progress.
- Directors and managers have not ensured that adult learners have access to good-quality information, advice and guidance. Staff do not fully inform adults enrolling on loans-funded courses of the expectations of the qualifications, particularly in health and social care and business. As a result, too many learners do not deliver their assignments on time. Lack of information on the destinations of adult learners means that tutors cannot provide advice on what might be the best next step for learners based on previous outcomes.
- Directors and managers have developed a clear strategy to deliver training to apprentices and adult learners that develops the personal and vocational skills required to secure employment or to meet the requirements of their job roles. They now offer the new apprenticeship standards in management and business professions that reflect their own considerable expertise and experience in these areas. The partnership with the two subcontractors addresses directly the need to train employees for the security and logistics industries in the Humber region.
- Directors and managers create effective partnerships with employers to design training that develops the knowledge, skills and behaviours of apprentices. Employers value the

support that managers from Encompass provide, such as the development of an aspiring leaders programme to enable employees to progress onto a full apprenticeship.

- Directors and managers have created a culture that promotes the professional development of their staff. Staff value the wide range of training opportunities available to them and the way in which their ideas are taken on board to make improvements. For example, their feedback has resulted in changes in the induction process for apprentices that have improved the numbers being retained on their programmes.

### **The governance of the provider**

- The three directors have recognised recently that they have been too slow to implement actions to bring about improvements. In response, the new managing director has taken decisive action to establish a new management structure with the relevant expertise and knowledge to bring about positive changes. However, it is still too soon to measure the impact of these changes.
- Directors' ability to monitor the progress of apprentices and adult learners, and to assess the quality of the provision, is hampered by their lack of access to accurate and timely data. As a result, they have not been holding managers to account effectively enough for some persistent weaknesses, such as the slow progress that adult learners have made on loans-funded health and social care and business courses.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Directors and managers ensure that appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out on staff, including those with subcontractors. All staff have completed their mandatory safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training. Staff log safeguarding incidents in detail and provide good support to apprentices and learners who experience any issues. Apprentices and adult learners feel safe and know how to report any concerns.
- In response to staff requests, managers have implemented an online calendar that contains links and resources for staff to use with apprentices and adult learners to discuss issues such as emotional well-being, modern British values and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Despite these efforts, apprentices and adult learners do not demonstrate a sound understanding of the risks they face from extremism at work, and they do not recognise the signs of potential radicalisation.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not good enough to ensure that a high proportion of apprentices and adult learners make expected progress towards the achievement of their qualifications.
- Initial information, advice and guidance do not prepare apprentices and adult learners sufficiently for the expectations and demands of their qualifications. Adult learners on programmes in health and social care and business funded through advanced learner loans find the attendance requirements and the need to undertake written assignments very challenging. As a result, only just over half of these learners complete their

qualifications within the planned timescales.

- Too many assessors and tutors do not use the information that they gather on the starting points of their apprentices and adult learners well enough to plan and provide programmes that enable them to make sufficient progress. Although assessors and tutors undertake surveys of learning styles, skills scans and diagnostic assessments for English and mathematics, the results of these are not used well to set individual targets for apprentices and learners. Instead, the delivery of programmes is planned for whole groups, with the result that the pace of learning is often dictated by the less able.
- Assessors' verbal feedback to apprentices and tutors' written and verbal feedback to adult learners on loans-funded programmes are not helpful enough to enable them to know what they need to do to improve. Tutors on some loans-funded courses do not mark and return learners' work quickly enough, which slows their progress. A minority of assessors do not use questioning techniques adeptly to develop apprentices' knowledge and understanding fully.
- Too often, assessors do not track apprentices' progress systematically enough, with the result that they do not plan timely interventions to help those who are falling behind. Information on the progress of apprentices is currently incomplete as managers have recently introduced a new electronic tracking system. Assessors are not yet confident in using the information on the new system to plan and provide support for those apprentices making slower progress.
- Assessors and tutors do not provide sufficient support to develop the English and mathematical skills of those apprentices and adult learners who are not required to take functional skills qualifications. As a result, apprentices and learners are not being equipped with the written English skills that they need for their management roles or for self-employment.
- Assessors and tutors are well qualified for their roles and apply their relevant teaching skills and vocational expertise to support apprentices and learners to develop new knowledge and skills. Managers have recruited specialists in areas such as procurement, personnel management and quality monitoring to meet the new apprenticeship standards and employers' expectations.
- Assessors' and tutors' expectations for those apprentices and adult learners starting more recent programmes are higher than they have been previously. Employers are working more closely with leaders and managers to set the behaviours and standards they expect to see from their apprentices in the classroom and workshop. Tutors on employability courses motivate adult learners to succeed by preparing them well for employment in the security and logistics industries.
- Tutors and assessors equip the great majority of apprentices and adult learners with new knowledge and skills that are beneficial to their personal and professional development and the needs of their employers. Younger apprentices, many of them in public-facing roles, grow in confidence and take on new responsibilities. More-experienced management employees develop new knowledge in areas such as conflict management, finance and leadership styles.
- The recent appointment of two English and mathematics specialist teachers has resulted in a significant improvement in the proportion of apprentices passing their functional skills qualifications at the first attempt. The new teachers identify early in the programme those

apprentices who need to pass functional skills tests in order to achieve their framework qualification. They provide these apprentices with effective one-to-one teaching support and access to additional resources to prepare them for the test.

- Assessors and tutors promote the theory and practice of equality and diversity effectively through their teaching and assessment practices. Apprentices and adult learners demonstrate their adherence to these principles through their understanding of rights and responsibilities at work and how to respect the needs of different cultures. For example, adult learners apply different beauty treatments in salons to accommodate the diverse religious beliefs of their customers.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

### **Requires improvement**

- Apprentices and adult learners who are not required to take functional skills qualifications do not develop their English writing skills sufficiently. As a result, too much of the written work that apprentices and adult learners produce for assessments is not of a high enough standard.
- The attendance of adults on courses funded through advanced learner loans is too low. The sporadic attendance of some learners disrupts the progress of others as tutors spend too much time helping absentees to catch up. Managers have not remedied the situation as they do not analyse the data that they collect on attendance.
- Adult learners on loans-funded courses in health and social care and business do not receive sufficient pre-course information on the demands and expectations of the qualifications. As a result, too many of them miss assignments, do not attend, and make slow progress.
- Apprentices and adult learners on loans-funded courses are not prepared sufficiently for their next step as on-course information, advice and guidance are not routinely available. As staff do not know how different qualifications enhance chances of securing employment, promotion at work, or progression onto further training, they cannot advise apprentices or adult learners effectively about their most advantageous next step.
- Apprentices' and adult learners' understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism is not well developed. Many can recall these issues being covered at their induction but are unable to explain clearly their relevance to them as employees and citizens.
- Adults on employability courses develop good personal and social skills that enable them to secure employment. They develop these skills through successfully completing vocationally specific qualifications in security and warehousing.
- Adults on employability courses enhance their employment prospects by taking additional qualifications in, for example, forklift truck driving.
- The great majority of apprentices and adult learners are enthusiastic about the benefits of learning and training. Apprentices develop new technical and professional skills and the behaviours that employers value.
- Apprentices and adult learners on employability programmes improve their verbal communication skills, particularly in those roles where they have to deal with customers and work colleagues. As a result, they feel more confident to fulfil their roles at work.

## Outcomes for learners

## Requires improvement

- Too many adult learners on courses funded through advanced learner loans make slow progress towards the achievement of their qualifications. As a result, in 2016/17 only just over half of these learners completed their courses and achieved their qualifications within the planned timescales, with the slowest progress being made by those on health and social care and business qualifications. The progress of current learners in these subjects remains too slow.
- Significant gaps persist in the progress that different groups of adult learners on loans-funded programmes make in the current year. In 2016/17, there were large gaps in the achievement of qualifications within planned timescales between males and females, and between Asian and White British learners.
- Not enough current apprentices make the progress expected of them, particularly those on the new level 3 management standard. The small number of apprentices on frameworks are on target to complete their qualifications within the planned timescales.
- The great majority of adults on loans-funded programmes and on employability courses achieve their qualifications. Despite managers at Encompass not collecting destination data, information from subcontractors shows that high numbers of adult learners on employability courses gain employment in the security and logistics industries.
- An increasing proportion of apprentices pass their functional skills tests at their first attempt. Achievement rates have climbed steadily over the past two years and are now high.

## Types of provision

### Adult learning programmes

### Requires improvement

- In the current academic year, 499 adult learners have enrolled on programmes, with 106 in learning at the time of the inspection. Two thirds of learners are on programmes at level 3 funded through advanced learner loans, with half of these studying beauty therapy qualifications and the remainder studying health and social care and business qualifications. A third of learners are on employability courses at two subcontractors, Portull Training Services and the RDS Academy, taking vocational qualifications in security, stewarding, forklift truck driving and personal development.
- Teaching, learning and assessment on the loans-funded programmes are not good enough. This is reflected in the slow progress made by too many learners in completing their courses and achieving their qualifications within the planned timescales, particularly those taking health and social care and business qualifications.
- The initial information, advice and guidance that learners receive before they start their loans-funded programmes do not prepare them properly for the demands and expectations of the qualifications. As a result, too many learners do not attend enough sessions to enable them to make good progress, and some struggle with the written assignments.
- Although all tutors establish the starting points of learners on loans-funded programmes, they do not use this information effectively to plan and deliver lessons that reflect the

prior attainment and experience of their learners. Consequently, the pace of much teaching is too slow as it does not take into account the different abilities of the members of each group.

- Tutors do not set targets that are sufficiently challenging and motivating, and there is too wide a variation in the quality of targets set by the different tutors teaching on the loans-funded programmes. The great majority of targets are too generic, such as 'create a mood board' or 'practise skills', to provide learners with clear direction as to how to develop their knowledge and skills.
- Too few tutors support learners to develop their writing skills. Tutors do not routinely tackle poor spelling, punctuation and grammar in learners' written assignments on loans-funded programmes. As a result, too many learners on these programmes are not being prepared well enough to produce a business plan to become self-employed or to write a report for a supervisor at work.
- Too many learners on loans-funded programmes do not benefit from timely and helpful feedback on their assignments. For example, some learners on business courses had to wait five months before they received their first written feedback, resulting in many of them achieving their qualifications well beyond their formal end date.
- Tutors make effective use of their vocational expertise and industrial experience on employability courses to plan and deliver highly relevant lessons. As a result, the great majority of learners on these courses develop good knowledge and skills, such as those required to provide door security at nightclubs and site security in shopping centres.
- The standard of learners' work on employability courses is very high. Tutors assess learners' work effectively and give constructive feedback that enables them to make good progress. They help learners on forklift driving courses, many of whom have been unemployed for long periods, to improve their written work. This gives them the confidence to prepare job applications, many of which result successfully in employment.
- Most tutors on employability courses and beauty therapy loans-funded programmes use reviews well to track and monitor the progress of their learners. As a result, these learners know what they have achieved and what they still need to do to complete their courses within the planned timescales.
- The great majority of adult learners demonstrate a high level of understanding about safeguarding and how to keep themselves and their customers safe at work. For example, those training to be door supervisors learn how to use proportionate force when restraining unruly customers. However, apart from learners on security courses, too few learners are alert to the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

## Apprenticeships

## Requires improvement

- The provider has 255 apprentices currently on programme. Of these, 208 are following an apprenticeship standard, with 142 studying at level 3 and 66 at levels 4 and above. The remaining apprentices are completing an apprenticeship framework at level 2 to level 5. The majority of apprentices are on programmes in management, procurement, accounting and emergency firefighting.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not good enough to ensure that a

higher proportion of apprentices make the progress expected of them.

- Too many assessors do not establish apprentices' starting points well enough to plan and deliver individual programmes that challenge apprentices to develop their knowledge and skills fully. Assessors too often give apprentices on the same programmes identical targets, with the result that there is little motivation for the most able to make rapid progress.
- In too many instances, assessors do not use the systems available to them to monitor the progress of apprentices effectively enough. As a result, they often leave it too late before they intervene when an apprentice falls behind, thereby slowing their progress further. Although more assessors than previously are starting to use the new electronic tracking system introduced by managers, it is still too early to see the impact of this.
- A minority of assessors are not skilled enough in using verbal questioning to check apprentices' understanding and to consolidate their knowledge. Too often, they pose questions at reviews that are not specific enough to test out and expand apprentices' knowledge, with the result that many apprentices give formulaic answers.
- Assessors do not support well enough apprentices who are exempt from taking functional skills qualifications to develop their written English skills. Assessors do not routinely correct spelling, punctuation and grammar errors in apprentices' written assignments. This impedes apprentices' effectiveness at work as many have just taken up their first management position and need to write reports for their line managers.
- Although apprentices know how to keep themselves safe and report any safeguarding concerns, they are not fully aware of how to protect themselves from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Assessors are not sufficiently skilled at making these issues relevant to their apprentices.
- Managers work effectively with employers to implement the delivery of the new standards apprenticeships by designing programmes that meet the training needs of specific industries. For example, assessors travelled to the headquarters of a global milk-processing company in Denmark to map the new management standards to the company's in-house programme before delivering training at its factory in Britain.
- Assessors ensure that the great majority of apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Encompass delivers a high volume of management standards apprenticeships to team leaders in fire and rescue services across the north of England, many of whom are in their first line management position. As a result of their training, these apprentices are now more confident in supervising staff, handling grievance procedures and managing devolved budgets. Apprentices on the new procurement standard can now use an algorithm for accurate supply segmentation to improve their employers' buying strategies.
- Managers and assessors ensure that their delivery model fully meets the principles and requirements of the different apprenticeships that they offer. All apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job training. Managers and assessors plan well to ensure that apprentices are prepared effectively for the end-point assessments on the new standards apprenticeships.
- Recently appointed English and mathematics teachers are supporting an increasing proportion of apprentices on framework qualifications to pass their functional skills tests at the first attempt. As a result, these apprentices are now making faster progress

towards the completion of their qualifications within planned timescales.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	1237113
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	423
Principal/CEO	Lisa Blakey
Telephone number	01482 222463
Website	<a href="http://www.encompass-consultancy.com">www.encompass-consultancy.com</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	–	–	–	20	–	83	–	3
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	2	–	5	157	1	90		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	–		–		–			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	–							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	–							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Portull Training Services RDS Academy							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the operations manager as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

### Inspection team

Charles Searle, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rachel Angus	Her Majesty's Inspector
Steven Sharpe	Ofsted Inspector
Howard Browes	Ofsted Inspector
Philippa Firth	Ofsted Inspector

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