

Inspection of Trade Skills4U Ltd

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 August 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Trade Skills4U Ltd (TS4U Ltd) is a national independent learning provider with centres in Crawley, Coventry, Leeds and Warrington. TS4U Ltd was formerly a private training company, which successfully registered to provide apprenticeships in 2021. TS4U Ltd specialises in electrical apprenticeships and privately funded electrical courses.

At the time of the inspection, there were 143 apprentices studying the level 3 installation electrician and maintenance electrician standard. A very small number of apprentices were studying the level 3 team leader apprenticeship. Apprentices are taught on a block release model, which combines face-to-face and online sessions. Most apprentices are aged 19 years or over. The provider does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Apprentices have high aspirations for their careers as electricians. They benefit from the excellent training and support of industry qualified training staff. Consequently, apprentices are well motivated. Their attendance is good, and most achieve high grades.

Apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours rapidly and apply their learning to their work successfully. For example, they learn to install solar panels, isolators and floodlighting to industry standards successfully. As a result, apprentices grow in confidence and contribute positively to their businesses.

Most apprentices are well informed about contemporary topics, such as equality and diversity, domestic violence and mental health awareness. As such, they improve their understanding of social issues when working with the public. However, apprentices do not consistently develop their wider interests and talents beyond the curriculum they follow. Apprentices do not have opportunities to demonstrate their commitment beyond the requirements of the apprenticeship programme.

Training staff provide relevant and useful careers advice and guidance to apprentices. For example, they ensure that apprentices are suitably advised on routes into specialised roles in renewable energy. Apprentices reflect on their career plans at the start of the programme and evaluate these with staff at review meetings regularly. As a result, they are suitably informed about their next steps.

Apprentices feel safe and know how to report concerns where necessary. Apprentices benefit from a comprehensive focus on health and safety and risk management in the electrical industry. They revisit this learning continuously. Consequently, apprentices are safe in their training and in the workplace.

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

Leaders work closely with employers to plan a curriculum that successfully meets the significant demand for skilled electricians. They design the apprenticeship programme to enable apprentices to learn about new and emerging technologies well. For example, leaders plan training to include the growing demand for domestic green energy, such as installing electric vehicle charging points and solar panels. As a result, apprentices develop the essential knowledge and skills needed by employers to grow and upskill their workforce successfully.

Leaders are ambitious for their apprentices, including those with additional learning needs, to develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours, which almost all do. Leaders support apprentices to gain the electrotechnical certification scheme card, which increases their employability skills and considerably enhances the contribution they make to their employers.

Leaders carefully plan the curriculum to ensure that apprentices develop knowledge and skills in a logical order. For example, apprentices study health and safety in detail before moving on to practical electrical installation and maintenance. Staff ensure that apprentices understand principles of voltage and current before progressing to wiring circuits. As a result, over time, apprentices successfully build the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours they need.

Leaders and staff recruit apprentices with integrity. They use initial assessment and information to tailor learning so that apprentices' learning is appropriate for their prior knowledge and expertise. As a result, apprentices make rapid progress in their studies.

Training staff teach new and challenging concepts skilfully to help apprentices understand and apply new knowledge very well. They break tasks down into simple steps, provide clear explanation and examples, and check apprentices' understanding carefully. For example, staff help apprentices to develop their understanding of Ohm's Law when working with simple circuits, which they then apply to increasingly complicated circuits. As a result, apprentices successfully build complex knowledge over time.

Most training staff use assessment and feedback effectively so that apprentices understand their progress and how to improve their work. Staff monitor apprentices' progress closely and intervene swiftly when there is a risk that they may fall behind. As a result, apprentices improve their work over time and achieve very well in their final assessments.

Training staff help apprentices to develop essential numeracy and literacy skills successfully. For example, apprentices become adept at calculating electrical current load across different types and sizes of wiring.

Training staff work closely with employers to coordinate apprentices' on- and off-the-job training effectively. They adjust learning content to ensure that the needs of apprentices and employers are prioritised well. Training staff ensure that almost all employers understand and support apprentices' progress. As a result, apprentices quickly develop fluency in their skills and apply them in their work proficiently.

Training staff support apprentices with additional learning needs well. They ensure that these apprentices benefit from specialist resources, additional teaching sessions and extra time in assessments. As a result, apprentices with additional learning needs make progress and achieve in line with their peers successfully.

Leaders and training staff ensure that apprentices develop their knowledge of wider and workplace values, such as the rule of law and environmental awareness, effectively. For example, apprentices gain a thorough understanding of electrical industry regulations and risk management. As a result, apprentices have a strong awareness of their duty to keep the public safe.

Leaders promote a supportive working culture successfully. They make regular checks on staff's workload and well-being. Training staff benefit from valuable professional development to support their industry expertise and improve their teaching skills. As a result, they improve their confidence and professional competence significantly.

Leaders have a good understanding of the provision's strengths and weaknesses. They rightly acknowledge that apprentices do not benefit sufficiently from personal development opportunities or from activities which promote commitment beyond the basics, such as social action projects. Although there are plans in place to address this, it is too early to see the impact.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise the safety and well-being of apprentices. The suitably trained and experienced designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and coordinators use appropriate processes to identify, report and monitor safeguarding concerns. The DSL completes careful risk assessments of apprentices aged 16 and 17 to maintain their safety effectively.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training every two years, as well as regular updates on changes to safeguarding practice. They ensure that apprentices understand how to keep themselves and their peers safe from the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

Leaders complete suitable checks to ensure that staff are safe to work with apprentices.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that all apprentices have opportunities to demonstrate their commitment beyond the requirements of the apprenticeship programme.
- Leaders should ensure that all apprentices have access to opportunities which develop their personal talents and interests.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2654235
Address	Mitre Court Fleming Way Crawley RH10 9JY
Contact number	01293 529777
Website	www.tradeskills4u.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Vicki Brown
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of apprenticeships, 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

Sara Woodward, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ann Potterton

His Majesty's Inspector

Fadia Clarke

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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