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SECTOR BENCHMARK REPORT · TRAINING AND L&D PROVIDERS · 2026

How ten training and L&D providers present themselves, and what it is costing them.

We read the websites of ten UK training and L&D providers, from learning platforms and qualification providers to an apprenticeship provider and a course marketplace, and scored each against the same two frameworks. The average was 27.3 out of 60, and no provider reached 40. Every provider made it easy to try. Few said who they were for. None could show a team that performed differently. The position this market leaves open is not another free trial. It is a reason to choose.

Produced by
Tom Wood, Addoli Ltd

Framework
The Proposition Architect

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plenty of front doors. No reason to choose one.

10
UK training and L&D providers assessed

27.3 / 60
Average combined score

3.0 / 5
The Easy Yes, the strongest layer

0 / 10
Providers showing a measured change in workplace performance

This report benchmarks the proposition of 10 UK training and L&D providers against two frameworks: the 5S Proposition Score, which measures what a firm says (out of 25), and the Commercial Architecture Score, which measures how it sells (out of 35). The combined maximum is 60.

The sample is deliberately mixed. It includes learning platforms, a self-serve authoring and LMS tool, specialist course and qualification providers, an apprenticeship provider, a youth training provider and a course marketplace. That is the range a UK employer meets when it searches for training, and buyers compare across all of it.

Four failure patterns drive almost all of the underperformance. The Mirror Trap appears in nine providers and the Trophy Cabinet in eight. The Wrong Invite appears in six and the Comparison Trap in five. The weakest commercial layers are The Foundation and The Fit Test, both at 2.1 out of 5. The weakest of the five proposition dimensions is Signature, at 1.7 out of 5.

This market has a shape we have not seen before in this series. Its strongest layer is the first step a buyer takes: free trials, free courses, live demos, test files, an interactive exam question and a hiring cost calculator. Its weakest layers are the two that should come before it: who the provider is for, and which situations it solves. Providers invite buyers in before telling them why this provider, for them.

The implication is simple. In a market where every provider offers a free first step, the provider that names its buyer and its buyer's situation wins the work that is worth having: the development programme, not the trial.

HOW TO READ THE SCORES

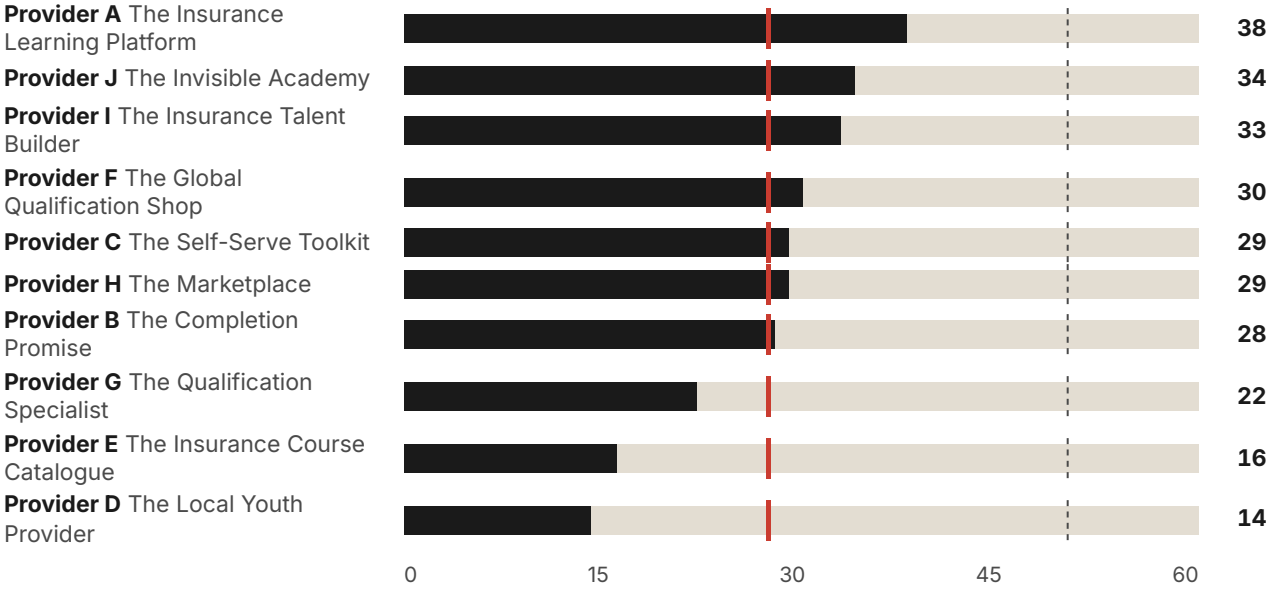
Scores are based on publicly available website content, read as a cold prospect would experience it: the homepage and the main service, product or course page for each provider. Pages were read as text, the way a search engine or AI assistant reads them, and checked in a browser where the text version was incomplete. Providers are anonymised and referred to by letter and archetype. Scores describe the proposition, not the quality of each provider's training.

01 · SCORE SUMMARY

Four providers function. None reaches 40.

Each provider is scored on what it says (the 5S Proposition Score, out of 25) and how it sells it (the Commercial Architecture Score, out of 35). Scores are based on publicly available website content, assessed as a cold prospect would experience it.

Combined score out of 60, highest first



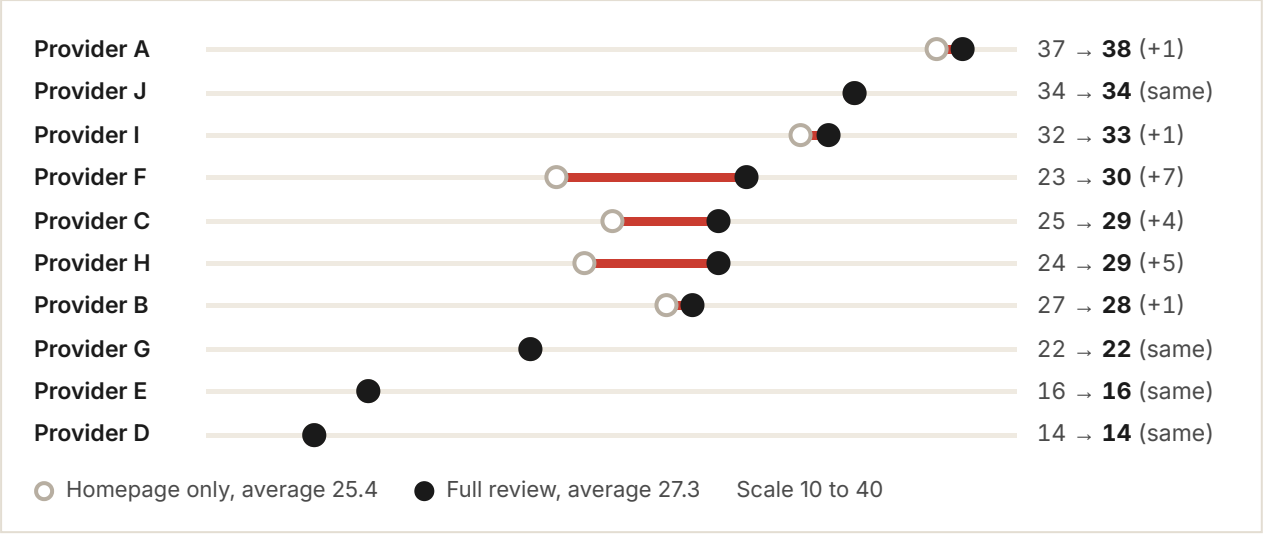
Provider	Archetype	5S / 25	CA / 35	Total / 60	Verdict
A	The Insurance Learning Platform	16	22	**38**	Functioning
B	The Completion Promise	11	17	**28**	Developing
C	The Self-Serve Toolkit	11	18	**29**	Developing
D	The Local Youth Provider	6	8	**14**	Fragile
E	The Insurance Course Catalogue	7	9	**16**	Fragile
F	The Global Qualification Shop	11	19	**30**	Functioning
G	The Qualification Specialist	8	14	**22**	Developing
H	The Marketplace	12	17	**29**	Developing
I	The Insurance Talent Builder	15	18	**33**	Functioning
J	The Invisible Academy	13	21	**34**	Functioning
Market average		**11.0**	**16.3**	**27.3**	

Verdict bands for the combined score match the earlier editions: 21 and below Fragile, 22 to 29 Developing, 30 and above Functioning.

01 · SCORE SUMMARY, CONTINUED

Depth helped some providers and not others.

Each provider's score on its homepage alone, and after its service, product or proof pages were read. The average rises from 25.4 to 27.3. Four providers gained nothing, because their service page repeats the homepage at greater length. The largest gains came from providers whose deeper pages carry what the homepage leaves out: a full price list, a qualification ladder, dozens of learner stories, original research.



What providers say: the five dimensions, market average out of 5

01	**Specific**	Four providers name a sector. Almost none name a moment.	**2.6**
02	**Standout**	Engaging, flexible, accredited and award-winning are the category defaults.	**2.5**
03	**Substance**	Learner counts and logo walls. Two providers show learners passing. None shows changed performance.	**2.0**
04	**Signature**	Products are named. Methods are not.	**1.7**
05	**Shareable**	One provider publishes original research. One turns a real exam question into a game.	**2.2**

02 · MARKET-WIDE FINDINGS

Nine providers open with themselves. None shows a team that changed.

Four named failure patterns explain most proposition underperformance in consulting markets. This is how often each appears across the 10 providers.

Failure pattern	Providers	Share	What it does
The Mirror Trap	9 of 10	90%	Buyers cannot recognise themselves, so price and catalogue size become the filter.
The Trophy Cabinet	8 of 10	80%	Proof counts activity, not change. Logos, badges and learner numbers without outcomes.
The Wrong Invite	6 of 10	60%	Courses for every sector and every learner mean no buyer feels chosen.
The Comparison Trap	5 of 10	50%	Interchangeable courses force a comparison on price per delegate, per seat or per discount.

01 The Mirror Trap 9 of 10 providers · 90%

Buyers cannot recognise themselves, so price and catalogue size become the filter.

Nine providers opened their homepage with what they are: a platform, a community, a category of training, a brand name. Only one opened with a problem its buyer has, and the problem it chose is whether staff finish their training. That is a real frustration for an L&D manager. It is not the problem a managing director is paying to solve. None opens with the moment a buyer is in: a manager promoted without training, a graduate intake starting in September, a regulator asking for evidence of competence, a team whose sales have stalled. A buyer who already knows they want a course can use a course finder. A buyer who only knows something is not working cannot.

02 The Trophy Cabinet 8 of 10 providers · 80%

Proof counts activity, not change. Logos, badges and learner numbers without outcomes.

This market measures itself the way weak L&D functions measure themselves: by activity. The largest learner claim in the study runs to the millions. Others count courses in the thousands, learning hours, enrolments, webinars per year and average star ratings. Logo walls feature global brands with no story attached. Badge rows run to eight certifications on a single screen. Awards are claimed without the name of the award. Two providers go further. One reports how much training a single client produced in its first year. One publishes dozens of learner stories with exam marks, first-time passes and moves into new roles. A third counts its qualified learners in the thousands. Not one provider shows a team or a business that performed differently afterwards.

02 · MARKET-WIDE FINDINGS, CONTINUED

Why the patterns persist, and what they cost.

03 The Wrong Invite 6 of 10 providers · 60%

Courses for every sector and every learner mean no buyer feels chosen.

Six providers invited everyone. One serves trainers, assessors, workplace safety, offshore and aviation from the same shop window. One lists course categories in alphabetical order from healthcare to hairdressing. One spans finance, safety, care, apprenticeships and funded courses. Even the sector specialists spread wide inside their sector, addressing individual learners and corporate buyers on the same page with no clear primary audience. A learner choosing a course and an L&D lead building a programme need different things. A page written for both serves neither.

04 The Comparison Trap 5 of 10 providers · 50%

Interchangeable courses force a comparison on price per delegate, per seat or per discount.

A health and safety qualification, a GDPR module or an LMS licence looks the same from one provider to the next. Without a named method, a defined niche or narrated proof, the buyer compares on price. One provider leads with discounts of up to half price. Most publish no price at all, so the comparison happens on a quote form, after the buyer has already decided the providers are interchangeable.

The provider that shows what changed does not need a bigger catalogue to win.

02 · MARKET-WIDE FINDINGS, CONTINUED

A market that teaches others to evaluate learning does not evaluate its own.

COUNTING LEARNERS, NOT LEARNING

L&D has had a widely used model for evaluating training for decades: reaction, learning, behaviour, results. Most providers in this study stop at the first step. Star ratings and testimonials about how much people enjoyed a course are reaction. Completion reports are activity. Two providers reach the second step, with exam passes and qualified learners. Nobody shows behaviour or results. This is the same gap L&D buyers are under pressure to close inside their own organisations. A provider that helped them close it would be selling the answer to their hardest question.

THE ACCURACY TEST

Training providers sell attention to detail and the ability to explain things clearly. Across twenty-five pages, every one of the ten providers fails that test somewhere. One provider shows two different phone numbers on the same page, and another's phone icon dials a different number from the one printed beside it. One gives two founding dates that cannot both be true and links its course cards to the wrong courses. One operates under three brand names with no explanation of how they relate. One describes itself in its search results as a data management tool. One lists a pandemic awareness course as a current offer. One promises discounts of up to half and then discounts by more, labels courses free while charging for them, and gives its own age three different ways. Another carries the name of a sister brand from another country in its page metadata. One labels a programme link with the name of a different programme, under a copyright notice four years out of date. None of this says anything about the quality of the training. All of it says something to a cold prospect about how carefully the provider checks things.

FREE IS THE DEFAULT

Free trials, free courses, free starter kits, free events, free revision tools, free test files, live demos, an interactive exam question and a hiring cost calculator appear across most of the ten providers. This is the strongest layer in the market, and it has stopped being a differentiator on its own. When every provider offers a free first step, the question a buyer asks is why this one. Almost nobody answers it.

INVISIBLE TO THE MACHINES

Pages in this study were first read as text, the way search engines and AI assistants read them. Two providers' homepages returned little or no readable body copy this way. In a browser, both are among the four strongest propositions in the study. One shows a clear apprenticeship ladder, an interactive exam question and a calculator for the real cost of hiring an apprentice. Read as text, it is a page title, a navigation list and a search description for a different kind of business. The other shows awarding body approvals, a claim to be first to market and separate routes for individuals and employers. Read as text, it is a navigation bar and two images. As more buyers ask an AI assistant to shortlist providers for them, a proposition that only exists after a browser renders it may not exist at all.

03 · COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

The front door is built. The foundation is not.

The Commercial Architecture Score assesses seven layers. Under the Solid Foundation Rule, the lowest layer limits everything built above it. In this market the layers are almost upside down: the first step a buyer takes is the strongest layer, and the two layers that should tell the buyer whether to take it are the weakest.

Market average by layer, out of 5



THE SOLID FOUNDATION RULE

Your lowest layer is your only priority, whatever your total. In this market The Foundation and The Fit Test are tied at the bottom, so the rule points to the first of them. Providers have built generous front doors. Until they say who they are for and which situation they solve, every free trial is a sample, not a sale.

LADDERS FOR LEARNERS, NOT ROUTES FOR EMPLOYERS

The three visible paths in this study are all career ladders for individuals: apprenticeship levels from practitioner to senior professional, qualifications from award to diploma, and an early-careers route from entering an industry to qualifying in it. They are good. They are also built for the person climbing, not the employer paying. Not one provider shows an employer what its team will be able to do after twelve months.

04 · WHAT THIS MEANS TO YOUR BUYER

What it looks like from the buyer's chair.

Consider the people and development lead at a 200-person regional insurance broker. Her board wants evidence that staff are competent in their roles, not just a record of hours completed. Two newly promoted team leaders are struggling. An apprentice intake starts in September. She has a modest budget and one chance to get the board's support for a proper development programme. She types "insurance training provider" into Google, then asks an AI assistant for a shortlist.

She opens ten websites. Nine open with the provider, not with her. She learns how many learners each has trained, how many courses each offers and how highly learners rate them. She is offered four free trials, a free course, two live demos and an exam question to test herself on. One apprenticeship provider shows a clear ladder from first apprenticeship to senior professional and lets her calculate what an apprentice will really cost. It is the most useful thing she finds all morning, and it did not appear in her AI assistant's shortlist. One platform talks about competence by role. One consultancy describes the pressure on newly promoted managers almost exactly as she would. None connects its idea to the others, and none shows a broker like hers whose people performed differently afterwards. She shortlists on price per seat and the first demo she can book.

Every provider could tell her how many people it had trained. None could tell her what changed.

The provider that named her three problems, showed a twelve-month path from apprentice intake and manager development to evidenced competence, and offered a defined first step with a board-ready output would have won her business before the demo. Between them, the ten providers in this study already have most of the pieces. None has put them together.

The commercial opportunity for a well-positioned provider is significant precisely because the competition is so weak at the foundation and the proof. A provider with a clear, specific, buyer-led proposition would stand out without needing to be larger, cheaper or fundamentally different in how it delivers.

THE TEST FOR YOUR OWN HOMEPAGE

Would this buyer recognise her situation in your first screen? Could she see what the next twelve months would look like, and what she would be able to show her board at the end?

05 · INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER DIAGNOSTICS

Ten providers, ten untaken positions.

PROVIDER A

The Insurance Learning Platform

38 / 60
5S 16 / 25 · CA 22 / 35
Functioning

The strongest proposition in the study, still describing the platform rather than the problem.

THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This provider leads the study. It names its sector and its buyers, L&D and compliance teams in insurance firms. It frames its purpose around competence by role rather than hours logged. It has scenario-based assessment, AI-assisted tutoring, a training needs tool, a large live webinar programme and a test-before-you-sign route for firms licensing its content into their own LMS. Its proof is substantial: years of trading, a large learner base, a high course rating, named testimonials and published case studies. But the headline describes the platform, and the four case studies describe partnerships rather than what changed for the firms involved.

WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline describes what the platform is, not the question the buyer's board is asking.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** Strong activity numbers and named clients. No case study reports a measured outcome.
- **Layer 5 strong.** A demo or free trial, plus a free test file before contract. The lowest-risk entry in the study.
- **Layer 7 partial.** A clear licensing process and FAQs. No prices.

THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Evidence competence, not hours." The provider already has the assessment, the needs analysis and the reporting. Lead with the board's question, can you prove your people are competent in their roles, and finish two case studies with the answer.

PROVIDER B

The Completion Promise

28 / 60
5S 11 / 25 · CA 17 / 35
Developing

The only headline in the study that starts with the buyer's problem, and it picks the smallest one.

THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This provider's headline is about getting staff to actually finish their training. It is the only homepage in the study that opens with a buyer's frustration rather than a description of itself. Its service page goes further, arguing that ticking a box is not the same as being compliant. Its free course needs no payment details. But its proof is a wall of global brand logos and a row of certification badges with one testimonial between them. Its catalogue spans finance, health and safety, care, apprenticeships and funded courses. And completion is an activity measure, the same trap its competitors fall into from the other side.

WHAT WE FOUND

- **Specific partial.** A real buyer pain in the headline. No buyer, sector or moment attached to it.
- **The Wrong Invite.** Every sector and every type of learning, from apprenticeships to bespoke builds.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** Large logos, many badges and one testimonial. No case studies.
- **Layer 5 strong.** A free course with instant access and no payment details.

THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Compliance training a regulator would accept as evidence." The provider already lists courses on new housing safety duties and its only testimonial is from a housing provider. Social landlords facing new standards need to prove their teams are ready. Lead with them, and the completion promise becomes evidence of compliance rather than a feature of the software.

05 · INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER DIAGNOSTICS, CONTINUED

PROVIDER C

The Self-Serve Toolkit

29 / 60
5S 11 / 25 · CA 18 / 35
Developing

Easy to try, hard to tell who it is for.

THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This provider makes an authoring tool, an LMS and a course library, positioned as easy to use alone and better together. It offers an unlimited free trial of its authoring tool, a free authoring licence with the LMS and a discount for charities. It holds two certifications rarely seen together in this market, one for social purpose and one for information security. It shows usage figures and a strip of verified reviews, and it is one of only two providers in the study to publish a measured client result. But its homepage promise of ease could belong to any tool in the category, it names no sector, and its site still offers a pandemic awareness course from 2020.

WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline is a product promise, not a buyer situation.
- **The Wrong Invite.** No sector, size or role. Logos span theme parks, retail, charities and transport.
- **The Comparison Trap.** In a crowded LMS market, ease of use is the default claim.
- **Substance partial.** One measured client result, though it counts training produced rather than performance changed.

THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"The learning platform built for charities training volunteers." The provider already discounts for charities, holds a social purpose certification and counts charities among its clients. Volunteer-led organisations need simple, secure, low-cost training they can run themselves. Nobody else in the study speaks to them.

PROVIDER D

The Local Youth Provider

14 / 60
5S 6 / 25 · CA 8 / 35
Fragile

A forty-year local track record, told in two different numbers.

THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This provider trains young people in its region for work in motor vehicles, construction, warehousing, care, business administration and other trades. It has a positive inspection rating and a long history. Its homepage headline is a generic statement about community. Its course page addresses learners only, gives two founding dates that cannot both be true, links several course cards to the wrong courses and cuts off two descriptions mid-sentence. The most commercially valuable thing it offers, help for employers recruiting young people, appears only in a single testimonial.

WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline describes the provider's community, not the learner's or the employer's goal.
- **The Comparison Trap.** A list of vocational courses with nothing to separate them from other local providers.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** An inspection rating without a date and an award without a name.
- **Layer 1 critical.** No employer proposition at all, despite employers being where its learners end up.

THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Your next apprentice, recruited and trained locally." Employers in its region struggle to find and prepare young recruits. The provider already recruits for employers. A named employer route, with its inspection rating and job outcomes as proof, would turn a learner prospectus into a second line of business.

05 · INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER DIAGNOSTICS, CONTINUED

PROVIDER E

The Insurance Course Catalogue

16 / 60
5S 7 / 25 · CA 9 / 35
Fragile

Two decades of insurance training, and not one piece of evidence.

THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This provider has served insurance and risk management for more than twenty years, with technical, compliance, management and business skills courses delivered online, face to face or as bespoke programmes, each with a relationship manager. Across two pages there is no testimonial, no client name, no pass rate and no case study. The compliance page lists six courses by title only. The site carries two different phone numbers and three brand names. The main call to action links to a programme built for one insurer's brokers, with no explanation for anyone else.

WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline is a general statement about developing people and growing businesses.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** An empty cabinet. Tenure is the only proof, and it is not narrated.
- **The Wrong Invite.** Copy addresses individual exam candidates while the forms are built for company group bookings.
- **Layer 3 critical.** Courses by category, with no route from one to the next.

THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Pass the regulatory exam first time." The provider already runs revision for the core insurance qualifications. Exam success is one of the few outcomes in L&D that can be measured cleanly. Publish pass rates, name the route from first exam to qualified status, and the catalogue becomes a programme.

PROVIDER F

The Global Qualification Shop

30 / 60
5S 11 / 25 · CA 19 / 35
Functioning

The clearest price list and the deepest learner proof in the study, sold on discount.

THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This provider sells online health and safety qualifications from the main UK awarding bodies, from short courses and entry awards to diplomas, to learners in many countries through regional offices on three continents. Its homepage pairs a learner-focused promise about ambition and pace with a claim to be world-leading and early to deliver the major safety qualifications online, a row of awarding body approvals, and separate routes for individuals and corporate clients. Its qualifications page sets out a clear ladder, from award to certificate to diploma, framed against academic levels. It is the only provider in the study to publish a price for every product, in several currencies, with instalments. Its learner base runs to tens of thousands, and around a third of its several dozen testimonials describe a real result: a first-time pass, a distinction, a move into a safety manager role. But the first thing a visitor sees is a seasonal half-price offer. The corporate route is a single paragraph promising a consultative approach, with no corporate proof, pricing or stories behind it. And read as text, the homepage carries almost no copy.

WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The opening promise speaks to the learner, but generically, and the next heading describes the provider as world-leading.
- **The Comparison Trap.** Leading with discounts on qualifications that many providers sell invites a price comparison it may not win.
- **Substance strong.** Named learner stories with marks, passes and career moves. The best individual proof in the study.
- **Layers 3 and 7 strong.** A visible qualification ladder and every price published.

THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Qualify your safety team online, wherever they work." Employers with sites in several countries need consistent, recognised safety qualifications for dispersed teams. This provider already sells in their currencies, from offices in their regions, at published prices, and already has a corporate route on its homepage. Give that route its own page, with team pricing, central reporting and three employer stories, and lead with it outside discount season. A learner shop becomes a corporate partner.

05 · INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER DIAGNOSTICS, CONTINUED

PROVIDER G

The Qualification Specialist

22 / 60

5S 8 / 25 · CA 14 / 35

Developing

A clear specialism for trainers and assessors, sharing a shop window with aviation.

THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This provider's core is distinctive: qualifications for trainers, assessors and internal quality assurers, offered as self-study, tutor-led online or in-house. It has a strong row of awarding body and regulator registrations, regular course news and package discounts. But the same shop window sells workplace safety, business management, offshore qualifications and aviation courses. The categories page names no buyer and shows no prices or process. The site carries two WhatsApp numbers, two learner login systems and two web addresses for its aviation arm.

WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline is a generic statement about education and training solutions.
- **The Wrong Invite.** Trainers, assessors, safety, management, offshore and aviation on one page.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** Registrations and accreditation logos with no learner or employer outcomes.
- **Layer 3 partial.** Three clear delivery modes. No route from first qualification to the next.

THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"The qualifications that let you run your own training." Employers building in-house academies, and training providers themselves, need qualified trainers, assessors and quality assurers. Lead with that buyer, show the pathway from trainer to assessor to quality assurer, and move aviation to its own site.

PROVIDER H

The Marketplace

29 / 60

5S 12 / 25 · CA 17 / 35

Developing

The best research in the study, sold as advertising space.

THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This provider is a course marketplace. Its homepage serves learners searching tens of thousands of courses. Its real customers, training providers, are served on a separate site offering profiles, listings, banners, sponsorships and email campaigns on a twelve-month contract. That site also hosts something no other provider in the study has: a regular series of original reports on training buyers, course trends and the UK training market. It is the strongest public proof in the study. It sits at the bottom of a page about advertising products, with no prices and no defined entry offer.

WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline describes the marketplace, not the training provider's problem of finding buyers.
- **The Wrong Invite.** Learners, employers and providers addressed across two sites with no clear primary customer.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** Course counts and a few logos, several without names. No provider success stories.
- **Layer 6 strong.** Original market research published as a series. Best in the study.

THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"We know what training buyers are searching for." Lead the provider-facing site with the research, offer a free demand report for a provider's own course category as the entry point, and sell listings as the answer to what the report shows. The data is the proposition. The advertising is the product.

05 · INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER DIAGNOSTICS, CONTINUED

PROVIDER I

The Insurance Talent Builder

33 / 60
5S 15 / 25 · CA 18 / 35
Functioning

A career journey for insurance, hidden behind five rotating headlines.

THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This provider works only in insurance, and it shows. It runs a professional exam revision platform, free networking for young professionals, a twelve-month early-careers programme, a route into the industry for job seekers, a leadership programme for women and a range of skills training. Its service page describes real triggers well, including newly promoted managers caught between their teams and their bosses. It has a podcast, free resources and live demos. Together these form one of only three visible paths in the study. But the homepage rotates five separate headlines, the main heading is the provider's name, and the proof is a logo wall and testimonials about how useful sessions felt.

WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The main heading is the provider's name and a claim to be award-winning.
- **The Wrong Invite.** Every audience within insurance, from job seekers to senior leaders, on one homepage.
- **Standout strong.** Insurance-only, with named programmes for early careers and women in the industry.
- **Layer 3 strong.** A visible route from entering the industry to qualifying in it.

THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"From first job to first qualification: early careers in insurance." Put the journey on the homepage as one route with four stages, attach the exam platform as the measurable milestone, and report how many people on the route pass their exams and stay in the industry. Brokers and insurers struggling to attract and keep young talent would buy the route, not the courses.

PROVIDER J

The Invisible Academy

34 / 60
5S 13 / 25 · CA 21 / 35
Functioning

One of the strongest propositions in the study, almost invisible to search engines and AI assistants.

THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

In a browser, this provider is one of the clearest in the study. It specialises in insurance and financial services apprenticeships and training, with a mission to increase the number of qualified professionals in the sector. It is independent, grew out of the training arm of a broking business, and has more than a decade of delivery behind it. Its homepage shows a ladder of apprenticeships by level and duration, from practitioner to senior professional, separates routes for businesses and individuals, invites visitors to try a real professional exam question matched to their experience, and offers a calculator for the real cost of hiring an apprentice. Read as text, almost none of this exists. Every page carries a search description for a data management tool, and administrator pages appear in the public page list. Its proof is also thin: a count of qualified learners, a star rating and some firsts, with no stories.

WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline names the category of training, not the employer's or learner's situation.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** Qualified learner numbers and a rating. No employer or learner stories.
- **Layer 3 strong.** Apprenticeship levels and durations laid out as a ladder. The clearest path in the study.
- **Layer 5 strong.** An interactive exam question and a hiring cost calculator. The most useful free tools in the study.

THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Grow your own qualified insurance professionals." Brokers that cannot hire qualified people can train them, and this provider was born inside a broker that did exactly that. Lead with the employer's hiring problem, put the calculator and the ladder side by side, add three employer stories, and make the whole site readable to the machines that are now building buyers' shortlists.

06 · THE UNTAKEN POSITION

What good looks like in training and L&D providers.

No single provider in this study occupies the full commercial architecture the market is leaving open. The untaken position has four characteristics that none of these providers shows in combination. Every one of them exists somewhere in the study. They are simply never in the same place.

01

A capability, not a catalogue

Not "courses for every sector", but a named capability a specific buyer needs at a specific moment: competent new managers within six months, an apprentice intake ready for client contact, a team that can evidence competence to a regulator. One provider frames its purpose around competence by role. None leads with the moment.

02

A path for the employer, not just the learner

Three providers show a ladder for individuals climbing qualifications or apprenticeship levels. The untaken position shows the employer the same thing: what the team looks like at three months, six months and twelve, and what the business can do at the end that it could not do at the start.

03

Proof of change, not proof of activity

Before and after: what people could not do, what they can now do, and what that changed for the business. Not learners trained, hours completed or courses rated. Two providers already show learners passing. The market has the evaluation models to go further. It does not apply them to itself.

04

A first step that leads to the second

Free trials and free courses are everywhere. What is missing is a first step with a defined output that shows the buyer the rest of the route. One provider's hiring cost calculator comes closest: it answers a real employer question and points straight at the next decision. The best first step in this market would do the same for capability: a needs analysis, a competence baseline, a programme plan a buyer can take to their board.

A provider does not need a bigger catalogue, a cheaper licence or another free trial to claim the open position. It needs to say who it is for and prove what changes. In a market that sells development, the proposition should show someone developing.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

Two ways to use this report.

This benchmark is read by two kinds of people: the firms in markets like this one, and the businesses choosing between them. There is a next step for each.

IF YOU RUN A TRAINING BUSINESS LIKE THESE

Find out where your own proposition sits.

Start with the free score: the same two frameworks, twelve questions, an instant result with a named failure pattern and a priority fix sequence.

If you want an outside read, the Reviewed Diagnostic is Tom reading your website the way these providers were read, then writing up the score, the pattern, a proposition blueprint and the fix sequence, with a 45-minute call. £495 + VAT, delivered in three working days.

Get your free score · thepropositionarchitect.com/reviewed-diagnostic

IF YOU ARE CHOOSING A TRAINING PROVIDER

Run a selection that finds the substance behind the shop window.

Tom was CEO of a compliance and training consultancy for eight years. With his team, he helped sell it and then merged it with its biggest competitor. He can help you agree what you need, write a brief providers can answer, run a fair selection and check the contract terms. This report shows how much of a provider sits beyond its homepage. Provider selection is built to find it.

01
Review
What you actually need, what you have now and what has to change.

02
Brief
A written brief or RFP and scoring criteria, agreed before anyone pitches.

03
Shortlist and panel
A researched shortlist, structured interviews and a scoring panel.

04
Select and contract
A recommendation you can defend, with the engagement terms checked before you sign.

thepropositionarchitect.com/provider-selection

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Method, citation and the frameworks behind the scores.

Method

Ten UK training and L&D providers were assessed in October 2026. The sample is deliberately mixed: learning platforms, a self-serve authoring and LMS tool, specialist course and qualification providers, an apprenticeship provider, a youth training provider and a course marketplace. Four serve the insurance market specifically. For each provider we read the homepage and the main service, product or course page, plus a case study, about or second product page where one existed: around twenty-five pages in total. Pages were read as text, as a search engine or AI assistant would read them, and three providers were also checked in a browser where the text version was incomplete. Each provider was then scored against the 5S Proposition Score (25 points) and the Commercial Architecture Score (35 points, seven layers of 5). Homepage-only scores were also recorded to show how much of each proposition sits beyond the first screen. Downloadable documents were not opened or scored. Providers are anonymised and referenced by letter only. Scores reflect public-facing material, not the quality of the providers' training, and this is not a definitive audit of any provider's commercial capability.

The frameworks

The 5S Proposition Score tests whether a proposition is Specific, Standout, Substantive, Signature and Shareable. The Commercial Architecture Score tests seven layers in sequence, from the Foundation to the Open Door. Both are proprietary diagnostic frameworks developed by Addoli to assess and improve the commercial performance of founder-led and growth-stage consulting businesses.

Cite this report

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Read it online

The full report, including an interactive version of every chart, is free to read at thepropositionarchitect.com/training-ld-provider-benchmark/. No email needed.

About Addoli

Addoli works with founder-led B2B businesses that have reached the point where growth slows, not because the founder lacks capability, but because the business lacks the commercial systems it needs to scale. Tom Wood is a Fractional Commercial Director. For eight years he was CEO of a compliance and training consultancy and, with his team, helped sell it and then merged it with its biggest competitor, before founding Addoli.

FIND OUT WHERE YOUR PROPOSITION SITS

How does your firm compare with these ten?

Take the free Proposition Architect score. Twelve questions, five minutes, an instant result with a named failure pattern and a priority fix sequence.

Get your free score at diagnostics.addoli.com

addoli.

addoli.com · thepropositionarchitect.com · tom@addoli.com

Addoli (Welsh): to worship, to revere. Your business should be adored.

Assessments are based on publicly visible website content only: the homepage and main service, product or course page per provider, read as text, checked in a browser where needed, and evaluated as a cold prospect would experience them. Providers have been anonymised. This report is not a definitive audit of any provider's commercial capability.
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