

CILEx Law School Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1278567

Name of lead inspector: Derrick Baughan, Her Majesty's Inspector

Inspection date(s): 16–17 January 2018

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

From October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by ESFA and/or the apprenticeship levy. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the *Further education and skills inspection handbook*, especially the sections entitled 'Providers newly directly funded to deliver apprenticeship training provision' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

CILEx Law School Limited (CLS) is wholly owned by the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives. However, CLS operates autonomously with its own board of directors and has been providing training for legal executives for 35 years. It started delivering directly funded apprenticeship programmes in May 2017.

Currently, 322 apprentices are on apprenticeship programmes. Most of these are on the level 3 paralegal apprenticeship standard, with a few on business administration apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3. Apprentices all work for employers spread across the country. CLS does not use subcontractors for any aspect of the apprenticeship programmes. CLS is a subcontractor for another prime contractor; however, these apprentices, and Chartered Legal Executive apprentices are out of scope for this inspection.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have a clear strategic rationale for the development of directly funded apprenticeship programmes. Part of this rationale is to provide an alternative route for entering the profession for those not able to follow traditional routes. Staff use their experience of being a subcontractor well to ensure that the programmes meet all the requirements of an apprenticeship.

Leaders and directors invest wisely in resources to deliver the programmes and maintain the capacity needed. Staff workloads are appropriate to meet the needs of the apprentices.

Managers use their good links with employers productively to ensure that they recruit apprentices who will develop substantial new skills, knowledge and behaviours. Managers robustly ensure that employers give apprentices the required time at work to do off-the-job training; for example, managers stopped working with one employer who was not providing this opportunity.

Leaders and managers ensure that new staff have a good range of specialist expertise to deliver paralegal training. Most of the assessors have had many years of legal experience. Leaders recruited additional staff with a wide range of suitable experience of apprenticeship provision.

Managers continue to improve how they monitor and record the overall progress of apprentices. Managers hold monthly meetings with staff to monitor apprentices' progress and have introduced an accurate way of identifying apprentices' starting points. However, reports to the newly formed apprenticeship sub-committee of the board do not feature an overall summary of apprentices' progress.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? Reasonable progress

Apprentices develop new skills, knowledge and behaviours well. These are directly relevant to their workplaces and enable them to contribute effectively to their teams. Employers rightly consider that apprentices make an important contribution to their business, such as using their new-found knowledge of European legislation to the benefit of their workplaces.

As a result of clear guidance from staff, apprentices have a very good understanding of their programmes and progression options. The training includes an effective mix of high-quality online learning materials developed by the provider, webinars and individual coaching.

Staff work well with employers to ensure that the training is effectively coordinated with workplace training and activities. For example, when required, employers have allowed apprentices to change job roles to ones that provide suitable opportunities to develop their skills.

Because of a structured programme for development and detailed feedback on assignments, apprentices improve their English skills appropriately. Paralegal apprentices learn how to write effectively for different audiences, such as other legal professionals or members of the public. While staff work with apprentices to develop their mathematics skills, this is not as effective as that for English skills. Managers recognise this and have plans to improve this aspect of training.

Teachers and assessors use their subject expertise well to develop apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. Teachers and assessors use their knowledge of apprentices' starting points effectively to plan a personal programme of study for each apprentice.

Leaders monitor many aspects of the quality of provision in detail. However, a few aspects of quality assurance are not fully developed. For example, managers do not identify in sufficient detail the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Managers monitor assessment and review processes well and use the information to improve them.

Apprentices benefit from well-planned and detailed ongoing assessment. Feedback from staff is informative and guides apprentices on how to develop their skills. Staff

have worked effectively to ensure that apprentices are thoroughly prepared for their end-point assessment.

Most apprentices make steady progress from their starting points. Staff closely monitor individual apprentices' progress using an online tracking system, which includes inputs from all those involved in the programme. As a result of this close monitoring, staff quickly identify if an apprentice falls behind and take prompt action to help them catch up.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Reasonable progress

Leaders focus strongly on safeguarding apprentices. All staff and apprentices receive appropriate training that is regularly updated. Staff keep detailed records of this training. Staff give apprentices clear guidance on how to get help and support for safeguarding issues, for example apprentices know how to access an anonymous helpline if they are worried about their health and well-being.

Leaders have improved the way they challenge their own performance by establishing a board sub-committee dealing specifically with apprenticeships. The first meeting was on 8 January 2019. The minutes are detailed and show a strong focus on safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty issues.

All staff undergo Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Staff record the details of these but do not always record the name of the person who does the check or when the check was carried out.

Managers check the suitability of workplaces thoroughly. For each new employer with whom they work, staff carry out a health and safety assessment and safeguarding checks, which are suitably detailed and recorded diligently. Staff recommend that employers undertake 'Prevent' duty training.

Staff take prompt and effective action to deal with safeguarding issues. They record the details well in the safeguarding log and in the safeguarding risk assessment forms. Staff record their actions, but they do not consistently list follow up actions or set the dates of any reviews in advance.

Apprentices have a clear understanding of British values, and the risks and signs of radicalisation and extremism, particularly as they apply to their lives and work.

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