

# Fit UK Training & Education Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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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 the Education and Skills Funding Agency 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.

Fit UK Training & Education Ltd (Fit UK) was formed in 2009. The company is a privately owned independent training provider. Its head office is in Birstall, West Yorkshire. Fit UK has apprentices studying throughout England. It mainly works with professional rugby clubs, local authority leisure facilities and a range of independent gyms to offer fitness and exercise-related apprenticeship frameworks. In May 2017, Fit UK became a levy-funded provider for apprenticeships. In January 2018, the company secured further funding for non-levy apprenticeships. Prior to this, Fit UK operated as a subcontractor. On this visit, only the directly funded provision was inspected.

Fit UK has 110 apprentices on apprenticeship frameworks. Of these, 80 apprentices study personal training frameworks and twelve apprentices study supporting teaching and learning in schools frameworks. The remaining apprentices mainly study leisure management apprenticeship frameworks. All but three apprentices study at level 3.

### Themes

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

**Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have a clear and ambitious strategy for growth and future developments. Fit UK currently operates as a specialist training provider offering fitness-related apprenticeships and qualifications.

Leaders ensure that they use highly qualified staff with good industrial experience, either directly employed or through freelance assessor relationships. Almost all staff have assessor and verifier qualifications. Where staff do not have such qualifications, appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that their work is appropriate. Around half of those in the delivery team have teaching qualifications. Many of the delivery staff still work in the fitness industry as, for example, personal trainers or strength and conditioning coaches. They use this industry experience well to give

examples that help apprentices to develop their knowledge of complex theoretical concepts.

Leaders develop purposeful relationships with employers. They support employers to recruit apprentices into new roles and to plan apprentices' learning carefully. For example, leaders often advertise the roles on behalf of employers, deal with initial queries from potential apprentices and support employers during interviews. Leaders ensure that employers understand the importance of off-the-job training to support apprentices' development. Employers provide apprentices with ample time away from their routine duties to complete the training that they need.

Leaders know the key strengths and weaknesses of the training that they provide. They can state accurately and confidently what they do well and the areas that they want to improve. Leaders evaluate the quality of their directly funded provision through a self-assessment report that covers all the training that they deliver, including the large amount of training that they provide as subcontractors.

Leaders provide programmes that are compliant with the apprenticeship requirements. They ensure that all apprentices are in employment and that they undertake recognised training that leads to the development of new skills and knowledge. A large number of personal training apprentices work for rugby clubs as professional players, and are not currently in a role that links directly to their learning. However, through their training, they develop the skills that they need for a sustainable career after they finish playing sport.

In a few instances, leaders do not identify quickly enough when apprentices are falling behind in their learning. A few assessors do not routinely inform leaders early enough when problems develop. As a result, in this small number of cases, leaders have been too slow to introduce interventions that support apprentices to make their expected 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**

Most apprentices make at least the progress expected of them based on their length of time on the programme. Assessors support apprentices to develop new and substantial knowledge and behaviours that they are able to use at work. Apprentices develop their independent learning skills well. As a result, most apprentices improve their confidence and professionalism in the workplace. For example, apprentices on a level 2 duty manager programme demonstrate their improved sense of business acumen when planning their centre's fitness timetables to respond to local demand.

Assessors provide appropriate advice and guidance to apprentices before they start their programmes. They ensure that apprentices are fully aware of the requirements of the apprenticeship. Assessors carefully explain to apprentices how the

apprenticeship programme can support them in their current role and future plans. They provide ongoing helpful advice and guidance when apprentices need it. As a result, most apprentices have ambitious but realistic plans for their careers after they complete their apprenticeship.

Leaders use initial assessments and vocational skills tests well to identify what apprentices can do at the start of their apprenticeship. They use this information to enrol apprentices on the most appropriate programme and level of study. However, too often, assessors do not have access to this information. As a result, they do not use it to plan and deliver learning sessions that meet the individual needs of their apprentices, particularly the most able.

Leaders ensure that apprentices who need to study English and mathematics to complete their apprenticeship do so as part of their learning programme. However, leaders and assessors do not encourage apprentices sufficiently to develop their English and mathematical skills to a higher level than the minimum framework requirements. Assessors do not routinely support apprentices to develop their written English skills. As a result, too many apprentices make repeated grammatical errors in their work that assessors do not correct.

Assessors do not set apprentices targets that are helpful. Too often, targets are cursory and focus too much on what tasks have been completed and what work needs to be resubmitted. Too few targets focus on the skills and knowledge that apprentices need to be better in their job roles. Too few employers are actively involved in the setting of occupationally relevant targets. As a result, too many assessors measure apprentices' progress by the number of units that apprentices have completed rather than by considering the skills that they need to develop.

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

Leaders oversee effective systems and processes to ensure that apprentices are safe. Apprentices know how to keep themselves safe in work and when attending training. They know what to do and whom to speak to should they feel unsafe. Most apprentices have a good understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) and deputy DSO receive appropriate training. They share frequent updates with staff through good-quality fact sheets that include 'hot topics' and regional priorities. For example, they highlight the growing concern of county lines drug activities. All but one of the members of staff have completed safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training within the last year.

Leaders have a 'Prevent' duty risk assessment and action plan that fulfils their statutory obligations. However, the risk assessment and action plan are too generic. They do not sufficiently address the local and regional risks that apprentices may come across in the areas in which they live and work.

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