

# Achieving Excellence UK Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 2495240

**Name of lead inspector:** Jane Hughes Her Majesty's Inspector

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**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** 8 Belmont Hill  
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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.

Established in 2008 by the two directors, Achieving Excellence UK Ltd is a small private training provider based in Lewisham, London. Originally set up to offer a brokerage service to employers, Achieving Excellence UK Ltd began offering funded training programmes as a subcontractor in 2013.

In 2017, Achieving Excellence UK Ltd gained a contract to provide levy-funded apprenticeship programmes. Currently, eight apprentices are on the care management level 5 framework. All apprentices are adults. Achieving Excellence UK Ltd trains approximately 200 non-levy apprentices through subcontracted arrangements. These apprentices are not in the scope of this monitoring visit.

### Themes

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

#### **Reasonable progress**

Leaders, managers and staff work closely with employers to ensure that the principles of apprenticeship programmes are met. Provider staff and employers understand the importance of off-the-job training and how this supports apprentices to develop new skills and knowledge. Employers release apprentices to complete their training and study frequently and managers at Achieving Excellence UK Ltd check closely that apprentices attend their sessions.

Since gaining a directly funded contract, leaders have recognised that they did not monitor the progress of the first five apprentices closely enough. These apprentices experienced disruption to their learning and have not achieved their framework in the planned time. As a result, timely achievement rates for 2017/18 are very low. Leaders have recruited new staff who have put into place detailed intervention plans for these apprentices. As a result, these apprentices are now making good progress towards meeting their revised end date.

Leaders have structured the training team appropriately and recruited sufficient well-qualified work-based assessors and internal quality assurers to support apprentices. Assessors have appropriate training, assessing and care qualifications, and many years' experience within care management. Assessors develop good relationships with apprentices and employers.

Leaders and managers now use a range of reports and information to monitor apprentices' progress effectively. They also monitor the performance of staff through frequent meetings and their effective performance management process. The two directors have overall responsibility for improving the quality of provision. They have accurately identified the majority of areas needing improvement and implemented a sufficiently focused improvement plan.

Managers and staff work effectively with employers to recruit apprentices to the appropriate programme. They provide apprentices with good initial information, advice and guidance about the programme. The majority of apprentices have previously completed a level 3 qualification in care and have recently moved into a management role.

In a minority of cases, apprentices already have experience of care management. Managers have discussions with apprentices and their employers about the new knowledge and skills they need to develop. However, managers do not detail the results of this assessment sufficiently in apprentices' individual learning plans to identify the specific areas on which apprentices need to focus. As a result, it is not clear whether these apprentices gain substantial new skills.

**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**

The majority of apprentices are highly motivated, enjoy their apprenticeship and develop new skills, knowledge and behaviours relevant to their job roles. For example, apprentices identify how they are more confident when conducting staff appraisals, dealing with conflict and managing team meetings.

Assessors have frequent contact with their apprentices and know them very well. Assessors track closely the progress apprentices make and the majority of apprentices are now making expected progress. Assessors set apprentices realistic short-term targets and give them clear information on the progress they make.

Apprentices attend interactive individual training sessions each month on topics such as care principles and effective communication. They frequently complete detailed reflective statements and workbooks to demonstrate their understanding of each topic.

Assessors use engaging and effective techniques during their individual sessions to deepen apprentices' theoretical knowledge. For example, in one session, the assessor used challenging questions to encourage the apprentice to think about the

skills needed to carry out a good appraisal with staff. Assessors link theory learning clearly to apprentices' job roles.

Assessors provide apprentices with detailed feedback on their work. They pay close attention to the quality of apprentices' written work, frequently correcting spelling and grammar mistakes. Assessors help apprentices improve how they reference their work and, as a result, apprentices' written work improves over time.

Assessors do not consistently link on- and off-the-job training activities. For example, when apprentices complete beneficial work shadowing, assessors do not discuss with the apprentice how this has increased their knowledge and skills. In a minority of cases, assessors do not keep employers fully informed of the progress their apprentices make.

Managers have clear and effective processes in place to check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. For example, during their observations of training sessions, they identify accurately the strengths and weaknesses and give assessors helpful feedback on how to make improvements. As a result, assessors' practice improves.

Most apprentices have good skills in English and mathematics. However, for the very small number of apprentices who do not, leaders have been too slow to make suitable arrangements for them to gain these skills. As a result, these apprentices have not yet started working towards their qualifications.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Through the recruitment process, managers have ensured that staff are safe to work with apprentices. Leaders have implemented appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures, with clear lines of responsibility and reporting. All staff have completed safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training. Managers have undertaken an adequate 'Prevent' duty risk assessment.

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) has completed relevant training at the correct level. The DSO has implemented suitable reporting procedures and links to the relevant local authorities with whom they should engage. The effectiveness of these procedures is untested because no safeguarding incidents have occurred.

The DSO maintains a register of potential safeguarding concerns and apprentices who may become vulnerable. The DSO monitors this closely to ensure that apprentices receive sufficient help to enable them to stay safe and continue with their apprenticeship programme.

Apprentices feel safe at work and understand who to speak to if they have any concerns. Apprentices receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction, through regular 'hot topics' emails and discussions at progress reviews. Apprentices benefit from additional safeguarding training and information they receive at their workplace. Apprentices are sufficiently aware of how to keep themselves safe. They

talk confidently about how important it is that they understand how to safeguard the clients in their care.

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