

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



15 March 2019

Mr David Marsh
Chief Executive Officer
Babington Business College Limited
Babington House
Mallard Way
Pride Park
Derby
DE24 8GX

Dear Mr Marsh

Short inspection of Babington Business College Limited

Following the short inspection on 6 February 2019 and 7 February 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since the provider was judged to be good in March 2015.

This provider continues to be good.

Senior leaders and managers have sustained and improved further the good quality of education and training for apprentices and learners. You and your team have an effective focus on maintaining and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Consequently, most apprentices and learners make at least the progress expected of them.

You have successfully focused your recently strengthened leadership team on your clear strategic direction to provide high-quality training for apprentices and learners in the professional sectors. You work effectively with employers and other partners, such as Jobcentre Plus, to be responsive to regional and local priorities and demands. In consultation with employer partners, you have also made the strategic decision and reacted swiftly to concentrate on the sectors you know best and withdraw from your underperforming health and social care and warehousing provision.

Apprentices and learners benefit from good resources at your centres. Very knowledgeable trainers use their vocational and industry expertise effectively to help apprentices and learners make good progress with their studies and in their understanding and development of knowledge, behaviours and skills.

Since the previous inspection, you have successfully introduced a significant number of standards-based apprenticeships. In conjunction with employers, you now have

appropriate pathways into employment in the financial and professional sectors as an integral part of your offer.

At the previous inspection, areas requiring improvement included the delivery of, and achievement in, English and mathematics, the effective monitoring of the progress apprentices and learners make, and the improved promotion of equality and diversity. You and your management team have taken steps to improve most of these aspects, leading to the continuing good quality of the provision.

Safeguarding is effective.

Senior leaders and managers ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective. All staff have undertaken relevant training and keep their knowledge and understanding up to date on a regular basis. Staff are very aware of their responsibility to protect apprentices and learners from extremist groups and radicalisation. Apprentices and learners know how to keep themselves safe and they say that they feel safe.

Leaders have good relationships with external agencies and partners to ensure that apprentices and learners are safe. Leaders have ensured safeguarding arrangements with subcontractors are comprehensive. They include subcontracted staff in their training and awareness raising.

Inspection findings

- Senior leaders and managers have a good awareness and understanding of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They evaluate the standard of teaching, learning and assessment effectively and intervene appropriately where performance is not to the expected standard. Managers use performance management processes well to provide support and training for trainers. They monitor the improvements well and most trainers improve their practice. Trainers undertake effective professional development activities which ensure that they inform, influence and improve the progress apprentices and learners make. Consequently, apprentices and learners develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours expected by employers. Senior leaders and managers have developed a strong learning culture across the organisation and subcontracting staff are fully engaged.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully introduced several standards-based apprenticeships, developed in conjunction with many high-profile employers. Managers and trainers work effectively with employers to determine the skills, knowledge and behaviours expected in each job role. Consequently, delivery models are agreed through a flexible approach to ensure that all the principles of standards-based apprenticeships are met. Apprentices are recruited with integrity onto these programmes.
- Following the completion of a detailed 'skills gap analysis' for each apprentice, and revisited throughout their programme, almost all apprentices make good

progress and are well prepared for their assessments, examinations and end-point assessments.

- Senior leaders and managers have an effective focus on increasing the proportion of apprentices and learners who improve their English and mathematical skills and achieve relevant qualifications as the proportion of learners who do achieve is low. They have intervened to put in place specialist trainers and ensured that the delivery of these qualifications is more systematic to better meet the needs of learners. However, it is too early to evaluate the impact of this intervention.
- Trainers stimulate apprentices and learners to expand their English and mathematical skills. For example, accountancy apprentices are challenged to improve their written English skills in email correspondence to clients and use the correct terminology when speaking with colleagues at work. Property services apprentices use calculations to determine quantities and floor areas and put together a useful glossary of terms related to their job roles.
- Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the progress apprentices and learners make. The large majority of apprentices and learners make at least the progress expected of them. Trainers use and set targets in conjunction with apprentices and learners that are effectively based on their prior knowledge and starting points. Apprentices and learners value the support and feedback they receive from their trainer. However, the feedback received by a minority of apprentices and learners focuses too much on meeting deadlines or on the completion of tasks and not on the personal developmental skills which will help them improve the standard of their work.
- Following the recent employment of experienced leaders and managers, senior leaders have a realistic overview of the quality and performance of the provision. Where any underperformance is identified, they swiftly intervene and challenge each other and staff to improve. For example, when it became clear that too few apprentices were completing their leadership and management apprenticeship programme successfully, a new delivery team and a more rigorous approach to the recruitment of apprentices were put in place.
- Apprentices and learners benefit from useful impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance. Leaders and managers provide an effective range of information and they support apprentices and learners well in their future career choices. Learners completing traineeships or employability courses benefit from meaningful information regarding their next steps and are prepared well for the world of work. Almost all apprentices remain in employment on completion of their programmes.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the proportion of apprentices and learners who achieve their qualifications in English and mathematics improves
- trainers provide useful feedback to all apprentices and learners so they know

what they have to do to develop the skills and knowledge to help them improve the standard of their work

- the proportion of apprentices who complete their programmes within the expected timescales increases.

I am copying this letter to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Steve Hunsley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, we were assisted by the chief operating officer as nominee. We met you, your senior leaders, middle managers and staff. We visited lessons and apprenticeship activities to observe teaching, learning and assessment and to look at learners' work. We spoke to apprentices and learners, held meetings with them and with staff, and reviewed key documents, including those relating to self-assessment, performance and safeguarding. We considered the views of learners, employers and parents and carers by reviewing the comments received on Ofsted's online questionnaires and by seeking the views of apprentices and learners during the on-site inspection activity.