

The Chartered Institute of Housing

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Richard Deane, HMI

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Address: Octavia House
Westwood Way
Westwood Business Park
Coventry
CV4 8JP



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.

The Chartered Institute of Housing is a charity based in Coventry. A proportion of the business is an independent learning provider that delivers standards-based apprenticeships in housing and property management at levels 2, 3 and 4. Most apprentices are employed in housing associations and departments in the voluntary and public sector across England. There are currently around 170 apprentices. The organisation also has an end-point assessment business for the standards-based housing apprenticeships. This is a wholly separate business to their apprenticeship provision.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders plan their curriculum carefully to meet in full the requirements of the apprenticeship standards and to ensure that apprentices develop the specific skills needed for their roles. Leaders incorporate a range of additional qualifications into apprenticeship programmes, including in leadership and management, to develop apprentices' wider skills. Leaders have included all aspects of the apprenticeship standard into the curriculum, including end-point assessment. While leaders understand end-point assessment requirements well, they have failed to communicate this information fully to apprentices. As a result, too few apprentices are aware of the high grades that they could achieve.

Leaders developed the apprenticeship provision cautiously to ensure that systems to support apprentices' learning and assessment were working effectively before increasing recruitment. Leaders have implemented an electronic portfolio system to enable apprentices to submit their work easily from their workplace. The majority of apprentices make good use of the electronic portfolio to monitor their progress. Leaders have also developed an online learning portal with a wide range of high-quality learning resources and assignments that apprentices access from any device.

Leaders work closely with most employers to recruit the right apprentice for the role at the right level. For example, leaders worked with a housing association to develop a range of apprenticeships to offer a clear career pathway for apprentices to move towards senior positions. However, leaders have yet to ensure that all apprentices have received sufficient careers information so that they can make informed decisions about future roles within the sector.

Apprentices receive appropriate guidance and information to ensure that they are on the right course and level. Consequently, most apprentices develop new skills that benefit them in their role. Those apprentices who need to achieve English and mathematics qualifications undertake a careful assessment of their starting points so that they receive appropriate training. However, this training is often too slow to start. Also, apprentices with the requisite qualifications in these subjects are not routinely set targets to improve their skills in these subjects.

Leaders monitor closely apprentices' progress towards completing the main elements of the apprenticeship. As a result, they have an appropriate understanding of apprentices' progress and achievement overall. Leaders use information about apprentices' progress and work ethic consistently to identify quickly apprentices who are falling behind in their studies. However, they do not routinely monitor apprentices' progress from their starting points precisely enough to ensure that all apprentices achieve the grades of which they are capable. They do not monitor sufficiently the extent to which apprentices develop English and mathematics skills beyond the required level.

Leaders have ensured that associates who tutor and support apprentices are appropriately qualified and experienced and that they have received necessary training to improve their teaching and assessment skills. Leaders assess the quality of teaching, learning and assessment appropriately. They use the information to identify training for associates to standardise and improve their practice. However, leaders have been slow to ensure that associates use information about apprentices' starting points effectively in order to plan learning so that all apprentices achieve their best.

Governors receive appropriate information about apprentices' progress. However, this is not comprehensive enough for them to hold leaders to account fully. Governors do not know the extent to which apprentices make progress based on their starting points and, where relevant, in their English and mathematics functional skills qualifications.

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

Leaders and associates ensure that apprentices develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours that their employers require. They work closely with employers so that

apprentices study at the level related to their job role and future career ambitions. Associates plan apprentices' learning around their specific job roles and choose subjects that fit with their daily duties. For example, level 3 apprentices learn new knowledge about how to manage empty housing stock. Apprentices know how they will apply this knowledge at work.

Associates and employers plan effective on- and off-the-job training that helps apprentices make good progress towards achieving their qualification. Apprentices study a wide range of online learning materials diligently, completing assignments to a good standard. They use various devices, including their mobile phones, to access the provider's new online learning and information systems to review learning resources and submit their work. They rightly appreciate the flexibility these systems offer.

Employers provide apprentices with additional on-the-job training and shadowing opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding. Nearly all apprentices say rightly that their employers enable them to study at work. Associates provide them with effective and timely feedback to improve their work. However, associates do not plan sufficiently appropriate learning to ensure that apprentices are able to achieve the grades of which they are capable.

Associates and tutors are appropriately qualified and have much experience in the housing sector. They use their knowledge skilfully to help apprentices understand more complex subjects, particularly in relation to housing policy and law. Although associates provide effective training, a few associates do not have enough information to provide apprentices with sufficient feedback on their progress overall, due to lack of access to various systems. They do not always ensure that employers contribute fully to apprentices' reviews. Consequently, a few apprentices do not have a sound understanding of their progress in all aspects of their apprenticeship, which slows these apprentices' progress.

As the main provider of end-point assessments in England, leaders have very strong quality assurance processes so that all apprentices' assessments are valid, sufficient and reliable.

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

Leaders have ensured that arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and staff have an appropriate understanding of safeguarding and their responsibility to safeguard their apprentices. Leaders have put in place six designated safeguarding officers. These monitor routinely safeguarding procedures and report to senior leaders. They ensure that apprentices have received the appropriate training to protect themselves from potential harm. Apprentices know who to contact if concerned, and they understand the reporting process in their workplace.

Leaders prioritise safeguarding practice in their work. They have updated the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures to reflect the most current legislation and guidance. The policy describes fully leaders' expectations to safeguard all staff and apprentices. Leaders have established a secure safeguarding recording process to monitor any safeguarding incidents.

Associates receive updated training on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Most apprentices receive this training in the workplace and the information is reinforced in their studies. Associates, however, do not routinely check apprentices' understanding of the potential threats from extremism and radicalisation in their communities. Consequently, a small minority of apprentices have only a cursory understanding of these topics.

Leaders follow safer recruitment practices. They ensure that associate staff and tutors have the appropriate background and enhanced disclosure and barring checks. Records of staff qualifications and training are accurate and up to date.

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