

University of Brighton

Further education in higher education

Inspection dates

14–16 May 2019

Overall effectiveness		Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	Apprenticeships Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good	
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good	
Outcomes for learners	Good	
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Leaders and managers have successfully developed apprenticeships as part of the university's mission to offer a route into higher education for non-traditional learners.
- Leaders and managers work well with the great majority of local National Health Service (NHS) trusts to ensure that their staff develop new skills and knowledge that improve health care.
- Leaders and managers have taken effective action to recruit experienced and highly qualified staff into leadership and teaching positions in the school of health science. These strengthen the quality of the apprenticeship provision.
- The great majority of apprentices make good progress towards the completion of their foundation degrees and are prepared well for the final assessment of their higher apprenticeships.
- Staff are highly responsive to feedback from apprentices and use it effectively to identify and tackle areas for improvement.
- Apprentices take on more responsibilities at work because of the technical skills, theoretical knowledge and personal confidence they develop during their apprenticeships.
- Apprentices broaden their understanding and knowledge of different aspects of health care through a programme of well-organised placements.
- Tutors and workplace mentors use a range of effective assessment and feedback methods that help apprentices to improve.
- Leaders and managers do not ensure that all the NHS trusts they work with are fully meeting their obligations to provide apprentices with sufficient time to complete off-the-job training.
- Leaders, managers and teaching staff do not have high enough expectations about attendance of apprentices at taught sessions. As a result, attendance is too low.
- A small minority of tutors do not provide apprentices with sufficient opportunities to discuss further education and career options.

Full report

Information about the provider

- The University of Brighton has been commissioned by a consortium of eight local NHS trusts and healthcare providers to deliver higher level apprenticeships to their employees. In addition to the consortium members, another six healthcare providers offer workplace placements to apprentices.
- There are currently 43 apprentices on the level 5 healthcare assistant practitioner apprenticeship standard and 141 apprentices on the level 5 nursing associate apprenticeship standard. All apprentices take a foundation degree in health and social care as part of the apprenticeship standard.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers need to challenge the senior leaders of the NHS trusts they work with to ensure that they all provide their apprentices with sufficient protected time at work to complete off-the-job-training.
- Leaders, managers and teaching staff should set higher standards for the attendance of apprentices at taught sessions at the university.
- Tutors should have structured discussions with apprentices about further education opportunities and career options.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers ensure that the apprenticeship provision, although a very small proportion of the university's total educational offer, plays an essential part in the university's mission to meet the skills needs of local employers and to offer a route for non-traditional learners into higher education.
- Leaders and managers work well with a consortium of local NHS trusts and other healthcare providers to support their employees to develop new skills and knowledge to improve the delivery of healthcare. Senior managers from local trusts were involved in the validation of the foundation degree in health science, an integral component of the apprenticeship standards, and play an active part in the apprenticeship steering committee that oversees the performance of the provision.
- Leaders and managers took swift action to recruit experienced and well-trained staff into leadership and teaching positions within the school of health sciences, in order to tackle the weaknesses that had emerged in the apprenticeship provision in 2017/18. As a result, apprentices' dissatisfaction with aspects of the management of the programme, such as the lack of information, advice and guidance and timetabling issues, have been addressed.
- Managers monitor the progress of apprentices on a regular basis and take effective action to support those who are not doing as well as they should. They have recently introduced a new management information system to capture the progress of apprentices in the expanded apprenticeship, which now includes apprenticeships in non-healthcare areas, such as business.
- Leaders, managers and teaching staff are highly responsive to feedback from apprentices and use it effectively to identify and tackle areas for improvement. For example, apprentices stated that they did not receive feedback that helped them to improve. Managers implemented a professional development programme for tutors that supported them to give more constructive feedback. As a result, marked work has clear suggestions on what needs to be improved if the apprentice wants to achieve better grades.
- Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They apply the same rigorous level of scrutiny to the quality of the apprenticeship provision as they would for other university programmes, with an annual academic health report resulting in clear actions for improvement that are reviewed regularly. As a result, apprentices' satisfaction with the quality of the provision improved significantly in the current year.
- Leaders and managers do not ensure that every NHS trust in the consortium is fully meeting its obligations to provide apprentices with sufficient protected time to complete their off-the-job training. In a small minority of cases, apprentices are not in roles at work that enable them to apply the skills and knowledge they learn at university.
- Leaders and managers do not set high enough expectations for the attendance of apprentices at taught sessions. As a result, apprentices are not encouraged to develop a key employability skill, and too many do not attend regularly.

The governance of the provider

- Although the apprenticeship provision represents a very small part of the university's overall educational offer, it receives proportionate and effective oversight from the university's governing and academic boards. Members of both boards receive reports on the performance of the provision and ensure that actions for improvement are implemented.
- The senior leadership team at pro-vice chancellor level has a good grasp of the purpose, performance and future development of the apprenticeship programme.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the university's corporate policies and procedures for safeguarding are applied consistently to apprentices and staff teaching on apprenticeship programmes. These procedures are reinforced by the safeguarding regulations of professional bodies such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council who register many of the staff who teach and assess on the apprenticeship programme.
- Managers carry out regular and rigorous audits of the work places that apprentices attend on placement. They ensure that apprentices are inducted fully into the health and safety procedures at their placements and that they know how to report any safeguarding concerns.
- The university's 'Prevent' duty risk assessment and action plan is signed off annually by the office for students. All tutors of apprentices in the school of health sciences have completed their mandatory 'Prevent' duty training. The great majority of apprentices are aware of the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- The university has an extensive range of support services to promote the health and well-being of its students. Apprentices have the same entitlement to these services as other students.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Tutors provide effective taught sessions at the university, while highly qualified and experienced mentors and education facilitators offer good assessment and support in the workplace. As a result, apprentices develop good technical skills and underpinning theoretical knowledge.
- The curriculum is planned well to enable apprentices to build their knowledge of the theories behind clinical practices; to practise the application of correct techniques in the controlled environment of the university's simulation suites; and to develop these skills further in their workplaces and placements under the supervision of trained mentors.
- Tutors establish apprentices' starting points accurately and use this information on prior qualifications and current work experience well to plan and deliver teaching and learning. The great majority of apprentices start with level 3 qualifications, so tutors focus on developing their study and academic writing skills to enable them to operate at graduate

level.

- Tutors identify and plan to meet apprentices' additional support needs effectively at the start of programmes. For example, tutors make suitable adaptations so that apprentices with limited dexterity can apply aseptic techniques, something they had previously found very challenging.
- Tutors at the university, and education facilitators in the workplace, provide constructive feedback to apprentices that enables them to improve their written and practical work. Apprentices receive written feedback that is developmental with clear guidance on how to achieve better grades.
- Tutors and education facilitators carry out frequent, fair and thorough assessments on apprentices' assignments. Apprentices are clear about the requirements for each assessment, and about the progress they are making towards the achievement of their foundation degrees and their end-point assessments.
- In the great majority of teaching and learning sessions, tutors engage apprentices effectively and ensure that they make the best use of their time at university. Small group work encourages apprentices to work collaboratively and confidently with tutors and peers. For example, apprentices in an academic skills workshop enjoyed sharing viewpoints on the stronger and weaker points presented to them about essay writing, and in reaching a consensus in grading example essays.
- Apprentices benefit from the occupational expertise of mentors and education facilitators in their workplaces and on placements. These staff enable apprentices to receive additional training by shadowing colleagues and attending conferences on specific areas of clinical practice. As a result, apprentices widen their experience of the health care sector and perform clinical tasks to industry standards.
- A small minority of tutors at the university do not emphasise sufficiently the need for apprentices to understand the theoretical underpinning of certain clinical practices. As a result, some apprentices are not clear why they are carrying out procedures, such as catheterisation, that they are already familiar with at work.
- A small minority of apprentices make slower than expected progress because they are not being given sufficient time by their employers to study and complete their assignments. Some apprentices are not being given enough responsibility at work to enable them to practise new technical skills and knowledge.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Apprentices are highly motivated and committed to their academic work and developing new skills and responsibilities, despite their heavy patient caseloads. They engage actively in acquiring the knowledge required to succeed and enjoy sharing with their peers their experiences of different workplaces.
- Apprentices develop a wide range of personal and social skills through their university studies and their time on placements. They become more confident and self-aware in their roles at work. They become more effective team members through developing their communication skills with colleagues, patients and patients' families and carers.
- Nurse associate apprentices, who make up the large majority of apprentices, benefit

greatly from the four different placements they attend in order to achieve their standard. Placements in diverse settings such as accident and emergency departments, hospices, rapid-response teams and early-discharge units mean that apprentices can understand how the different parts of healthcare work together. This diversity also enables them to make informed choices about their future career paths in the sector.

- The great majority of apprentices develop their English, mathematical and digital skills well through completing their written assignments, applying procedures in the workplace and undertaking project work. For example, apprentices improve their note taking on hospital wards and in taking readings for fluid balances.
- Apprentices develop the academic and study skills that they need to undertake degree-level work. They show great perseverance in mastering these skills, as for many of them this is the first time that they have been back in formal learning since their school days.
- Apprentices' contributions are valued highly by their employers. They bring up-to-date knowledge into their workplaces which they share enthusiastically with their colleagues. In some cases, they promote positive changes in clinical practice. For example, apprentices have successfully promoted the shift from antiseptic to aseptic techniques in dressing wounds on some hospital wards.
- Apprentices feel safe at the university and in their workplaces. The regular online and face-to-face training they receive enables them to identify signs of abuse and how to report any concerns.
- Apprentices' attendance at taught sessions at the university is not high enough. At the time of inspection, as many as a quarter of apprentices missed sessions. Apart from missing the teaching and learning that takes place in these sessions, apprentices are not developing a key employability discipline.
- A small minority of apprentices are not clear about their options for future progression once they complete their programmes. This is because tutors do not apply a consistent approach to timetabling tutorials where discussions about planning next steps take place.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- The great majority of current apprentices make good progress towards the completion of their foundation degrees in health and social care, an essential requirement in the attainment of their apprenticeship standard. Nearly all apprentices passed their level 4 modules in the first year of their two-year degree programme.
- A high proportion of apprentices achieved their qualification in the assistant healthcare practitioner framework in the previous academic year. A very high proportion did so within their planned timescales.
- Apprentices master new technical skills through demonstrations in university workshops and through the opportunities to apply them in their work settings and placements. For example, apprentices develop clinical skills in the use of aseptic techniques when performing wound care and undertake venepuncture when taking blood samples.
- Most apprentices produce work of a good standard. Apprentices marshal evidence effectively in their written assignments and follow the correct style of academic referencing. As a result, apprentices demonstrate a sound grasp of the underpinning

theoretical knowledge of the clinical areas they study.

- Many of the apprentices who have completed their apprenticeship programmes remain employed with their NHS trusts. Many have achieved promotions to positions with greater responsibilities and higher pay. Some have progressed onto degrees in nursing.
- A small minority of apprentices who are nearing the completion of their programmes have yet to complete their English and mathematics functional skills qualifications. As a result, these apprentices have struggled with some of the written assignments on the foundation degree. Managers acknowledge that the entry criteria for the current cohort of apprentices should have included the requirement that they already had a level 2 in these subjects.

Provider details

Unique reference number	133796
Type of provider	Further education in higher education
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	108
Principal/CEO	Professor Debra Humphris
Telephone number	01273 600900
Website	http://www.bton.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-	184	
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of apprenticeships, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews, and made visits to clinical settings. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

Charles Searle, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Marinette Bazin	Ofsted Inspector
Stefan Fusenich	Ofsted Inspector

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