

Creative Process Digital Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Ann Monaghan Her Majesty's Inspector

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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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.

Creative Process Digital Ltd began as an independent training provider in September 2014 specialising in digital skills. It offers apprenticeships and adult education programmes as a subcontractor for two general further education colleges. This provision was not in scope for this monitoring visit.

Since May 2017, it has also offered apprenticeship provision under its own contract. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 11 directly recruited apprentices on level 3 standards-based apprenticeship programmes in digital marketing and junior content producer.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders have a clear strategic vision closely aligned to national and regional economic strategies. This reflects local demand for advanced digital skills well. Leaders and their team have an excellent working relationship with employers that they use to inform and develop their provision. Leaders use their membership of key local forums to inform strategic planning and operational priorities, including their readiness to introduce standards-based programmes.

Trainers and assessors are highly qualified and experienced in relevant digital skills and specialisms. Apprentices benefit from this wealth of experience and develop industry-specific knowledge, skills and behaviours rapidly. Access to industry-standard training resources ensures that apprentices can test and apply their knowledge on up-to-date digital platforms and equipment.

Managers' monitoring of apprentices' progress is frequent and thorough. Employers are fully involved in the review process. However, tutors do not identify apprentices capable of achieving higher grades early enough to ensure that they are challenged and supported to achieve high grades.

Apprentices benefit from a thoroughly planned programme of activities. Managers constantly review this to ensure that it meets the needs of the apprentices and their employers. This responsive approach is highly valued by apprentices and employers. However, learning that happens in the workplace is not formally recorded and, therefore, apprentices are not able to reflect on this wider learning and application of their new knowledge and skills.

Managers' self-assessment is inclusive and largely evaluative. However, the quality improvement plan is not detailed enough to ensure rigorous monitoring of progress towards targets and lacks involvement from relevant managers and staff.

Staff provide apprentices with effective information, advice and guidance prior to joining the programme. They thoroughly assess applicants' mathematics, English, digital and other work-related skills.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? **Significant progress**

Managers put in place strong quality assurance arrangements. Assessors benefit from regular support and continuous professional development. This ensures that assessors share good practice and maintain their professional standards of assessment and feedback.

Apprentices rapidly develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for the apprenticeship standards. In addition, they develop broader skills and knowledge that enable them to work successfully on increasingly complex tasks.

Apprentices develop high levels of self-confidence and resilience to become reflective learners. This enables them to become more adept at problem-solving and using their initiative at work. Apprentices share their learning with their employers and this supports business improvements by, for example, applying learning on search engine optimisation and coding. Assessors meet frequently with apprentices and their employers to review the progress of the apprentice at work and in their classroom-based study.

Apprentices produce high-quality work. Tutor feedback is detailed and evaluative and provides supportive guidance that inspires learners to strive for the distinction grade. However, apprentices are not formally told of their potential final grade early enough in their programme. Managers' monitoring of progress only measures those who will pass or are at risk of not achieving rather than monitoring progress towards achieving higher grades.

Leaders use apprentices' and employers' feedback to continuously improve the learning experience. In response to apprenticeship feedback, leaders have amended

the timing and number of support sessions in place to ensure that apprentices are better prepared for their final assessment.

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

Managers' arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders place a high priority on the safeguarding of all apprentices. The designated safeguarding officer has completed appropriate training and has very good links with a range of external agencies. Staff highlight risks relevant to the local area, such as the threats posed by political extremism and 'county lines' drug trafficking, to apprentices.

Leaders and managers complete appropriate recruitment and safeguarding checks. Staff are trained in safeguarding during their induction period and have regular refresher training.

Apprentices have a basic awareness of the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Leaders monitor the implementation of an appropriate action plan to bring about further improvements. However, this is not rigorous enough as it lacks clarity on who is responsible for implementing named actions and monitoring progress towards achieving the improvements.

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