

Elevated Knowledge Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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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.

Elevated Knowledge Ltd is a small training provider based in Manchester that provides courses in lift servicing engineering. In September 2017, the company received public funding to deliver apprenticeship training. At the time of the visit, 13 apprentices were on framework apprenticeships in engineering maintenance lift servicing at level 3. Elevated Knowledge works with employers across England.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Directors build on their substantial experience in the industry to develop strategies that meet employers' needs. They use their commercial experience and excellent relationships with employers to develop programmes that provide individualised content, as needed. Directors are closely involved in the development of the apprenticeship standard at both level 2 and the now-published level 3. As a result, they use that detailed knowledge to inform current training practices.

Directors ensure that the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship are met. Apprentices receive a wide range of on- and off-the-job training, thus developing substantial new knowledge and skills. The development of these new skills contributes quickly to the employer's business. For example, apprentices complete the basic maintenance licence and can work independently on lift equipment.

Directors and managers carefully track all aspects of the apprenticeship and accurately identify areas that need improving. They do this through frequent management meetings, where actions are agreed and reviewed. For example, the assessors completed joint observations of training and assessment practice. Following the observation, they identified good practice at the start of lessons. This was then introduced as expected practice.

Directors and managers have a detailed understanding of each individual apprentice's progress. This information is used well to inform employers and plan

training activities. Senior leaders rightly recognise that, as the number of apprentices increases, they need to develop ways of ensuring that they have a clear oversight of progress. Directors have invested in electronic systems to achieve this but this is in its infancy and no impact can be seen.

Directors have not yet recruited a governing body to hold the senior managers to account. They are in the process of recruiting governors to provide that support and challenge.

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

Directors and managers have a comprehensive understanding of apprentices' starting points. As part of the apprentices' induction programme with the employer, they are introduced to the apprenticeship framework and its expectations. Information about apprentices' existing knowledge, skills and experiences is collected and training is planned around them. For example, apprentices with technical qualifications are not required to undertake college programmes. Apprentices develop good knowledge and skills quickly, which benefits their employers.

Managers have good industrial experience and relevant technical skills. They are passionate about their industry and about raising the quality of training for apprentices. They use their expertise to develop apprentices' skills. Managers use an appropriate range of assessment methods. This, combined with the on-the-job training, allows apprentices to develop a rich understanding of the industry.

Apprentices enjoy their apprenticeship. They benefit from good on- and off-the-job training that prepare them for the industry. For example, they receive specialist product training, giving them up-to-date skills with new equipment. They are developing autonomy in their roles and have increasing levels of responsibility. Apprentices can link classroom learning to their jobs, for example understanding how to replace worn brake and balance parts in lift shafts. Apprentices improve their understanding further through the frequent and high-quality feedback they receive on their work and on their observed practice.

Apprentices have a well-developed understanding of health and safety. They have a good comprehension of risks and how to escalate concerns to supervisors and managers.

Target-setting requires improvement. Apprentices' targets, set by managers, are not specific enough, nor are they checked or followed up routinely. For example, apprentices are set risk-rated targets. These have not been followed up at the review or with the employer. Therefore, a small minority of apprentices do not make the progress of which they are capable.

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

Directors and managers place a high priority on ensuring that apprentices are safe. There are appropriate safeguarding processes in place, which include safeguarding, whistleblowing and safe recruitment policies. The senior designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and her deputy have had appropriate training. The DSL uses the links with employers well to ensure that any potential concerns are addressed. Managers check that employers meet the necessary health and safety regulations in the industry.

Managers ensure that safe recruitment practices are in place. This means that all staff, including those who teach in college settings, have had the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Staff know the correct procedures to follow if a concern is raised.

Apprentices feel safe and are safe. Apprentices follow a rigorous induction programme. They show good understanding of health and safety regulations and how to apply in the sector. Most apprentices have a good understanding of safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty and radicalisation and extremism and how these apply to them in their workplace.

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