

# SR Supply Chain Consultants Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Name of lead inspector:** Kim Bleasdale, 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.

SR Supply Chain Consultants Limited (SR) began receiving public funding in May 2017 to provide apprenticeship training. It currently has 153 apprentices on the commercial procurement and supply chain standards-based apprenticeship at level 4. SR also provides apprenticeship training on behalf of another organisation. The subcontracted provision is not in scope for this monitoring visit.

### Themes

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

#### **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have a clear rationale to provide procurement and supply chain apprenticeships. They ensure that they plan apprenticeships effectively and meet the requirements and principles of an apprenticeship. Their apprenticeship training has a positive impact on apprentices and employers. The training includes useful classroom sessions, webinars and remote mentoring sessions.

Managers provide good additional support to help apprentices improve their study techniques and deepen their knowledge of the procurement and supply chain. As a result, almost all apprentices make at least the progress expected of them.

Employers value the high-quality training that apprentices receive. They release apprentices for off-the-job training sessions. As a result, apprentices develop successfully their knowledge, skills and behaviours and make a significant contribution to their employers' businesses.

Managers have a good overview of the progress that apprentices make. They work closely with mentors, tutors and employers to ensure that apprentices are on target to achieve. Managers identify swiftly the appropriate interventions apprentices need to help them to catch up if they do not make the required progress. Consequently, most apprentices are on target to achieve their apprenticeships by their planned end-date.

Quality improvement arrangements are underdeveloped. The quality improvement plan does not identify targets against which leaders and managers can measure improvements. Leaders and managers acknowledge correctly that they do not check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment frequently enough. Observers do not follow up actions they set for improvement routinely to ensure the quality of the provision improves as quickly as possible.

External scrutiny arrangements are insufficient. As senior leaders and managers acknowledge, they need to strengthen their governance arrangements.

**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 managers recruit apprentices carefully. Apprentices' induction is good. They receive a very helpful introduction to the off-the-job training programme and assessment requirements.

Managers ensure that tutors are appropriately qualified. They are procurement and supply professionals with good industrial experience. Consequently, apprentices develop a detailed understanding of the behaviours and expectations of a proficient procurement and supply professional.

Apprentices have a good understanding of how on- and off-the-job training complement each other. They use a very good range of electronic and paper-based learning resources effectively. Often, apprentices attend highly relevant conferences, trade exhibitions and professional seminars to enrich their knowledge and experience. As a result, apprentices' employability skills increase. A small minority of apprentices do not receive their full entitlement to off-the-job learning during working hours.

Apprentices develop substantial new vocational knowledge, skills and behaviours. They make a significant contribution to their employers' business. For example, they learn about sourcing and contract agreements, supplier management, and the importance of successful negotiation. Apprentices apply their theoretical knowledge successfully in their work. Most apprentices produce work of a suitable standard for the level of apprenticeship.

Most apprentices have high levels of motivation and are making at least the progress expected of them. They have a good understanding of the assessment that will take place at the end of their apprenticeship. However, a few apprentices do not know what they need to do to obtain a distinction.

Mentors and tutors do not provide apprentices with sufficient support to develop their English and mathematics. As a result, a minority of apprentices do not always

develop the knowledge and skills in English and mathematics that they need to progress in their work roles.

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

Senior leaders and managers ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place. Most apprentices have an effective understanding of safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. For example, they know how to recognise the signs of radicalisation and extremism and how to keep themselves safe.

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) implements the organisation's policies and procedures effectively in order to keep apprentices and learners safe. The DSO has received appropriate training to ensure that they have suitable knowledge and skills to undertake the role. Managers follow safe recruitment processes when they appoint new staff.

Staff receive regular update training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. This enables them to support apprentices confidently and make any necessary referrals to the DSO. The DSO follows up apprentices' concerns as quickly as possible. They record any safeguarding-related cases accurately.

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