

PHX Training Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1270755

Name of lead inspector: Steve Ingle Ofsted Inspector

Inspection dates: 26–27 June 2019

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: Kendal House
Murley Moss Business Park
Kendal
LA9 7RL



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.

PHX Training Limited (PHX) received a contract to offer directly delivered adult learning courses in November 2017 and for training apprentices in April 2018. PHX also delivers courses for adult learners and apprentices for other training organisations as a subcontractor. These courses were out of scope for this monitoring visit. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were four directly funded apprentices. All are working with one employer and follow the level 2 apprenticeship framework in warehousing. Two hundred and sixteen adult learners are following functional skills programmes in English, mathematics or information and communication technology (ICT) at entry level to level 2. PHX also provide pre-employment and short courses in a range of vocational areas such as retail, customer service, team leading and business administration.

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 ensure that apprenticeship programmes meet all the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship. Leaders and managers ensure that they recruit apprentices on to programmes that meet apprentices' vocational skills needs. Leaders and managers have a good working relationship with the apprentices' employer. Together, they effectively identify apprentices' starting points and plan a curriculum that meets their educational goals, as well as the requirements and objectives of the business.

Leaders and managers effectively coordinate training to ensure that apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours to use in their jobs. Managers, employers and assessors collaborate well to monitor the progress of apprentices and to implement strategies to help them stay on track. As a result, apprentices are making at least the progress expected of them.

Leaders and managers have recently implemented enhanced arrangements to evaluate the quality of training and assessment. Managers complete detailed observations of training sessions and provide assessors with useful feedback to improve the standard of education and training.

Governance arrangements are adequate. Senior leaders and board members receive regular reports which allow them to challenge managers, where appropriate, and to monitor the quality of provision over time. Leaders recognise the need to broaden the skills, expertise and independence of the governing board membership and to improve the recording of governance meetings to provide a clear action plan for improvement.

Leaders and managers identify accurately that current self-assessment arrangements are insufficiently analytical. They have rightly identified the need to improve the level and accuracy of data used to assess overall quality. Improvement action plans do not set specific enough priorities to enable leaders and managers to monitor fully the impact of actions taken to improve the standard of education and training.

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

Assessors collect useful information on apprentices' prior learning, skills and experience to plan learning effectively. Assessors collaborate well with the employer and apprentices to select an individual programme of learning that meets apprentices' training needs and the needs of the business. As a result, apprentices learn substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours that relate directly to their individual job roles. They use the knowledge and skills acquired to improve their performance at work.

Apprentices benefit from high-quality well-coordinated on- and off-the-job training. Apprentices undertake relevant vocational training and additional short courses, organised by their employer, that further develop their understanding of their role. For example, apprentices develop their understanding of the processes and procedures needed to meet customs requirements when sending goods and cargo overseas.

Assessors support and challenge apprentices to develop the applied English and mathematics skills needed for the workplace, often beyond the minimum requirements of the apprenticeship framework. For example, assessors reinforce the importance of a good standard of written English when communicating with external customers through email. They skilfully develop apprentices' numeracy skills to ensure that client invoicing is clear and accurate.

Assessors work effectively with apprentices and their employer to monitor progress. Where apprentices begin to fall behind their expected level of progress, assessors intervene quickly to arrange additional support sessions. As a result, current

apprentices are on track to achieve their apprenticeships within the planned time frame.

Assessors provide good verbal feedback that helps apprentices to understand their developing strengths and areas for further development. However, apprentices often do not have access to systems which record, and store, written feedback provided by assessors. Consequently, specific targets on how apprentices can improve the quality of their work are not always clear or available to them for future reference.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aims and/or personal goals? Reasonable progress

Learners on English and mathematics courses work independently, in PHX training centres, to access online training and resources that help them to study at a time and pace that meet their needs. Learners benefit from the support of caring tutors who provide skilful guidance and coaching. Tutors accurately assess learners' starting points in English and mathematics and use this information well to ensure that learners start on the most appropriate level of course.

Tutors use the outcome of assessments effectively to plan individual programmes of learning that target learners' skills gaps and development priorities. As a result, learners on English and mathematics courses develop useful skills that help them in their everyday lives. For example, learners who speak English as a second language develop skills that help them communicate successfully with their children's school.

Learners on vocational courses produce work of the expected standard and the majority make the progress expected. Learners gain useful new knowledge and skills that help them gain an insight into the world of work. For example, learners learn how to deal professionally with a range of customer complaints. They learn about the importance of stocktaking in a retail environment.

Too often, tutors do not provide clear feedback, or challenging targets, to help learners know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve further. Consequently, a small minority of learners do not make the progress of which they are capable. Tutors do not routinely provide feedback to learners on vocational courses about their English writing skills. As a result, too many learners repeat the same mistakes and make slow progress in developing their skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Leaders and managers ensure that appropriate staff are adequately trained in safeguarding and understand their roles

and responsibilities to keep all learners safe. Senior managers have established clear reporting procedures to log and monitor safeguarding concerns. Leaders provide effective oversight to ensure that concerns are dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

Leaders and managers carry out appropriate safe recruitment processes, including Disclosure and Barring Service checks. They ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding updates and participate in appropriate training activities to maintain their knowledge of key safeguarding issues, including the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation.

Most learners have an appropriate understanding of health and safety and safeguarding issues. Learners can articulate how to keep themselves and others safe and how to raise any safeguarding concerns. Tutors and managers are proactive in signposting learners to a range of relevant local and national support agencies.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Learner View

Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too. To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

Employer View

Employer View is a website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too. To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019