

Anglia Ruskin University

Monitoring visit report

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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.

At the time of the monitoring visit, the university had 314 apprentices studying on two standards-based higher-level apprenticeships. Around three quarters of apprentices are on a level 5 assistant practitioner apprenticeship that takes approximately 20 months and is delivered in Cambridge and Chelmsford. The remaining apprentices are on a level 5 nursing associate apprenticeship that is delivered in Peterborough and takes approximately 22 months.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders are proud of their reputation as a university that provides degrees at work to a range of employers and learners. They have built successfully on their 10 years' experience, by developing strong partnerships with 12 NHS trusts in the East of England. They have ambitious plans and a strategy to train apprentices for the health sector, which faces a shortage of skilled employees.

Managers monitor and track the progress of apprentices diligently to ensure that they remain on the programme and complete their qualifications within the planned period. The arrangements for end-point assessments are thorough. However, managers do not make apprentices or their employers routinely aware of their target grades.

Governors do not have a sufficiently clear view of the performance of the levy-funded apprentices and the quality of their training. Hence, they are unable to provide appropriate scrutiny, support and challenge to hold managers to account for making improvements promptly.

Teaching staff are highly skilled and experienced health practitioners with teaching and research backgrounds. Senior leaders provide a good range of professional

development activities to improve their skills in providing high-quality learning to apprentices.

Leaders have invested time and resources in developing highly interactive virtual learning and virtual reality resources. These enable apprentices to access self-directed learning at their convenience, including from their mobile phones. They also receive prompt detailed and specific feedback on their written assignments. This enables apprentices to present academic assignments to high standards.

Managers work closely with the employers to provide valuable information, advice and guidance to place apprentices on the appropriate career pathways and raise their aspirations. Managers identify apprentices' prior learning, qualifications, skills and experience at the start of the learning. However, they do not use this information effectively to set individual targets and measure gains in apprentices' knowledge.

A few employers are not clear about the requirements of an apprenticeship and are not sufficiently involved in the feedback, monitoring and target setting.

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

Employers are very supportive of the training programme. They provide extensive additional training relating to the care needs of the patients. This enables apprentices to undertake a range of roles. Working with experienced and qualified work-place mentors, apprentices make good progress in acquiring new knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Apprentices enjoy their well-planned and challenging off-the-job training sessions. They hone their skills, by working in clinical placements outside their usual work place. Tutors and workplace mentors provide individual coaching and guidance to help them complete assignments to high standards. Apprentices appreciate the importance of English and mathematics skills in their job roles and personal lives. Most apprentices have the required entry qualifications in these subjects and they continue to develop their skills, producing handover notes and calculating medications accurately.

Apprentices are highly motivated to learn and improve their prospects. They provide high standards of care that patients appreciate. Apprentices use their improved understanding of physiology to understand the nature of patients' concerns and communicate these to qualified nursing staff more effectively. Their improved confidence and communication skills make them better equipped to speak to service users' families, thus relieving pressure on clinical staff. Although apprentices talk enthusiastically about their enhanced skills, they do not always understand how to relate their formal learning to their job roles.

Tutors and mentors provide sufficient feedback that stimulates apprentices to improve the quality of their work as well as the standards of care that they deliver. Apprentices produce appropriate standards of written work. However, apprentices' work and progress records contain too few explicit links between theory and apprentices' development of new work-related skills and behaviours.

Of the small number of apprentices who have completed their end-point assessment all have passed with either a merit or a distinction.

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

Leaders and managers have closely matched the university values with those in the healthcare sector. Patients' and apprentices' safety and safeguarding are fully embedded in the culture, of both the university and the employers.

Apprentices have a sound understanding of safeguarding topics and awareness of topics such as domestic abuse, sexual exploitation, modern day slavery and risks arising from radicalisation and extremism. They feel safe at work and at university. They know how to handle issues and to whom they should report any concerns. All university staff who work directly with apprentices receive the required employment checks and undertake annual safeguarding training.

Teachers reinforce apprentices' understanding of safeguarding topics through the use of workplace scenarios, such as changes in patient behaviour, and the risks associated with learning disability and mental health. Apprentices handle issues of bullying and harassment confidently in the workplace although they do not routinely inform the university.

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