

# Further Training Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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**Name of lead inspector:** Richard Deane, 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.

In January 2018, Further Training began direct delivery of apprenticeships. At the time of the monitoring visit there were 172 apprentices in learning. Apprentices are employed in a range of large and smaller employers nationally. All apprentices follow standards-based apprenticeships in either level 5 operations department management, level 3 team leading, customer service at levels 2 and 3, or level 3 business administration.

### Themes

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

#### **Reasonable**

Leaders have developed strong regional links with the combined mayoral authority, local enterprise partnerships and a number of provider networks. Consequently, leaders have a very good understanding of regional skills needs. They have used this information purposefully to provide business and management-related qualifications to employers who do not offer this training.

Leaders have planned programmes appropriately so that apprentices are prepared sufficiently to undertake their end-point assessment. However, they have not developed the curriculum well enough to make sure all apprentices can achieve their potential. The apprenticeship meets the requirements for on- and off-the-job training.

Leaders ensure that apprentices have access to high-quality online learning and assessment resources to help them achieve their qualifications. They recruit trainers who have the requisite experience to deliver learning in the sectors in which they operate. However, leaders have been slow to provide trainers with the necessary professional development so that they can plan and sequence learning to ensure that all apprentices achieve the grades that they should.

Leaders review carefully employers' plans to recruit apprentices. They ensure that employers can provide high-quality on- and off-the-job training for apprentices at the appropriate level. Leaders also ensure that apprentices take an appropriate assessment of their previous skills and abilities, so they are able to develop significant new skills.

Managers know the progress of most apprentices. They review routinely their progress towards achieving their qualification. However, in a few cases managers have been too slow to ensure that those apprentices who fall behind in their work receive the required support quickly enough.

Leaders and managers have an appropriate quality audit process. They use external experts to review their systems robustly. They work well with the board of governors, who provide them with effective challenge. However, leaders and governors have been too slow to ensure that all apprentices make the progress that they should.

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

Trainers help apprentices to develop the specific knowledge, skills, and behaviours to become better and more effective employees. For example, apprentices following management courses become more confident and effective at leading teams and delegating work.

Trainers plan high-quality off- and on-the-job training to help apprentices achieve their qualifications. They use a range of workbooks and online resources well to help apprentices understand theoretical concepts such as management theory for high-performing teams. Most apprentices produce work of a good standard.

Trainers do not use information about learners' starting points routinely to plan work that helps apprentices achieve the grades of which they are capable. For example, they fail to identify strategies to help apprentices remember specific knowledge to help them achieve well in examinations and professional discussions.

Most apprentices continue to develop their English and mathematical skills. Trainers give apprentices useful activities such as practising various methods of communication with customers and staff and using spreadsheets to monitor cashflow accurately. However, trainers do not use information from apprentices' diagnostic tests well enough to plan tasks to develop their individual skills needs in these subjects.

Trainers monitor closely their apprentices' progress. Every six weeks, they review their progress towards the achievement of units and the skills needed for the qualification.

Apprentices receive mostly positive feedback from trainers, identifying what they have achieved. However, trainers do not routinely identify what apprentices need to do to ensure that they produce work and develop the understanding to achieve the grades of which they are capable.

Trainers provide useful additional face-to-face, email and telephone support to help apprentices who fall behind in their work. However, in a few cases trainers are too slow to provide the necessary support to help these apprentices improve quickly.

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

Leaders ensure that there is a strong focus on safeguarding throughout the organisation. They share information on training, events and safeguarding updates with governors, staff and apprentices via a newsletter.

Managers have updated safeguarding policies and practice to reflect recent updates from the Department for Education. Leaders have revised the information and guidance for apprentices and provide training for all frontline staff to help them identify emerging issues early.

Leaders use safer recruitment strategies effectively to recruit staff. They have deployed and trained appropriately designated safeguarding officers. All officers have achieved the requisite training for their roles.

Managers have an appropriate safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty action plan. They work well with the regional 'Prevent' officer. They share updates on topics such as 'county lines' and the emergence of far-right extremism. Trainers ensure that apprentices develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and of the potential threats posed from extremist groups.

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