

Training 4 Careers (UK) Limited

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 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Training 4 Careers (UK) Limited began trading in 2014. The company received a contract to deliver apprenticeships in March 2017. Currently, 46 levy-funded apprentices are on programmes. These include business administration, business improvement techniques, customer service specialist, operations/departmental manager, sales executive, and team leader/supervisor. Programmes range from level 2 to level 5. Thirteen apprentices are on apprenticeship frameworks and 33 are on standards-based apprenticeships.

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 for developing the apprenticeship provision in a controlled and systematic way. They work very effectively with a small number of levy-paying employers.

Leaders and managers are very receptive to employers' training needs. They design and implement a relevant range of apprenticeship programmes at levels 2 to 5. The programmes meet the needs of the employers and apprentices very effectively. They also make a good contribution to reducing local, regional and national skills shortages.

Leaders and managers liaise with employers effectively to ensure that they recruit apprentices with integrity. They enrol them on the correct apprenticeship programme at an appropriate level. Leaders and managers follow the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship correctly.

Leaders and managers recruit tutors and assessors who have appropriate vocational qualifications and experience. Tutors and assessors provide the high-quality and specialised vocational training and support that apprentices require. However, leaders have not placed sufficient importance on appointing tutors with specialisms in English, mathematics and digital skills.

Managers monitor apprentices' progress frequently. They ensure that apprentices make the required progress and are on track to complete by the planned end date.

Leaders and managers work very effectively with assessors. They provide good support, such as through a range of standardisation activities and regular one-to-one supervision meetings.

Leaders and managers are highly responsive to changes that employers, apprentices and assessors suggest in order to improve the apprenticeship programmes. They continually improve the quality of the provision. They have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. However, their self-assessment report is too descriptive and insufficiently evaluative.

No one holds leaders to account for the effectiveness of their leadership and management and the quality of the apprenticeships. They acknowledge the need for external scrutiny and intend to appoint an external 'critical friend' to challenge and support them.

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

Apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills, understanding and behaviours. For example, customer service apprentices learn how to analyse and present information to customers. They understand how customers' expectations can change according to culture, gender and age.

Tutors identify and prioritise apprentices' individual starting points accurately. Apprentices reflect systematically on their learning and how they can use their new knowledge, skills, understanding and behaviours in their workplaces.

Apprentices receive high-quality off-the-job training. They attend frequent, carefully planned and appropriately resourced workshops. Employers also make good contributions to these workshops. They deliver relevant topics which apprentices can relate to their organisations and work roles. Apprentices rightly value the good opportunities workshops provide to work together with other apprentices.

Employers are right to value apprentices' vocational competency and personal development. They appreciate highly the good contributions that apprentices make to their businesses. When requested by employers or apprentices, managers provide additional workshops to enrich apprentices' knowledge and skills.

Apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job learning during working hours. However, in a small minority of cases, conflicts arise between the time needed for their job role and the time allowed for off-the-job learning. Employers do not

eliminate these conflicts routinely. Consequently, apprentices continue their learning in out-of-work time.

Assessors provide detailed feedback to apprentices. They highlight clearly the areas where apprentices can improve their answers. However, leaders and managers do not emphasise sufficiently to apprentices on standards-based programmes the importance of end-point assessment and the associated grades.

Leaders and managers have effective arrangements for quality assuring on- and off-the-job training and assessment activities. Their ambitious vision is for all apprentices to receive training of the highest quality.

Managers do not place enough importance on English, mathematics and digital knowledge and skills. They do not challenge apprentices sufficiently to work progressively at higher levels.

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

Leaders and managers have a comprehensive range of safeguarding and safeguarding-related policies and procedures. They implement these appropriately to protect apprentices and employees and to keep them safe.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has appropriate qualifications and experience. A new deputy DSL is awaiting training at level 3. All assessors receive relevant and frequent safeguarding training. Each of them has an appropriate safeguarding qualification at level 2.

Leaders and managers comply with safe recruitment practices. Members of staff receive periodic and relevant checks to ensure that they are suitable for working in a training role.

Apprentices' knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty is not consistently good, as the provider knows. Tutors and assessors do not place enough importance on extending apprentices' knowledge and understanding, including the safe use of the internet. Leaders and managers are taking action to improve apprentices' knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and safeguarding-related issues.

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