

Clifford College Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Ruth Peri, Her Majesty's Inspector

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Address: Clifford House
Hampton Heath Industrial Estate
Hampton
Malpas
Cheshire
SY14 8LU



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 the Education and Skills Funding Agency (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.

Clifford College Ltd is a training provider based in Hampton, Cheshire. It has training centres in three other locations: High Wycombe, Chadderton and Lancaster. The college began training under its own directly funded contract in September 2017. All directly funded apprenticeship provision is supplied for one electrical contractor. Currently, there are 62 apprentices on the installation electrician/maintenance electrician standard at level 3.

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 and appropriate apprenticeship strategy. Apprentices progress to the apprenticeship in installation electrician/maintenance electrician from the traineeship programme. Managers recruit apprentices on to the correct programme at the appropriate level.

Leaders and managers plan apprenticeships effectively. They fulfil the requirements and principles of an apprenticeship. Leaders and managers ensure that employer managers understand clearly on- and off-the-job training requirements. All apprentices receive their full entitlement.

Managers and tutors work closely with employer managers to design the curriculum. The curriculum meets the specific needs of the employer's business. For example, the hospitality department requested training on installing dimmer switches in response to workload requirements. As a result, apprentices are now able to install dimmers competently.

Leaders and managers include relevant industry-specific additional qualifications in the curriculum. Apprentices receive qualifications in first aid, mobile-tower scaffolding, and asbestos awareness. As a result, apprentices broaden their industrial knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Leaders and managers provide helpful financial advice and guidance to apprentices. They liaise with relevant external agencies to help apprentices to claim bursaries for financial support. As a result, apprentices improve their ability to manage their finances.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of most of the areas they need to improve. For example, managers have improved apprentices' induction programme. Apprentices now access induction information through quick-response codes with links to relevant websites. As a result, apprentices are better informed about their programme.

Governors provide appropriate challenge and support to leaders and managers. They identify areas for improvement accurately and help to bring about change. For example, they identified a weakness in professional standards training. Leaders and managers designed additional training and apprentices now work to a standard expected in the industry. Leaders and managers correctly recognise the need to strengthen governance further by recruiting more governors who are independent of the college.

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 tutors arrange the curriculum in a logical order. This enables apprentices to acquire substantial new vocational knowledge, skills and behaviours incrementally. For example, apprentices learn about terminations and connections of conductors. They use testing equipment after learning about the procedures for safe isolation. As a result, apprentices know more and can do more.

Apprentices produce work of a high standard. For example, they install fuse boards, radial circuits and trunking skilfully and to strict industrial standards.

Apprentices receive high-quality off-the-job training. They enjoy their training and learn at an appropriate pace. Tutors check systematically what apprentices know and can recall at the start and end of lessons. Apprentices have a good understanding of the requirements for their endpoint assessments.

Tutors and employer managers provide effective support to apprentices. They hold valuable discussions with apprentices to support their progress. Employer managers correctly acknowledge the good contribution apprentices make to the business. Apprentices increase in confidence and improve continually their performance at work.

Tutors are very experienced and have extensive subject knowledge. They make good use of their knowledge and experience to enable apprentices to deepen their

vocational knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, apprentices learn how to prevent the premature collapse of a wiring system in the event of a fire. Most apprentices pass their unit examinations at their first attempt.

Tutors provide helpful feedback to learners on English and mathematics. Consequently, apprentices improve their work. For example, apprentices complete test sheets accurately using the correct electrical terminology. As a result, apprentices meet the professional standards for the electrical industry.

Tutors do not collect and use information on apprentices' starting points well enough. Consequently, a few apprentices do not make rapid progress.

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

Leaders and managers have a clear commitment to safeguarding. They have appropriate policies and procedures in place. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and two deputy DSLs implement the policies and procedures effectively.

Apprentices are safe and feel safe. For example, managers have installed a concern button on their website. This enables apprentices to report safeguarding and safeguarding-related concerns promptly online.

Managers follow safe recruitment practices when they appoint new staff. Staff receive regular updates about safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. The DSL and deputy DSLs have received appropriate training. They carry out their roles effectively.

Apprentices know how and to whom they should report any safeguarding concerns. However, a few apprentices have a limited understanding of the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism.

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