

Divad Training Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1280359

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Inspection date: 22–23 October 2019

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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.

Divad Training Limited was set up in 2015 and provides training to local and regional employers, the vast majority of which are based in and around the capital. The company gained a direct contract with ESFA to deliver apprenticeships from May 2018. At the time of the monitoring visit, 425 apprentices were registered with the provider on programmes at levels 2, 3 and 5. Three quarters follow programmes in the health and social care and childcare sectors and a quarter study business administration and management apprenticeships. A small number of accounting apprentices have very recently started their programmes. Just over half of all the apprentices are completing frameworks, and the remainder are working towards standards.

Themes

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

Insufficient progress

Leaders and managers do not ensure that the programme meets all the requirements of an apprenticeship. Staff recruit apprentices who work part time or are in unpaid roles onto the apprenticeship programme. Therefore, these apprentices are unable to meet the requirement of substantive paid employment. Managers have not provided apprentices with timely support to improve and develop their functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. Managers have not ensured that all apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job-training.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that the apprentices, recruited by brokers, understand that they are on an apprenticeship programme. A significant proportion

of apprentices on standards do not have sufficient understanding of the various components of the apprenticeship and of the end-point assessment.

A significant minority of apprentices do not gain new knowledge, skills or behaviours, because they already have substantial experience of working in their respective sectors. A few have been working at, or above, the level of their apprenticeship for a number of years.

Leaders and managers have been slow to develop effective quality assurance and improvement processes. As a result, leaders have overestimated the overall effectiveness of the provision and the impact of recent strategies to raise standards.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that apprentices are able to make steady progress throughout their programme. They have been slow to take action regarding the poor frequency, quality and consistency of assessor visits and corresponding feedback to apprentices. A small minority of apprentices have had significant periods of time without visits from assessors. Managers have been unable to resolve a dispute with an awarding body, and as a result, apprentices have had to resubmit work and re-take examinations in English and mathematics. This has led to a significant minority of apprentices failing to complete their apprenticeships.

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

Tutors and managers have been slow to adapt training and assessment from previous frameworks to meet the requirements of the new apprenticeship standards. They have focused their activity on redesigning paperwork, such as that used to record apprentices' progress, rather than developing high-quality training. As a result, tutors do not focus enough on the wider development of skills and knowledge when working with apprentices, and therefore the majority of apprentices are unable to demonstrate that they have acquired new skills and knowledge.

Tutors only provide a limited range of research materials for apprentices to refer to, and do not always ensure that apprentices have understood these. Consequently, the majority of apprentices produce assignments that include reference to their research, without demonstrating how they would implement theory learned in their work environment.

Apprentices do not receive support to develop their knowledge and use of English and mathematics in order to pass mandatory examinations. Many do not start

studying English and mathematics until the end of their programme, or are still waiting to be notified when this will start. This contradicts the provider's stated curriculum intent that all apprentices will achieve functional English and mathematical skills qualifications within the first six months of their programme.

Tutors do not provide good enough feedback to enable apprentices to improve their work. For example, on records of observed practice, tutors state what tasks the apprentice has completed, but do not provide feedback on their competence, skills and performance.

Assessors are suitably qualified and experienced in their specialist sectors to support apprentices in the vocational components of their programme. Their passion and knowledge of subjects, such as safeguarding vulnerable adults and autism spectrum disorder, are reflected in discussions with apprentices.

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

Apprentices feel safe. They receive clear materials to help ensure they understand safeguarding issues, including those related to the 'Prevent' duty. Assessors review apprentices' understanding of these topics throughout their programme and check whether they have any concerns. Apprentices know how to report any concerns about safeguarding or welfare issues. They have the information needed to self-refer to external support agencies.

All staff, including the three designated safeguarding leads, have undertaken appropriate training in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities. Managers have ensured that staff are suitable to work with their apprentices.

Leaders and managers take their responsibilities towards safeguarding seriously. They review staff training needs regularly and provide staff with weekly bulletins to ensure they keep up to date with local developments. Leaders have established suitable external links to support them to develop safeguarding practice. As a result, apprentices benefit from a culture that emphasises their well-being and safety.

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