

Development Processes Group PLC

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.

Development Processes Group PLC (DPG) started to receive funding to deliver apprenticeships in February 2018. DPG provides training to apprentices throughout England. At the time of the monitoring visit, 92 apprentices are on standards-based human resource (HR) apprenticeship programmes. Of these, seven are on HR support at level 3 and 85 are on HR consultant/partner at level 5. DPG deliver the professional qualifications contained within the standards. The remaining elements of the apprenticeship programme are being delivered by one subcontractor.

Themes

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

Insufficient progress

Leaders do not have an accurate oversight of the quality of the HR apprenticeship programme. They rely too much on their subcontractor for advice and guidance about how to run the apprenticeships. Leaders do not take full responsibility for the quality of the provision. They have failed to design and implement suitable processes to ensure that they meet apprenticeship requirements.

Leaders and managers have failed to recruit apprentices to the most appropriate programmes at the correct level. Consequently, a minority of apprentices do not learn anything new and the programmes accredit their existing knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, leaders and managers recruit apprentices with significant experience in HR, who already hold higher-level qualifications, to the level 5 programme.

Leaders and managers do not plan apprenticeships effectively with the employers and the subcontractor. They do not ensure that there are clear links between on- and off-the-job training. As a result, apprentices' on-the-job training and learning needs are not met.

Board members recognise correctly that the management of the apprenticeship programmes is ineffective. Leaders have recently restructured the management of apprenticeships. It is too early to see the impact of this. Board members do not yet

receive accurate reports that enable them to hold leaders and managers to account for the quality of the apprenticeship programmes and the management of them.

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

Facilitators and training development officers do not plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the employers and the apprentices. They do not ensure that all apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need to progress in their careers. For example, most apprentices at level 5 are unclear how the apprenticeship helps them to develop in their job role.

Facilitators do not give apprentices enough information on how they can gain distinctions in their qualifications or what they can do to improve. Information on the end-point assessment is not available early enough in the programmes. As a result, apprentices are unable to identify what they need to do to achieve high grades.

Training and development officers review apprentices' progress but the reviews are not rigorous enough to develop sufficiently apprentices' acquisition of knowledge, skills and behaviours. As a result, the specific development needs of apprentices are not identified routinely or addressed quickly enough by the training and development officers.

Training and development officers do not liaise frequently enough with employers to develop a clear and personalised learning plan for each apprentice. Training and development officers do not identify or address apprentices' development needs for the workplace. As a result, too few apprentices learn the critical aspects, which employers require, to improve their performance in the workplace.

Facilitators enable learners to understand the key concepts in their professional qualification. They present information and stimulate discussion appropriately. Apprentices apply the relevant concepts in their workplace, successfully making progress on their professional qualification.

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

The safeguarding arrangements that leaders implement are not rigorous enough. Leaders, managers and staff do not follow their procedures to keep apprentices safe. Not all staff have had suitable checks before they work with apprentices. A designated safeguarding officer (DSO) and deputy DSO are in place. The deputy has had appropriate training.

Apprentices do not know who or how to report concerns about safeguarding. Information given to apprentices at the start of the programme is unclear. Further information relating to safeguarding is not embedded throughout the programmes.

Leaders do not have a 'Prevent' duty risk register or action plan in place. They are unclear about the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism in the areas where apprentices live and work. The 'Prevent' duty is not made relevant to the workplace. Consequently, apprentices' knowledge and understanding of the 'Prevent' duty is poor.

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