

Keystone Training Ltd

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 the Education and Skills Funding Agency 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.

Keystone is a consultancy company founded in 2005. Keystone Training Ltd started to deliver levy-funded apprenticeships in January 2018. Keystone works with employers in a wide range of sectors such as food, local government, engineering, construction and manufacturing throughout the United Kingdom. At the time of the inspection, 114 apprentices were on the level 3 team leader/supervisor and level 5 operations/departmental manager apprenticeship standard programmes. The vast majority of apprentices already have GCSE mathematics and English qualifications. Keystone Training Ltd does not use subcontractors to deliver training.

Themes

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

Insufficient progress

Leaders have not implemented a programme that satisfies the principles and requirements of apprenticeships. For example, apprentices do not receive their off-the-job training entitlement. Most apprentices and employers do not have a full understanding of the off-the-job training expectations. Leaders do not monitor effectively the quality of the activities that apprentices undertake.

Leaders have established links with employers from a range of sectors. However, they do not work closely with employers to plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the apprentices.

Most apprentices are not recruited appropriately. Apprentices do not receive suitable advice and guidance to ensure that the apprenticeship is appropriate for their needs. Apprentices recruited into the programme are not always in a job role that allows them to develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, most heating engineers have no line management or supervisory responsibility, hampering their ability to complete the apprenticeship.

Leaders have not implemented a curriculum that ensures that apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours beyond the Institute of Leadership and Management qualification. Leaders do not track the progress of the full apprenticeship effectively.

Staff do not communicate the requirements of the end-point assessment to apprentices and employers very well. The vast majority of apprentices do not know what is expected for their final assessment. As a result, most apprentices are not on target to complete the apprenticeship programme.

Leaders do not ensure that they have experienced staff to deliver apprenticeships. Assessors are not well qualified and most do not hold relevant vocational qualifications above level 3. As a result, staff do not have the experience and knowledge to make rapid changes to the curriculum to positively benefit apprentices.

Leaders do not scrutinise the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They rely on internal discussions and media updates to inform them how to run successful apprenticeships. Currently there are no governance arrangements in place.

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

Apprentices are enthusiastic and motivated to learn. They value the Institute of Leadership and Management element of the programme. However, a large majority of apprentices do not develop significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours that are relevant to their job roles. Too few apprentices can recall anything new they have learned as a result of the programme. All apprentices who should have completed their apprenticeship are significantly behind their planned completion date.

Assessors do not plan the learning sessions well enough to enable apprentices to make substantial progress. Apprentices complete a detailed self-evaluation, but assessors do not use this to plan their programme effectively. Assessors do not communicate effectively with facilitators and often apprentices repeat things they already know.

Leaders and assessors do not monitor the progress of apprentices effectively. They have not put in place any formal plans to help apprentices catch up with the content they miss at their off-the-job training workshops. As a result, most apprentices do not get the support they need to complete the apprenticeship. Leaders have invested in a new system to track off-the-job training, but it is too early to see its impact.

Leaders do not communicate with employers very well. Employers receive monthly updates on the progress of their apprentices. These updates do not outline what the

employer needs to do to support apprentices to get back on track when they fall behind.

Apprentices do not make adequate progress in developing their English and mathematical skills. Many apprentices only receive access to online resources, which they complete in their own time. This support is insufficient to develop these skills and as a result they do not achieve their qualifications in a timely way.

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

Leaders have not developed an effective culture of safeguarding and protection within the organisation. The designated safeguarding officer has not received training to ensure that she has either current or full knowledge of the potential risks apprentices may face. Staff do not complete safeguarding or 'Prevent' duty training. As a result, they cannot discuss relevant areas of risk with apprentices, such as heating engineers who visit clients' homes on their own or apprentices who work on construction sites.

Leaders have not developed a secure system to record incidents to enable them to follow up issues, should they arise. They have no mechanism to review potential risks or what actions they should take if required.

Leaders have not developed an effective 'Prevent' duty policy. They do not discuss issues related to radicalisation and extremism with their staff, apprentices or employers. As a result, apprentices do not have a secure understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

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