

St George's Hospital Medical School

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.

St George's Hospital Medical School (St George's) is situated in Tooting, south London. St George's began providing courses funded directly by the Education and Skills Funding agency in January 2018. St George's provides apprenticeship programmes at level 5 in nursing associates and healthcare practitioner standards. Apprentices work in a broad range of roles in hospital trusts across London. At the time of the monitoring visit, 139 apprentices are on nursing associate apprenticeships and four are on healthcare assistant practitioner apprenticeships.

Themes

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

Significant progress

Leaders and managers at St George's have established a strong and successful vision to provide high-quality healthcare education for new entrants to nursing. They have put in place a curriculum that meets the National Health Service priority to increase the number of trained nursing associates.

Leaders have carefully considered the apprenticeships that they teach. They work closely with their employer partners to meet the training needs of hospital trusts across London. The apprenticeship programme provides applicants, who may not have been able to enter nursing through traditional routes, with the opportunity to embark on a nursing career.

Leaders have planned a programme that provides apprentices with a broad understanding of the different fields within nursing. Apprentices benefit from a range of placements in different care settings. These enable them to make informed decisions about their future career pathways and to select areas of specialism confidently. Apprentices are well equipped to progress onto registered nurse training at the end of their apprenticeship.

Managers have ensured that tutors and assessors are qualified in relevant specialisms and to the appropriate levels. All tutors complete their teaching qualifications.

Leaders, managers and employers work highly effectively together to ensure that apprentices have a very good understanding of the requirements of the course prior to entry. As a result, apprentices are suitable for the programmes that they enrol onto and most remain on their apprenticeship.

Managers have established robust quality assurance processes. They use these well to monitor and improve the quality of the apprenticeships. Senior leaders have a very good overview of apprentices' progress and they plan appropriately for apprentices' off-the-job training and end-point assessments.

Leaders and managers gather useful feedback from apprentices and employers. They are responsive to the needs of apprentices and employers and so ensure that apprentices receive a good preparation for their careers in nursing.

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

Tutors plan the curriculum in fine detail and develop apprentices' skills and knowledge sequentially. For example, apprentices secure a very good understanding of anatomy and physiology before moving on to more complex pathophysiology and specific medical conditions. Most apprentices have an excellent understanding of the broader skills they need at work. For example, they learn to communicate very effectively to reassure patients while carrying out procedures such as taking blood.

Tutors and assessors provide apprentices with detailed and helpful feedback on their assignments. As a result, apprentices improve their work as they progress through the apprenticeship. Tutors teach apprentices to improve their academic writing skills. Staff identify apprentices' learning needs swiftly. Tutors and assessors know about apprentices' additional support needs, such as when nurses should not carry out manual handling or if resources need to be in accessible formats.

Apprentices, who are mostly new to the profession, have a very good understanding of the career opportunities available to them. Specialist nurses provide expert knowledge in teaching sessions. Apprentices are given time to shadow registered nurses to gain a greater understanding of nursing in different contexts.

Apprentices are taught new knowledge and skills, which help them to be successful in the workplace. For example, healthcare assistant practitioner apprentices learn how to insert catheters competently and, as a result, can support nurses on the ward more effectively.

A minority of apprentices who started their apprenticeship when it was first set up have not achieved their functional skills in English and mathematics at level 2 or equivalent. Leaders have recently changed the entry requirements so that apprentices must achieve English and mathematics prior to starting the apprenticeship. Employers now provide applicants with very good support, including assistance from Health Education England, to achieve these qualifications, prior to commencement of their apprenticeships.

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

Staff at St George's have created a very positive culture of safeguarding. They have established relevant procedures which they implement effectively to keep apprentices safe.

Tutors provide very good well-being support to apprentices. For example, apprentices benefit from a mentor at the university and one in the workplace. Apprentices meet frequently with their mentors to discuss issues related to the course or personal challenges.

The designated safeguarding lead and safeguarding officers receive appropriate training. Safeguarding leads have positive links with external agencies, including the counter terrorism police. Staff have a good understanding of potential risks in the local area, such as from right-wing terrorism. Apprentices have a good understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

Managers carry out relevant pre-employment checks to ensure that staff are safe to work with apprentices. Staff have frequent training in relation to the 'Prevent' duty. Managers do not, however, monitor routinely whether all staff have completed mandatory update training.

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