

Mooreskills Limited

Monitoring visit report

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of a series of monitoring visits to a sample of new apprenticeship training providers that are funded through the apprenticeship levy. Ofsted's intention to carry out monitoring visits to these new providers was first announced by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in November 2017. The focus of these visits is on the three themes set out below.

MooreSkills Limited was formed in 2013 by two co-founding directors. In May 2017, they started training apprentices funded through the apprenticeship levy, swiftly recruiting apprentices in a relatively short space of time. They currently provide training for 223 apprentices. The vast majority of apprentices are enrolled on new standards with a small number on framework apprenticeships. The apprentices are mainly enrolled on retailing and wholesaling, administration, team leading, business management or leadership apprenticeships at levels 2 to 5. More than half of the apprentices are based at Heathrow Airport, with the remainder at other airports and businesses around the country.

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 prospective apprentices receive effective advice and guidance about what is required to be a successful apprentice when they are considering enrolling on a programme. For example, apprentices have not received the correct information regarding the requirement to develop their English and mathematical skills and they are not all aware of the assessments at the end of the programme. Most apprentices appreciate the opportunity for promotion that the apprenticeship could enable them to gain.

Leaders and managers have not implemented effective quality monitoring processes to check that apprentices receive a high standard of training and make sufficient progress. The progress of the vast majority of current apprentices is slow. Apprentices who enrolled in February 2018 have yet to start their training programme. Leaders have not ensured that they have sufficient training staff with the required competencies and skills to deliver the programmes. Far too many of the apprentices at Heathrow Airport are adversely affected by this shortage of qualified training staff.

Managers ensure that the assessors they do recruit are suitably qualified and experienced. They have taken on new staff more recently to cope with the growing

number of apprentices. Leaders have implemented an effective appraisal process and, as a result, two assessors have recently left the organisation.

Leaders and managers do not evaluate the quality of the provision sufficiently or set challenging targets to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment or apprentices' achievements. They do not analyse information to inform improvement strategies. The action plan does not make it clear what the expected improvements will be or how managers and assessors will know if the actions are successful.

The observations of training focus too much on what assessors do rather than on what apprentices learn or the progress they make in developing new skills. Managers have refined the observation process recently and intend to do joint lesson observations, but this is not yet taking place. Observers have not yet had training on effective observation skills.

Not all employers understand clearly the requirements of the apprenticeship standards for on- and off-the-job training. The majority of apprentices spoken to during the visit reported to inspectors that they are not developing new skills or enhancing their existing knowledge through their apprenticeship training. Most apprentices have a monthly review where assessors set them tasks to complete before the next review. Apprentices complete these tasks in their own time. Leaders and managers do not monitor effectively the off-the-job training activities to ensure that apprentices receive their entitlement. Managers have recently introduced additional workshops to try to rectify this concern. Employers are supportive of their apprentices and often provide a mentor to give extra support.

Apprentices at Manchester Airport attend well-planned training days. For example, apprentices on the level 3 retail team leader programme develop their product knowledge of beauty and cosmetic products. They are involved directly with high-profile launches of new products, for example perfume that is not yet available on the high street. The recording of attendance at the workshops and other training sessions organised by the employer is sporadic and dependent upon the apprentice and their assessor.

The directors have set a clear strategy to expand and develop new apprenticeships in retail at international airports. However, there have been a number of staffing issues, particularly at Heathrow Airport, and this has affected the quality of the programmes. The standard of the programmes is better at Manchester Airport and these apprentices make their expected progress.

Directors use external consultants to provide them with an assessment of the quality of their apprenticeships; they identified a number of key areas that require improvement. Directors have put actions in place, such as additional workshops for apprentices and suspended recruitment at Heathrow Airport, but as yet, there is no discernible impact of these actions.

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

Assessors do not set and record personalised detailed and useful training and development targets for their apprentices to help them to make timely progress. Assessors focus solely on the completion of units and not on the development of apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. All unit completion dates are the same for all apprentices. Assessors do not complete individual training plans so that apprentices understand fully what is required of them and by when.

The quality of the assessment and the recording and monitoring of apprentices' progress are poor in most cases and do not provide apprentices with sufficient guidance on what they need to do next. Activities set by assessors do not support apprentices to develop high-level skills. Assessors do not provide the most able apprentices with the opportunity to complete challenging activities. Managers have identified this concern and have taken action recently to improve the quality of assessment activities; however, this has not yet had any impact.

Not all staff and apprentices fully understand the electronic system for recording and monitoring apprentices' progress and activities. Consequently, leaders do not have an accurate oversight of the progress that each apprentice makes. For example, at Manchester Airport, retail apprentices demonstrate good levels of skills development, knowledge and professional behaviours in their roles, which assessors or apprentices do not record in the electronic portfolios. Only a quarter of apprentices at Heathrow Airport had met their assessor for a review and none of them knew how to use the electronic portfolio system.

Apprentices, particularly at Heathrow Airport, do not make a prompt start to their programme following induction. Too many apprentices do not understand the requirements of their apprenticeship. Most apprentices have completed very little work and are making slow progress. Too few apprentices have a good understanding of their planned completion date, and many are unaware of what they need to do to complete their apprenticeship.

The planning and delivery of training to develop apprentices' English and mathematical skills are poor. Apprentices who are required to complete functional skills qualifications as part of their programme do not receive enough guidance on how to improve their English and mathematics, in particular, through training on how to develop strategies to improve their poor spelling, punctuation and grammar. Apprentices who have already gained a level 2 qualification in English and/or mathematics do not develop these skills further or understand how they can use these skills in their job role.

Assessors' feedback to apprentices is mostly verbal and insufficiently specific. For example, assessors provide praise, or give very general comments about improvement, such as to 'elaborate' on a particular unit criterion. Where assessors

provide written feedback, the quality is poor and does not give sufficient detail on how an apprentice can improve their work successfully.

Most apprentices enjoy group training sessions. They benefit from meeting other employees from different parts of their organisation. Apprentices at Manchester Airport are developing the practical knowledge, skills and behaviours that are required for their roles. For example, apprentices spoke of how they are moving successfully from a sales assistant role to becoming a team leader. All retail apprentices at Manchester Airport said that they had become more professional at work and were now able to apply new skills successfully, such as time management, team building, problem solving, effective communication and organisational skills.

Assessors at Manchester Airport work closely with managers to ensure that apprentices have opportunities to practise new skills and behaviours in their roles. Apprentices at Manchester Airport have clear career pathways, which their employers support.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Leaders and managers make safeguarding a high priority for staff and apprentices. Directors have created useful safeguarding policies and procedures, which include the 'Prevent' duty, which staff understand. Within these policies and procedures are guidelines on the referral of any concerns in relation to safeguarding and radicalisation. Staff receive training in safeguarding to update their knowledge and understanding.

Managers ensure that there are safe recruitment practices in place and all staff have had the relevant checks.

Managers have investigated thoroughly the very few safeguarding incidents that have occurred. While managers record the incident thoroughly, they do not record well enough the actions they take. Managers seek the advice of external agencies, such as the local authority designated officer, when needed. The senior designated safeguarding manager has completed update training for this role recently.

Apprentices feel safe in their workplaces. They know to whom they should report any incidents that make them feel unsafe. Apprentices who work at airports have a particularly good understanding of the need for rigorous security within the airport environment. Assessors check apprentices' safety and well-being when they visit them in their workplaces. A small minority of learners at Manchester Airport have a good understanding of radicalisation and how it applies at work. However, this is not the case for all apprentices, particularly at Heathrow Airport.

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