

# Impact Futures Training Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 1276401

**Name of lead inspector:** Nigel Bragg HMI

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**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** Academy House, Unit 3, Waterside Drive,  
Langley, Berkshire SL3 6EY



## 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.

Impact Futures Training Limited (Impact) commenced delivering vocational training and apprenticeships in 2008. In May 2017, Impact became a prime subcontractor, training apprentices using levy funding. This provision was in scope for the monitoring visit. Impact currently delivers training for 161 apprentices at levels 2, 3 and 5. Apprentices are following programmes within the health and social care, management, team leading, business administration, customer service and recruitment sectors.

### Themes

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

**Reasonable progress**

Senior leaders and managers are very committed to providing a high and improving standard of training for all apprentices. They have exploited fully the findings of the recent short inspection of their associate company to introduce improvements across their apprenticeship provision. For example, to support apprentices' development, tutors now carry out progress reviews more frequently. Managers have introduced monthly sector-head meetings so that the checking of the delivery team's performance is both more systematic and current. Senior managers have commenced sharing apprentices' achievement data regularly with tutors to aid assessment of personal performance against agreed targets.

Senior managers have set and communicated a clear strategy to address training skills gaps in the business, and health and social care sectors. Their vision and actions centre on becoming an outstanding provider in the delivery of levy-funded apprenticeships. Senior managers have ensured that training builds tutors' professional competence so they can support apprentices' success effectively. Tutors are suitably qualified and knowledgeable about the vocational area in which they work.

The senior management team rightly ensures that it does not contract with employers who are not able and committed to deliver all aspects of the

apprenticeship. Impact's staff undertake significant preparatory work with employers. As a result, apprentices are on the correct programme and employers are effectively involved in the planning and delivery of their training. Managers make good use of detailed service-level agreements to support their good working relationships with employers. These agreements and related processes clearly outline and reinforce the responsibilities of relevant parties in the delivery of high-quality training. This ensures that employers have a good awareness of how they can contribute to apprentices' success.

Senior leaders and managers have a good and realistic understanding of the provision's strengths and areas for improvement. They make effective use of an action plan for quality improvement to raise standards rapidly. Managers receive and use a wide range of feedback to inform their view of the provision's standards. Self-assessment is well established. It makes a valuable contribution to the senior management team's quality evaluations. The findings within the current self-assessment report generally reflect those inspectors made during the monitoring visit.

Tutors' recording of apprentices' participation in training is good. The large majority of apprentices consistently receive their on- and off-the-job training entitlement. However, managers have recognised a need to improve monitoring arrangements so they can intervene more quickly when they identify shortfalls in training attendance. Managers are piloting a strengthened process, but it is too early to evaluate its usefulness.

A board of shareholders and directors provides effective support and challenge to the senior management team's performance. The board meets regularly and gives justifiably detailed attention to monitoring apprentices' achievement. The board has recently enhanced its use of data to monitor more effectively the achievement of different apprenticeship groups. Board members acknowledge the need to improve the independent and impartial scrutiny of their decision making. Currently, the board does not have a member with sufficient expertise in teaching, learning and assessment within apprenticeship training. Recruitment initiatives to address this deficit have yet to be successful.

Managers make good use of data reports to monitor apprentices' and tutors' performance against suitably challenging targets. The available data allows managers to intervene appropriately and to solve weak performance. However, managers accept that the electronic reporting system needs refining so that indicators of apprentices' progress are consistently reliable.

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

Tutors ensure that apprentices develop new skills, knowledge and behaviours that allow them to carry out their work roles more effectively. As a result, apprentices are able to show how their learning has improved the quality of service that they offer their clients. For example, a customer service apprentice described how her improved communication skills allowed her to help vulnerable service users and their families.

Tutors plan off-the-job learning and support sessions well by taking appropriate account of apprentices' job roles and prior educational attainment. Many apprentices receive useful additional training that accelerates their programme achievement and extends their acquisition of new skills. For example, in a large adult care provider, apprentices participate in extensive in-house training that complements the apprenticeship programme.

The majority of apprentices make at least good progress and achieve their agreed short-term targets within the required timescale. Tutors are skilled at identifying the minority of apprentices whose progress is too slow. Managers are effective in ensuring that apprentices receive additional coaching and support to accelerate their learning. As a result, most apprentices overcome their barriers to learning and subsequently progress at an appropriate pace.

The standard of apprentices' written and practical work is good. Apprentices are keen to learn, and talk enthusiastically about the benefits of participating in apprenticeship training. They receive adequate information, advice and guidance at the beginning and throughout their programme. Apprentices are aware of how their current learning supports their longer term career aspirations.

Apprentices have a good awareness of what is required of them to succeed in their apprenticeship programme. They benefit from constructive and detailed feedback from tutors on their assessed work, which helps them to progress. Apprentices know how much progress they have made. Most apprentices can explain what new skills, knowledge and behaviours they have developed. They know what actions they need to complete to finish their apprenticeship within the planned duration.

Tutors skilfully use a wide range of sector-relevant online learning materials to ensure that apprentices develop their English and mathematical skills. Tutors provide apprentices with good individual support as they work towards achieving English and mathematics functional skills qualifications. Tutors raise the skills of all apprentices so they can apply their new skills to improving their workplace effectiveness.

Senior leaders keep apprentices and employers fully informed about the emerging requirements for end-point assessments. Managers have established an appropriate assessment strategy and associated arrangements that they adapt as required. Consequently, they prepare tutors, apprentices and employers well for the relevant testing format.

The large majority of employers are supportive of the apprenticeship programme. They generally engage well in ensuring that apprentices attain to a high standard. Workplace supervisors usually have an appropriate understanding of what apprentices are learning. This ensures that they, along with tutors, coordinate on- and off-the-job training effectively. However, in a few instances, employers do not attend the three-month progress reviews with apprentices and tutors. This delays apprentices' achievement.

Managers use quality assurance processes well to monitor and improve the learning experience. Evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment through direct observation places adequate emphasis on judging their quality. Managers identify accurately the key strengths and weaknesses of observed sessions. However, improvement plans for observed tutors do not consistently link to the further training required to improve learning. Managers have recently corrected this, but it is too early to judge the effect on the quality of taught sessions.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are effective. The senior management team gives a high priority to protecting all apprentices and staff from harm. Leaders and managers use appropriate policies and procedures to inform the safe recruitment and vetting of staff. Safeguarding policies and procedures are comprehensive and fit for purpose. Managers and tutors have a sound awareness of their safeguarding duty. Apprentices report feeling protected during their training and at the workplace. They have a good awareness of how to raise any concerns about their safety or welfare.

Leaders and managers have ensured that the designated safeguarding officers are well qualified and competent to carry out their role. The officers undertake a wide range and variety of training so that they are conversant with current legislation. They make appropriate use of local intelligence to inform strategies designed to protect apprentices. In addition, all tutors have participated in suitable development opportunities to equip them in identifying and dealing with safeguarding issues.

Apprentices generally have a good appreciation of British values. They have an appropriate understanding of how to apply this knowledge to their work and personal lives. Apprentices working in health and social care settings are very clear as to their responsibilities to protect the vulnerable people who use their services. Managers have recently strengthened the arrangements to raise apprentices' appreciation of

the 'Prevent' duty. However, not all apprentices are sufficiently aware of the dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism.

Apprentices usually demonstrate an appropriate understanding of how to stay safe when using web-based and social media. Relevant filters and procedures are in place to stop inappropriate use of the internet during training sessions.

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
M1 2WD

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