

The Management Academy Ltd

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.

The Management Academy (TMA) was set up in 2016 to develop management talent. It became a prime contract holder in May 2017. It works closely with an employer within the aviation industry to deliver the Level 5 Operations/Departmental Manager standard apprenticeship. Ten apprentices were enrolled in September 2017. All apprentices are funded through the levy.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders have a clear strategic direction to provide training for managers within the aviation industry. They have worked closely with a single employer to design a course that meets its business needs and the needs of apprentices.

Managers have carefully thought through the structure and design of the course so that apprentices benefit fully from the off-the-job element of the programme. They are aware of the endpoint assessment apprentices are working towards. Trainers deliver most of their entitlement on one day each week for apprentices. Apprentices negotiate the rest of their entitlement with their line managers.

TMA managers closely monitor apprentices' training and ensure that the employer is supporting them to access all their entitlement. In a few instances, TMA managers have had to intervene to ensure that apprentices are released from their workload to undertake their learning. This resulted in lower attendance and slower progress for the few apprentices that this affected.

Apprentices receive appropriate information, advice and guidance prior to the programme. A launch at the beginning of the programme outlines course requirements for apprentices and their line managers. Apprentices receive a handbook with the structure and content of the course clearly laid out. Apprentices have a good understanding of how the qualification links with their job role and supports their career ambitions. Since starting the programme, all apprentices have gained additional work-related responsibilities, and a few have secured early

promotion to senior management roles within the company. However, a few apprentices find the course more demanding than expected. Managers are aware of the need to provide more training for line managers in supporting their apprentices.

Arrangements for governance are appropriate for the size and scale of the provider. The board comprises the chief executive and a non-executive director who is able to provide an independent perspective. They meet quarterly, determine the strategic direction of the company and oversee key aspects of the provision, such as safeguarding.

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**

TMA trainers and coaches have good knowledge and management experience within the aviation industry. They skilfully use this understanding to plan varied and interesting learning for apprentices. This motivates and challenges apprentices to consolidate and extend their learning. Apprentices develop a good understanding of how leadership and management practices relate to their individual job roles. For example, as a result of working on a range of challenging live company project briefs, apprentices acquire and demonstrate high levels of confidence and communication skills in writing reports, producing accounts and taking minutes of meetings.

Apprentices benefit from the specialist contribution to their learning provided through the active involvement of senior leaders from their employer. Managers from the finance department and from human resources act as guest tutors. They work closely with TMA trainers and provide expert input. Apprentices are very positive about the quality of their learning. They also value greatly their employer's direct contribution towards the delivery of the course. The employer values the contribution apprentices are making since commencing the programme.

Trainers assess apprentices' vocational work frequently. They provide them with detailed and supportive feedback that indicates how they can improve. The standard of apprentices' written work is good, and their portfolios are neat and well organised.

Apprentices routinely demonstrate high levels of confidence and commitment to their learning. They receive good support from their trainers and coach. Most line managers provide ongoing professional mentoring in the workplace. As a result, apprentices develop good interpersonal, social and problem-solving skills.

Reviews in the workplace are frequent and timely. Apprentices' line managers take an active role in these reviews. They set work patterns to make the best use of learning and assessment opportunities.

TMA staff do not use initial assessment effectively to identify apprentices' English, mathematics or vocational skills at the start of the programme. As a result, individual learning plans lack a clear focus on how apprentices can improve these skills. Targets are not specific or demanding.

Trainers maintain accurate records and have a good overview of the progress that apprentices are making. They have successfully established a culture in which apprentices aspire to reach the highest standards. However, they do not consistently set them challenging targets so that all make the progress expected of them. As a result, a significant minority of apprentices are making slower-than-expected progress. Leaders at TMA have recently developed appropriate intervention plans to ensure that all apprentices are on track to complete the course by the planned end date. However, it is too early to gauge the full impact of these actions.

To improve teaching, learning and assessment, the two main trainers have been observing each other and giving each other feedback. Managers are working to introduce an external element to the observation process to provide more rigour.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are effective. TMA has a designated safeguarding officer (DSO) who has received enhanced training. All members of staff have received training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. The DSO is aware of the process to follow if an incident occurs and has details of local safeguarding boards and channel panels, should they be needed. To date, no incidents have been recorded.

Leaders and managers have a comprehensive set of policies covering safeguarding, the promotion of fundamental British values and the 'Prevent' duty. Trainers give apprentices this key information at their induction. Trainers also integrate these issues within their classroom teaching and make them relevant to the aviation industry. Trainers use those units that lend themselves to highlighting these issues, such as the 'leading people' unit, to generate discussion on both the 'Prevent' duty and fundamental British values. As a result, apprentices have a secure awareness of these issues. Apprentices know how to keep themselves safe. A few apprentices are not clear about who the designated contact is in TMA.

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