

# Unique Training Solutions Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 1278575

**Name of lead inspector:** Rebecca Perry HMI

**Inspection date(s):** 31 July – 1 August 2018

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** 10 Sandridge Park  
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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.

Unique Training Solutions Limited (UTS) gained approval as a prime contractor in May 2017. UTS has been providing privately funded commercial training and accredited courses for 15 years to the health, housing and social-care sector. The first publicly funded apprentices started their programmes in June 2017. At the time of the monitoring visit, 147 apprentices of all ages were studying programmes at different levels mainly in adult-care work and team leading. All apprentices are enrolled on standards-based apprenticeships. UTS does not work with any subcontractors.

### 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 been slow to implement actions to assess the quality of provision, given the rapid growth in the number of apprenticeships in recent months. Leaders do not have comprehensive improvement arrangements in place to ensure that the quality of provision is at least good. Leaders have appointed three external stakeholders to form a governance board in order to challenge leaders about apprentices' achievements and the quality of provision. However, the board has not yet met.

Leaders and managers do not effectively support improvements in teaching, learning and assessment through observing practice. Managers focus too much on what trainers and assessors do rather than on the learning that takes place and the progress that apprentices make. Leaders set improvement actions for trainers and assessors, but they do not monitor them and their impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders recognise this and have designed and piloted a new observation process, but it is too soon to judge whether it is improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Leaders have recently introduced new arrangements to ensure that operational line managers and apprentices are aware of the apprenticeship requirements. Leaders do not hold employers sufficiently to account when they do not play their part in helping meet the expected requirements of the apprenticeships programmes. As a result, too

many apprentices do not receive their entitlement to off-the-job training within working hours. However, when apprentices do receive this time, the training is beneficial and it includes additional certificated learning relevant to the care sectors in which they work.

Leaders do not ensure that apprentices have sufficient opportunities to improve their English and mathematical knowledge and skills. For example, too many apprentices do not have sufficient time planned into their programmes to study for their functional skills qualifications. As a result, the proportion of apprentices who achieve these qualifications is low and first-time pass rates are very low. Leaders are aware of this weakness and have appointed a new manager very recently to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in English and mathematics.

Leaders now monitor apprentices' progress more effectively than previously. Assessors accurately report progress for all apprentices based on an in-depth review of their performance. Leaders use this information well to make informed decisions about appropriate intervention actions. However, it is too soon to judge the impact of this recent development on improving apprentices' progress.

Leaders and employers collaborate very effectively to plan apprenticeship programmes that aim to meet the needs of the care services that they provide. Leaders and managers have built very strong relationships with senior managers in the large organisations with which they work, including local authorities and National Health Service trusts.

**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**

Staff have significant expertise to train apprentices in health and care. Leaders ensure that all trainers and assessors access a broad range of professional development opportunities. These help to improve trainers' and assessors' teaching and assessing abilities and meet the practitioner occupational standards required by the relevant professional health and care organisations.

The large majority of apprentices make good progress in developing their knowledge, practical skills and behaviours to improve and increase the contributions they make in the workplace. For example, apprentices communicate effectively with care users and assiduously follow statutory guidance when planning care services. Most apprentices enjoy their learning and value their professional development. They demonstrate the importance of advocacy, treating service users with dignity and respect and, as a result of their recently gained confidence, challenge those who do not.

Staff effectively monitor apprentices' progress. Assessors conduct very effective progress reviews for apprentices with their employers. Reviews are thorough and ensure that apprentices know how much progress they make in the workplace.

Most employers enable apprentices to improve their practical skills in the workplace. Apprentices demonstrate a good understanding at work of the behaviours and attitudes required to provide high standards of care. For example, they ensure that care users understand why they receive certain types of care services. Apprentices also play a full part in helping care users to choose menus, clothing and activities.

Most apprentices produce written assignments of an appropriate standard. However, some assessors do not provide apprentices with feedback on their written work and apprentices' mistakes are not corrected. As a result, they do not know how to improve their work further and fully grasp relevant theory.

Apprentices demonstrate English and mathematical skills appropriate to the minimum requirements of their roles within the health and care sectors and their apprenticeship. However, assessors and trainers do not make good use of information on apprentices' abilities when they start their programmes to enable apprentices to improve these skills further.

Assessors do not ensure that apprentices who require additional support with their studies receive specific help so that they can make good progress. Too many apprentices complete work in their own time as they do not receive their full entitlement to off-the-job training during working hours.

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

Leaders ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place. Apprentices feel safe and are safe in their workplaces. Leaders have made appropriate arrangements for managing concerns and disclosures, and they work effectively with employers to manage workplace issues, such as reports of bullying. Leaders follow safer recruitment practices when they recruit trainers and assessors.

All staff have been trained in safeguarding. The designated safeguarding officer is highly qualified. As a result, staff enable apprentices to develop their understanding of safeguarding well within the context of the health and care industries they work in. Leaders provide regular, relevant updates to staff and employers. In response to the recent expansion in apprenticeship numbers, leaders have firm plans in place to ensure that a further two managers take up designated safeguarding officer training in September 2018.

Most apprentices demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of how to protect their clients and service users and how to report concerns to their employers. Apprentices know who to go to within UTS if they have any safeguarding concerns.

Assessors ensure that apprentices' safety is regularly reviewed at their progress reviews. However, apprentices have a very limited understanding of how to protect themselves from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism or how these dangers apply to them at work or in their personal lives. Leaders have been slow to respond to the statutory requirements relating to the 'Prevent' duty and staff have not yet undertaken any formal training.

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