

BiS Henderson 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.

BiS Henderson Limited was established in 1997. Through its wholly owned subsidiary, BiS Henderson Academy, it acts as a privately owned, independent learning provider. It began delivering vocational training by means of levy-funded apprenticeships in August 2017. This levy-funded provision was in scope for the monitoring visit.

BiS Henderson Limited has 105 enrolled standards-based apprentices, of whom 73 are team leader advanced apprentices. The remainder are supply chain and warehouse intermediate apprentices. Apprentices are employed at sites throughout England. The standards-based apprenticeships are funded through the employer 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 and managers have a detailed understanding of the recruitment and skills shortages faced by the logistics and supply chain operations sector. In response, they have worked closely with employers and apprentices to introduce apprenticeship programmes that address these needs. The senior management team has a good awareness of standards-based programmes. It delivers apprenticeships that fulfil the relevant apprenticeship requirements.

Only apprentices who can benefit from participating in training join the programmes. Managers are careful to ensure that apprentices enrol onto the correct programme and at the right level. Consequently, apprentices have accurate expectations of the programme's demands and the personal commitment they need to succeed.

Following a period of organisational change, leaders and managers have undertaken a significant amount of productive work to ensure that the training arrangements are fit for purpose. During this time, apprentices' achievement rates slowed, particularly for those following the team leader advanced apprenticeship programme. In

response, managers have implemented personalised recovery plans for each apprentice. Consequently, the large majority of apprentices are now making expected or better progress. A very small minority of apprentices have taken a break from training while their employer moves premises. When apprentices' personal circumstances necessitate a break in learning, managers adjust the planned end dates correctly.

Leaders and managers successfully ensure that employers adjust work patterns to allow apprentices to take part in sufficient off-the-job training. As a result, most apprentices are on target to receive their training entitlement. However, managers recognise that the tracking of apprentices' participation in off-the-job training needs further improvement. Current processes are too bureaucratic and hinder performance monitoring. This can delay managers' identification and response to deficits in apprentices' participation in off-the-job training. It is too early to judge the impact of recent improvements to monitoring processes.

Senior managers have invested in adequate staff and learning resources to allow for successful apprenticeship programme delivery. They have also established appropriate end-point assessment arrangements. All trainers have a good understanding of the strategies they must apply to prepare apprentices fully for assessment.

The senior management team has a realistic understanding of the provision's strengths and areas for improvement. However, managers have delayed the self-assessment process. As a result, it has yet to produce the planned report and associated improvement plan. In the interim, the team has made good use of training quality evaluations to support improvements that are enhancing swiftly the apprentices' experience.

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**

Standards trainers have a good knowledge of their apprentices. They use their productive working relationships with workplace managers effectively to help apprentices overcome barriers to achievement. For example, they ensure that impediments to apprentices' participation in both on- and off-the-job training are minimised.

Standards trainers are enthusiastic and ambitious for apprentices' success. They are readily accessible to apprentices, who appreciate the ease of communication should they need help. Standards trainers are particularly adept at undertaking their workplace visits at a time and place that fit in with apprentices' work patterns and employers' business demands. This contributes effectively to apprentices' sustained

motivation and progress in developing new, vocationally relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Apprentices receive a suitable assessment of their competence before starting their programme. This includes a comprehensive evaluation of their vocationally relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours. Standards trainers make effective use of this and other assessment information to plan individualised training programmes that promote apprentices' development effectively.

Standards trainers identify apprentices' English, mathematical and digital skills development needs accurately before they begin their programme. Standards trainers monitor apprentices' knowledge and skills levels closely throughout their programme. When needed, trainers review and reassess apprentices' English and mathematical knowledge and skills levels. As necessary, standards trainers provide apprentices with good-quality training that raises their knowledge and skills levels significantly. This in turn facilitates accelerated completion of assignments by apprentices to fulfil programme requirements. A high proportion of the relatively small number of apprentices who take functional skills examinations pass at their first attempt. Training arrangements to allow apprentices to improve their digital skills are not yet effective across all the provision.

Apprentices benefit from regular and effective teaching, assessment and progress review sessions with their standards trainers. At these sessions, standards trainers make good use of learning resources, including information and communication technology, to support and motivate apprentices. Standards trainers use apprentices' electronic portfolios effectively to enhance their progress and responsibility for learning.

Standards trainers generally routinely link on- and off-the-job training effectively to allow apprentices to develop rapidly the required knowledge, skills and behaviours. Most apprentices have a good appreciation of how to generate evidence that meets the apprenticeship standards. Targets set for apprentices by trainers are usually challenging and monitored appropriately.

Apprentices participate in on- and off-the-job learning activities that suitably challenge them to reflect on their learning. They quickly become adept in using reflective practice to make them more effective employees. For example, advanced team leader apprentices can show how to apply different communication strategies to manage unacceptable conduct by a team member.

All standards trainers have the correct vocational and industrial knowledge and skills to train within their work role. They receive regular and frequent training that builds their professional competence. This has made a valuable contribution to promoting apprentices' success. Standards trainers prepare apprentices appropriately for the end-point assessment. Most apprentices have a good understanding of what level they are currently working at and how they will be assessed.

Leaders and managers have implemented appropriate actions to improve the geographically dispersed apprenticeship provision. Consequently, leaders and managers raise the quality of training for all apprentices. Their arrangements for assessing taught sessions through direct observation are effective in improving the quality of training experienced by apprentices. However, they do not evaluate the learning achieved by apprentices sufficiently to help trainers improve all aspects of their professional practice.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that apprentices can access impartial careers information, advice and guidance throughout their programme. Apprentices receive helpful initial support, so they develop a good understanding of where the programme can lead in the short term. However, subsequent interventions with apprentices do not broaden their understanding of the full range of available opportunities.

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

Leaders and managers have implemented suitable safeguarding procedures. They place a high priority on the use of these arrangements to protect the welfare of apprentices and staff. All staff are subject to safe recruitment practices before they start to work with apprentices. These include relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

Both the designated safeguarding officer (DSO) and deputy DSO have established appropriate external links to ensure the welfare of apprentices and standards trainers. Suitable processes and procedures are in place to respond to any concerns raised by apprentices or staff. At the time of the monitoring visit, no welfare or safety issues had been reported and recorded.

Officers and delivery staff have undertaken a broad range and level of initial and updating safeguarding training. Consequently, staff have a good understanding of how to carry out their safeguarding roles and responsibilities with respect to the 'Prevent' duty. Standards trainers raise apprentices' understanding of relevant topics to an appropriately high level during workplace visits. Most apprentices have at least an adequate understanding of how to protect themselves from the potential dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism. Usually, they can use this knowledge to articulate fluently how they would protect themselves at work and in their personal lives.

Leaders and managers recognise the need to improve apprentices' understanding of how to stay safe when using web-based technology and social media.

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