

Boom Training Ltd

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1276470

Name of lead inspector: Martin Hughes, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI)

Inspection date(s): 8–9 January 2019

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: Unit 72
Basepoint Enterprise Centre
Andersons Rd
Southampton
SO14 5FE



Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

From October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and/or the apprenticeship levy. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', especially the sections entitled 'Providers newly directly funded to deliver apprenticeship training provision' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Boom Training Ltd is a private training provider established in April 2014. Based in Southampton, Boom Training Ltd works with employers in Hampshire, Berkshire, Surrey, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire, Leicester, Nottingham and Derby.

Boom Training has provided apprenticeship training for several years as a subcontractor to a further education college and an independent learning provider. In January 2018, the company gained registration to receive public funding to train in its own right. There are currently 93 apprentices on standards-based programmes in business administration, customer service, accountancy, team leading and management, with apprentices studying at levels 2 to 5.

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 developed apprenticeship programmes that closely meet the needs of employers and apprentices. This helps apprentices to develop the skills and behaviours that allow them rapidly to work in office-based environments. Leaders have developed an approach to training and to monitoring performance that has been built successfully on previous experiences as a subcontractor. This has enabled leaders to concentrate on managing and developing staff and resources to deliver apprenticeship training to a high standard.

Leaders have made significant investment in management information and progress monitoring systems, along with a customised e-portfolio. Managers and tutors use well the accurate and timely information to monitor apprentices' progress and to identify swiftly any apprentices who fall behind. As a result, apprentices receive timely support and make good progress. The small number of apprentices who have completed apprenticeships so far did so within the planned timescales.

Staff have established a strong employer base and guide employers in making the most of the apprenticeship levy funding to provide training for professionals in office-based work. Employers are very happy with the good support they get from Boom Training. They appreciate all that staff do in providing specialist apprenticeships in office-based activities. Staff have limited input to the initial recruitment of apprentices. However, they do work closely with employers to make sure that the expectations of an apprenticeship fit with the job role and position available. Employers value the skills, expertise and support that this partnership brings. Employers understand and commit to providing apprentices with sufficient time to complete their studies in the workplace and off the job.

Leaders and managers make sure that all apprentices receive their on- and off-the-job training entitlement. They have high expectations for apprentices and support and help them to achieve their qualifications and do well in their employment. Tutors work well with employers to make sure that they are aware of the requirements of the programme. They also work with apprentices to make them aware of the careers available to them. Apprentices on most programmes gain professional qualifications alongside their apprenticeship. For example, those working in accountancy also complete the Association of Accountancy Technicians qualification.

Leaders and managers recruit experienced and qualified staff who can deliver training to higher managerial levels. Monthly updates and professional development activities support them in delivering training and provide credibility with employers. For example, staff have been supported well to guide apprentices and employers through the end-point assessment process. Leaders and managers share information and communications widely across the organisation. This helps tutors operating away from the main office to stay informed and report on learners' progress.

Leaders appreciate the importance of continuous improvement and carefully assure the quality of the provision. They know and understand the strengths and areas that need further improvement. Observations of teaching, learning and assessment are used productively to inform professional development for tutors. However, observation reports have a substantial focus on how the tutor has performed, not on the skills, actions or behaviours the learners developed.

Leaders correctly identify that governance is essential in providing challenge and support to staff in their plans to expand and monitor performance. They are setting up a governance group with external expertise from across the business community to provide this higher level challenge to managers.

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 quickly and thoroughly identify the skills that new apprentices bring. They also identify new apprentices' work experience and English and mathematical skills. While very few apprentices need to complete qualifications in English or

mathematics, insufficient attention is given to improving these skills during training or in submitted work.

Apprentices benefit from well-planned individual and group training sessions. These help them to make progress and develop new skills and behaviours that are useful in the workplace. For example, the early introduction and training on spreadsheets helped a new apprentice to take on an important role quickly in an accountancy business. Apprentices benefit from their tutors' experience as they are challenged to extend their knowledge and understanding of their work and job role.

Tutors effectively review apprentices' progress using their portfolios, and during frequent meetings. They use individual reviews to check and test understanding as well as to set targets. However, a minority of targets set were too vague, focusing on completion of a generalised task rather than on the skills the apprentice needs to develop.

Apprentices understand their training programmes well. They know how they are progressing and how to use the e-portfolio to record learning. They can make effective links between the development of skills and their increase in confidence and self-assurance. Apprentices know precisely what constitutes on- and off-the-job training and how to record it. They know how to use it as part of their development. Apprentices benefit from well-managed advice and practical work that prepare them for their final assessments.

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

Leaders and managers hold safeguarding as a high priority for apprentices and staff. Comprehensive written policies support operational practice. Staff receive appropriate training on how to support apprentices and keep them safe.

All tutors and staff who have direct contact with apprentices have completed Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. Managers have implemented safe recruitment practices and all new staff are checked before they are employed. The designated safeguarding officer has received appropriate training. All staff complete mandatory training on safeguarding and on the 'Prevent' duty. This training is supplemented with refresher and extension training in areas such as awareness of forced marriages.

Tutors effectively promote personal safety and well-being. They know how they can support apprentices with welfare or pastoral needs. Apprentices understand how, and to whom, to report safeguarding concerns. The procedures for reporting and managing concerns are well established. They have been used to good effect to support individuals in crisis or to link them to the most appropriate organisations that provide specialist support.

Apprentices receive some basic training during induction on how to stay safe online, but this is not customised to meet the needs and abilities of all apprentices. Although business administration apprentices complete specific units in their programme of

study in online safety, and health and safety, this is not done systematically for all apprentices.

Apprentices are aware of some of the dangers of extremism and radicalisation and know how to report concerns. Managers are currently developing contacts with local authorities in all the areas in which they operate to make sure that staff and apprentices are aware of regional priorities and concerns.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Learner View

Learner View is a website where apprentices can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other apprentices think about them too. To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

Employer View

Employer View is a website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too. To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for apprentices of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019