

Construction Works (Hull) Limited

Monitoring visit report

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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 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.

Construction Works (Hull) Limited (Construction Works) was established in 2005 as a funded local labour project. At the time of the monitoring visit, 17 apprentices were on standards-based apprenticeships and 37 on apprenticeship frameworks delivered directly by Construction Works. Another 26 apprentices are with a subcontractor on standards-based refrigeration and business administration apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3. Non-levy paying organisations in the Hull area employ almost all apprentices that attend Construction Works. The vast majority of these apprentices are on engineering programmes at levels 2 or 3, with the remainder on business administration, management or customer-service programmes 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 design programmes that provide good opportunities for apprentices to improve their knowledge and skills. As a result, unemployed people and those from areas of high social deprivation are supported well to gain employment. Leaders communicate effectively with employers to ensure that programmes meet their needs. Staff recruit apprentices with integrity.

Leaders and managers recruit highly experienced and well-qualified staff, who make good use of their expertise to develop apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. However, leaders and managers do not use professional development effectively to ensure that it results in rapid enough improvements to the quality of provision.

Leaders and managers make effective use of feedback from apprentices about the quality of physical resources to make improvements to the learning environment. For example, apprentices requested more space for independent study and, in response, leaders recently installed a mezzanine floor to create space to complete written work.

Leaders and managers make accurate assessments of the strengths and areas for improvement across the organisation. They have sufficient oversight of their provision, and this ensures that they meet all the apprenticeship requirements. However, quality improvement processes are often informal and many of the actions to support improvement are not sufficiently focused, which hinders the pace of improvement. Progress to support the transition from frameworks to standards is too slow.

Leaders and managers have an effective approach to managing the subcontractor. They have implemented a robust process for due diligence that validates successfully the subcontractor's suitability to deliver an apprenticeship programme. Managers' plans to quality assure the subcontractor are thorough and appropriately challenging. As the provision that the subcontractor delivers is new, it is too early to assess the impact of these plans.

When staff identify that apprentices are falling behind, they intervene quickly and very effectively to provide support. For example, apprentices struggling with English receive a learning plan that their employers agree to ensure that they catch up. As a result of this support, the large majority of apprentices remain on their programme. However, leaders and managers do not make sufficient use of their system to monitor apprentices' progress and their off-the-job training. Managers check apprentices' progress three months from completion, but this is often too late to identify and take actions to ensure that apprentices complete by their planned end date.

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

Apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job training. Managers and tutors work well with employers to ensure that apprentices develop skills that meet employers' business needs. Managers provide an effective recruitment and induction programme that identifies apprentices' starting points and aspirations accurately. As a result, they design programmes that meet apprentices' needs.

Tutors deliver effective off-the-job training and, as a result, apprentices develop substantial new vocational knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, engineering apprentices fabricate shop signs. Business administration apprentices can explain legal structures and apply them effectively to their own organisation.

Leaders and managers ensure that the training centre is well equipped with up-to-date industry-standard equipment so that apprentices can practise and develop new skills during their off-the-job training. As a result, apprentices develop confidence in their knowledge, skills and behaviours which they apply effectively in the workplace by, for example, using different welding techniques.

Almost all apprentices produce work of at least the expected standard and in many cases of a high standard. Tutors support apprentices effectively to develop English and mathematics skills. For example, engineering apprentices are confident in calculating heating curves and measuring the radius when producing gauges. Tutors ensure that all apprentices pass external online tests, and most apprentices are successful at their first attempt.

Tutors' feedback to apprentices on the development of their skills supports apprentices to make rapid improvements. For example, apprentices received effective feedback about how to file steel to get a rounded angle when producing a gauge. However, tutors' feedback on apprentices' written work does not identify clearly enough what apprentices need to do to improve their writing.

Tutors do not take sufficient account of apprentices' individual needs when planning lessons. As a result, they do not challenge a minority of the most able apprentices sufficiently to achieve higher grades. Tutors do not use progress reviews well enough to identify clearly the progress that apprentices make in developing their knowledge, skills and behaviours.

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

Leaders and managers have developed a comprehensive strategy to ensure that all apprentices receive support to stay safe and look after their own well-being. Designated safeguarding staff have high levels of experience and appropriate qualifications. They receive regular updates and have highly effective links with local agencies. Managers provide very successful support to apprentices when they encounter problems, such as mental health issues and domestic difficulties.

Leaders and managers implement appropriate policies and procedures for safeguarding apprentices, complying with the 'Prevent' duty and the safe recruitment of staff. They review and update policies regularly. However, the 'Prevent' duty risk assessment action plan lacks specific detail to show the steps that managers take to minimise risk.

Tutors provide useful guidance on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty to apprentices and employers during induction. Apprentices receive regular and beneficial guidance on how to stay safe online. As a result, apprentices are safe and know whom they should contact if they have any concerns.

Apprentices have a clear understanding of safety and demonstrate safe working practices. They assess risks at work and ensure that they use appropriate personal protective equipment, supervised by tutors, in the workshop. Leaders and managers do not systematically check that tutors understood all the information that they receive about safeguarding and that they communicate it to

apprentices clearly. A very small minority of apprentices are unclear about how to protect themselves from risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

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