

Medivet

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Chris Bealey Ofsted Inspector

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Type of provider: Employer

Address: Unit 4
Mowat Industrial Estate
Sandown Road
Watford
WD24 7UY



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 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.

Medivet received a direct contract to be an employer provider for apprenticeships in June 2017. The employer has 300 clinical practices based across England, 124 of which are training practices. At the time of inspection, Medivet had 153 apprentices funded through the employer levy. Most apprentices are based in the eastern region. All apprentices are adults on level 3 apprenticeship frameworks in veterinary nursing.

Themes

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

Reasonable

Leaders and managers have a clear rationale for the development and delivery of apprenticeships. They understand clearly what the requirements of good-quality apprenticeship training are. Leaders and managers have planned effectively for the introduction and provision of new standards-based apprenticeships. Lecturers plan most learning to a good standard. Specialist clinical coaches provide expert support to apprentices at work. Consequently, apprentices develop relevant new knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Leaders and managers ensure that they have appropriate human and physical resources to provide high-quality training. Lecturers and clinical coaches are specialists in their subjects. Lecturers are qualified registered veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons. All are teacher-trained or working towards these qualifications and hold specialist qualifications, including in emergency and critical care, clinical research, and law and ethics.

Practical resources for off-the-job training are adequate for the current number of apprentices. The number of apprentices has recently increased, resulting in large groups in theory and practical teaching areas. While this does not hamper apprentices' current learning and progress, leaders and managers rightly recognise that additional practical resources are required.

Leaders and managers plan career paths for apprentices effectively, giving them the opportunity to attain more senior roles within the organisation. Apprentices' career aspirations are reviewed thoroughly in the last year of their training. This enables apprentices to plan and prepare thoroughly for the move from their student posts to more senior roles. As a result, most apprentices recruited in the past five years have gained senior clinical or management roles.

Leaders' and managers' evaluation of the quality of their provision is accurate and drives improvement in the quality of learning. For example, managers have reviewed and changed workplace reviews of apprentices' progress to ensure that the tasks and activities agreed challenge most-able apprentices sufficiently. However, managers' appraisal of lecturing staff does not yet include specific reference to improving their teaching performance and skills identified during observations of learning. As a result, lecturers do not undertake additional training, beyond the requirements of a teaching qualification.

Governance is appropriate. The executive team meets weekly to review apprentices' progress and examination results. The executive team reviews policies and procedures to ensure that they are up to date and reflect current practice. However, they do not review or challenge the annual self-assessment report so do not yet have a clear overview of the quality of the provision.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? Reasonable

Training staff work closely to ensure that apprentices have access to a wide range of veterinary practices to develop their skills. For example, apprentices working in small practices often undertake weekend work at a larger hospital practice to broaden their clinical experience and extend the range of animals they work with. As a result, apprentices are very effectively prepared for working in the veterinary industry.

Managers identify suitable apprentices from their patient care assistants (PCAs). Within their veterinary practices, they select the best-performing PCAs, based on their work record, their professional behaviour and the skills they demonstrate with the animals in their care. As a result, almost all apprentices remain on their programme.

Apprentices make expected progress from the starting points of their programmes. They develop appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours and are prepared thoroughly for their end-of-unit examinations. As a result, most apprentices pass their examinations at the first attempt. All have completed their examinations successfully following resits.

Apprentices produce work of a good standard, appropriate to the level of study. They apply their clinical knowledge appropriately and produce detailed case studies of the animals in their care. Consequently, apprentices enjoy their learning and feel valued in the workplace. High professional standards are expected and upheld by training staff and managers. Staff provide thorough and rigorous feedback to apprentices, with helpful information on how to improve.

Apprentices develop adequately their mathematical skills for employment. They make calculations in their job roles and are supported by both their managers and their lecturers to develop accuracy. Apprentices develop their English skills effectively through the detailed feedback lecturers provide on their written work and their regular use of appropriate technical language.

Apprentices are confident and work collaboratively to solve problems in their taught sessions. They collaborate through discussion and sharing of knowledge, and they respect each other's opinions. Apprentices apply their experiences in the workplace to their theoretical learning comprehensively. Most can use examples of clinical cases to justify their answers in their theory and practical work and understand fully the use of different treatments for illness in small animals.

On occasion, lecturers do not challenge or encourage apprentices to deepen their knowledge and apply their problem-solving skills sufficiently. For example, lecturers correct apprentices' incorrect answers without giving apprentices the opportunity to evaluate and reflect on their mistakes.

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

Leaders and managers do not ensure that teachers and training staff follow routine health and safety procedures. Inspectors and an accompanying manager observed unacceptable practice while visiting a practical training room. Although leaders and managers have established the correct protocols and procedures, they have not done enough to ensure that teachers and training staff adopt and adhere to these.

Apprentices have a basic understanding of British values and of equality and diversity. However, many do not recognise the relevance of these issues to their workplace.

Leaders and managers are taking reasonable steps to meet the requirements of the 'Prevent' duty. Apprentices have an adequate understanding of the general risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. However, apprentices' understanding of radicalisation in their working and social lives is insufficient.

Leaders and managers ensure the safe recruitment of staff. All staff are subject to pre-employment checks prior to commencing work. A suitably trained and

experienced designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is in post. The DSL takes timely and appropriate action to deal with any safeguarding concerns. As a result, apprentices feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe in their workplaces and online.

Leaders and managers risk-assess the safety of their apprentices well. A good programme to protect apprentices' mental well-being is in place and enables apprentices to raise their concerns either remotely or face-to-face in a confidential manner. Apprentices are helped to effectively manage any mental health issues they disclose. As a result, apprentices with fragile mental health remain on their programme and pass their qualifications. Apprentices benefit from good training to ensure that they can understand how to give good support to their clients when their pets become critically ill and die.

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