

# AAA Training and Recruitment

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 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.

AAA Training and Recruitment (AAA) commenced delivery of directly funded apprenticeships in January 2018. It delivers standards-based apprenticeships in health and social care funded through the employer levy. Currently there are 598 apprentices all based with one national care employer. AAA subcontracts a small proportion of its delivery to this national employer.

### Themes

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

#### **Insufficient progress**

Leaders and managers have not ensured that the requirements of the apprenticeship programme are met. The majority of apprentices are not receiving their full entitlement to off-the-job training and, as a result, have to complete work in their own time.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that apprentices acquire substantial new skills and knowledge while on programme. They do not have an accurate oversight of the progress apprentices are making across and during their training. A new management information system, to enable better monitoring of apprentices' access to training and the progress they are making, is being implemented. The majority of apprentices are not making expected progress, and none have yet achieved within their expected finish date. The previous limited availability of assessors, combined with a lack of support to address apprentices' identified needs, slows their progress.

Approximately a third of apprentices have left without achieving their qualifications. Leaders, managers and the employer have recently amended the enrolment process and introduced regular meetings to review progress; however, the impact of this is yet to be seen.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that all apprentices understand the progress they are making, and what they need to do to improve the quality and standard of their work. Too many apprentices do not know the requirements of the

apprenticeship programme, including the end-point assessment, or their entitlement to on- and off-the-job training.

A new leadership team has recently been established which has identified the weaknesses in the provision of apprenticeships and has plans in place to remedy these. However, it is too early to see the impact of these changes.

Leaders and managers have worked hard to develop their relationship with the employer and subcontractor. This has included visiting individual branches to improve local knowledge and, as a result, branch managers now understand the requirements of an apprenticeship programme.

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

Too many apprentices do not develop new, substantial and occupationally specific knowledge, skills and behaviours. Assessors do not always use their knowledge of apprentices' existing skills and knowledge effectively to plan their programmes. Assessors do not always plan and sequence training to ensure that apprentices develop the skills and knowledge they need in their individual job roles.

Some apprentices have had their assessors changed several times and experienced long gaps in the delivery of their programmes. Some have had to repeat lost work. Too many learning and review sessions are cancelled. Consequently, the majority of apprentices do not make expected progress.

Assessors do not adequately monitor apprentices' progress or check their understanding of the learning programme. As a result, too many apprentices do not fully understand the requirements of their apprenticeship. They are often unclear about what they need to do to prepare for their final assessments or when they are due to finish. A new assessment team is implementing a new system to monitor apprentices' progress but it is too early to judge the impact of this change.

Apprentices do not make adequate progress in developing their English and mathematics skills. Arrangements to support apprentices to develop these skills are weak and, as a result, too many have not achieved the required qualifications or developed the skills they need for future roles. For example, many apprentices are only given access to online resources, to be completed in their own time. Assessors do not routinely correct errors in apprentices' work. Work is often not marked and limited feedback is given to apprentices to improve the quality of their work.

The new leadership team recognises the previous failings in the programme and has recruited new staff and begun to implement a range of processes to improve provision. It is too early to see the full impact of this, but initial feedback from apprentices is positive.

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

Leaders and managers place a high priority on safeguarding apprentices. They have recently updated their policy and ensure that it is better understood by staff and apprentices. The safeguarding lead is appropriately trained and undertakes face-to-face induction training with all new staff.

Human resources staff ensure that staff recruitment processes and procedures are safe and robust. All staff have had appropriate safer recruitment checks which are regularly updated in line with the policy.

Apprentices demonstrate that they are able to keep safe in the workplace. They can talk confidently about how to keep their clients safe. The provider takes reasonable action to meet the requirements of the 'Prevent' duty. However, assessors do not reinforce this sufficiently and, as a result, apprentices often have little recall of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

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