

# Qommunicate Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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**Name of lead inspector:** Victor Reid Her Majesty's Inspector  
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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.

Qommunicate Ltd received its first publicly funded contract for apprenticeships in March 2017. Currently, 102 adult apprentices are on apprenticeship programmes. All are on apprenticeship frameworks. Around two thirds of apprentices are working towards qualifications in business improvement techniques, customer service and team leading at level 2. The remaining apprentices are on management qualifications at level 3 and level 5. The company also delivers a range of adult training courses as a subcontractor to another publicly funded training provider. These courses were not within the scope of this monitoring visit.

## Themes

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

### Reasonable progress

The board of directors and senior leaders have established a strong vision and set high expectations for the apprenticeship programmes. Leaders ensure that the apprenticeship curriculums meet the national and regional skills priorities. They also ensure that the provision complies successfully with apprenticeship requirements.

Leaders and managers have established effective working relationships with a range of employers. Managers and trainers are responsive to the training needs of local employers. They adapt qualification delivery appropriately to suit local requirements. For example, they tailor and flexibly deliver provision to fit in with employees' varied shift patterns. Trainers work closely with supervisors and mentors to ensure that apprentices benefit from participating in workplace projects. As a result, apprentices confidently apply their new learning and knowledge.

Training staff are suitably qualified and have wide experience in the subjects they teach. They hold appropriate training qualifications and receive good-quality continuing professional development to meet their individual support needs. Trainers deliver effective learning sessions that apprentices appreciate. Employers value highly the good contributions that apprentices make to their businesses.

Leaders and managers use a variety of data systems that provide them with access to a range of detailed management reports. These inform their understanding of course performance and standards.

Leaders monitor closely the progress and performance of different groups of apprentices. Managers use performance management arrangements effectively to support staff, promote their professional development and tackle issues of underperformance.

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to strengthen the delivery of functional skills English and mathematics. They have done this through the appointment of suitably experienced specialist staff.

Leaders' arrangements for observing trainers and judging their performance do not focus sufficiently on evaluating learning and apprentices' progress. The most recent self-assessment report is not rigorous enough. Several of the stated strengths are no more than normal practice.

**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**

Most apprentices produce good-quality work that demonstrates what they have learned and how they apply it in the workplace. They develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Apprentices often gain promotion or additional responsibility at work.

Trainers provide good support to apprentices. They assess apprentices' work accurately and provide feedback that enables them to understand how their knowledge, skills and behaviours are improving. However, trainers do not give feedback routinely that helps apprentices to understand how they can improve their work further.

Apprentices benefit greatly from, and value highly, the specialist individual support they receive for English and mathematics. This enables them to make good progress in their knowledge and skills development. A very high proportion of apprentices pass their functional skills examinations in English and mathematics at the first attempt.

Most apprentices undertake useful additional independent research and learning between lessons and visits. Consequently, they demonstrate a deeper understanding of the subject matter and participate fully in discussions and activities.

Apprentices receive good support from their employers. They receive their full entitlement to off-the-job learning during working hours. Apprentices benefit from

useful training and mentoring provided by their employers that contribute effectively to their development. As a result, most apprentices make good progress in their vocational knowledge and skills development.

Training staff provide valuable information, advice and guidance to most apprentices. Most apprentices are studying appropriate programmes. They understand fully the options they have for further study after they complete their apprenticeship.

A small number of business improvement techniques apprentices did not receive sufficiently accurate guidance at the start of their programme. They were disadvantaged initially because of staffing and planning issues. Their progress was too slow. However, leaders have put improved arrangements in place. Most apprentices now make at least the progress expected of them.

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

Leaders ensure that apprentices feel safe and know how to report any concerns they have. The designated safeguarding officer and nominated deputy are suitably trained and experienced. They deal with any safeguarding disclosures swiftly and appropriately.

Directors and leaders follow safe recruitment procedures when appointing new staff. All staff who deliver apprenticeships receive appropriate checks to assess their suitability to work with apprentices.

Trainers receive suitable training to reinforce their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty. They help apprentices appropriately to understand the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. Trainers are confident and vigilant. They identify correctly the signs that indicate an apprentice may need early help and intervention.

Leaders have yet to develop a formalised e-safety policy setting out the specific arrangement to protect apprentices from harm when online. As a result, a few apprentices are unsure of how to spot fake websites.

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