

New Model Business Academy Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1280367

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Inspection date(s): 18–19 September 2019

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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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 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

New Model Business Academy Limited began to deliver apprenticeships in April 2018. At the time of the monitoring visit, 113 apprentices were on level 4 standards-based apprenticeships of whom 103 were on financial adviser programmes and 10 were on paraplanner programmes. New Model Business Academy Limited works with employers in the financial advice sector across England.

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 do not provide a sufficiently structured programme to enable apprentices to develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours. The initial part of the apprenticeship, often lasting twelve months, focuses solely on enabling apprentices to pass examinations. Apprentices do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their skills and behaviours and apply them in the workplace until they have passed all their examinations.

Managers do not have an oversight of the progress that apprentices make in developing their skills and knowledge. They only review apprentices' performance in passing examinations. Managers do not ensure that apprenticeship development managers (ADMs) provide feedback to apprentices or their employers on apprentices' progress or what apprentices need to do to improve their work.

Leaders and managers do not have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the apprenticeship provision. They do not implement effective quality assurance arrangements. As a result, they are unable to make improvements where required.

Managers do not ensure that apprentices are able to use their off-the-job training time to enhance their skills, knowledge and behaviours. They do not ensure that ADMs monitor the off-the-job training that apprentices carry out. Instead, they rely on apprentices to record this.

Leaders and managers have a clear rationale for the delivery of apprenticeships in the financial sector. They use their sector experience to meet the growing demand for financial advisers and paraplanners.

Managers ensure that they have appropriate staffing resources to provide apprenticeships and have recently taken on new staff, due to the increased demand in the sector. Staff are highly experienced in the financial sector, but most are not sufficiently experienced in delivering apprenticeships.

Managers ensure that candidates are appropriate for an apprenticeship. They thoroughly check candidates' current levels of skills and qualifications and work closely with employers to determine applicants' suitability.

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

Most apprentices make slow progress. Too many apprentices continue in learning beyond their planned end date. ADMs have weak oversight of the progress that apprentices make. They rely too heavily on apprentices identifying when they find things difficult or when apprentices fail examinations. When apprentices fall behind, ADMs do not use effective interventions to enable them to catch up quickly.

Too few apprentices develop the skills and behaviours that they need to be successful financial advisers. ADMs plan for apprentices to focus on passing examinations in the first twelve months of the programme by completing theoretical study. As a result, apprentices do not develop the broader skills that financial advisers need.

Communication with employers is not good enough. Employers are right to state that they do not receive frequent or helpful information from ADMs about the progress their apprentices are making. Too many employers have to seek feedback from the provider rather than it being an agreed process. Consequently, too many employers are unaware of the progress that their apprentices are making. As a result, they are unable to support apprentices before they fall behind to prevent this from happening.

ADMs do not consider apprentices' prior knowledge and skills well. They do not plan programmes that enable apprentices to fill gaps in their knowledge and skills and make rapid progress. When apprentices have already passed modules, they follow the same learning programme and cover the topics on which they have already been assessed.

Most apprentices can recall the new knowledge that they are developing through the theoretical study that they are completing. Apprentices develop their vocationally related mathematical skills through their work. For example, they can apply complex

and challenging formulas to taxation calculations. They can establish the return on investment around particular products and services available to clients.

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

Leaders and managers have put clear policies in place regarding safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. These policies detail how staff work to keep apprentices safe and how to report concerns. Apprentices feel safe and know how to report concerns.

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) is appropriately trained and experienced. All staff undergo annual training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty.

The DSO receives frequent updates and advice from local agencies regarding safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. However, managers do not seek advice from agencies in different geographical areas where apprentices work to highlight the risks that may affect them.

ADMs do not reinforce sufficiently with apprentices the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. Consequently, apprentices do not have a good enough understanding of the risks that they may face.

Leaders and managers carry out comprehensive background checks on staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with apprentices.

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