

Selection Training 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 adult learning provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. 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 to providers that are newly directly publicly funded' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Selection Training Limited (STL) is based in Kingston upon Hull. It began delivering apprenticeships to levy-paying employers in November 2017. Currently, 32 apprentices are on team leader/supervisor standards-based programmes at level 3. All apprentices are over the age of 18. Seventeen apprentices began their programmes in March and April 2019 and are employed by two companies in Hull and Scunthorpe. A further 15 apprentices are employed by a third employer and have only very recently started their programmes. Two directors and a training manager deliver the programme. Apprentices complete a professional qualification as part of their studies. The planned programme duration is 15 months, of which the last three are allocated to end-point assessments.

Themes

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

Insufficient progress

Leaders do not ensure that the requirements of apprenticeships are met or that employers demonstrate sufficient commitment to the programmes. Too many line managers do not ensure that apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job learning.

STL staff are not involved sufficiently in the selection of apprentices to ensure that recruits are suited well to the programme. On occasions, candidates selected by employers do not have the necessary aptitudes or abilities to succeed, such as the digital skills they need to use the electronic evidence portfolio. Not all apprentices are in leadership or supervisory roles that provide opportunities for them to apply their new learning. In previous cohorts, around half of apprentices left their programmes early without completing.

Leaders and managers evaluate the programme appropriately. They act on apprentices' feedback on workshops by, for example, including more practical activities. However, managers do not seek end-of-programme evaluations from apprentices who leave their programmes early.

Leaders have taken action to improve the engagement of employers and the level of support that line managers provide to apprentices. For example, line managers are required to attend apprentices' induction to the programme and their three-monthly progress review meetings. These measures have enabled one employer to ensure that the vast majority of its apprentices are meeting assignment deadlines.

Leaders ensure that line managers and apprentices have clear information on what the programme entails at the outset, including arrangements for end-point assessment. The responsibilities of all partners are explained clearly. Apprentices who have completed their end-point assessments have achieved merits and distinctions.

Leaders ensure that apprentices have access to appropriate resources to support their learning. In addition to monthly workshops, staff provide useful one-to-one support. Apprentices use high-quality online learning materials to support their studies.

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 make slow progress. Just over a half of apprentices have fallen behind with their assignments, mostly with one employer. Line managers do not ensure that apprentices have sufficient off-the-job learning. Of the nine apprentices who have completed their programmes successfully, none have done so by their planned end date.

Apprentices who need to complete functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics do not begin their learning early enough in the programme. As a result, they do not make the progress of which they are capable. Staff do not provide sufficiently helpful feedback to apprentices on the quality of their writing, including spelling and grammar, to help apprentices to improve.

Staff hold accurate information on apprentices' progress and use it to agree action plans with apprentices and their line managers during progress review meetings. However, staff do not take action quickly enough when apprentices fall behind. The first progress reviews take place four or five months into the programme. By this stage, too many apprentices have already missed submission deadlines for more than one assignment and they struggle to catch up.

Apprentices who remain on their programmes develop substantial new knowledge and abilities. They become more accomplished and confident in their work roles and increase their contributions to their employers' businesses. They demonstrate improved skills, such as time management and coaching. Many have been promoted to more senior supervisory and managerial roles upon completion of their programmes.

Apprentices benefit from attending high-quality monthly workshops. Staff use their very good subject knowledge to enable apprentices to gain a deep understanding of theories and how to apply them to their jobs. Staff respond quickly to apprentices' questions and requests for support between workshops.

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

Leaders and managers do not meet the statutory 'Prevent' duty requirements. Staff, including the designated safeguarding manager, have not completed training in safeguarding or the 'Prevent' duty. Leaders have not completed an assessment of the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation that apprentices face. Links with external agencies are insufficient.

Apprentices do not have a good enough understanding of safeguarding issues. Staff provide them with STL's safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty policies as part of their induction programme, but little discussion or further development takes place, including during progress reviews.

Apprentices feel safe and are confident to raise concerns, should they arise. None have been raised so far. They also have a good understanding of safe working practices. However, STL does not check employers' safeguarding arrangements to ensure that apprentices are protected at work.

Apprentices gain an appropriate understanding of British values, equality and diversity as part of their professional qualification.

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