

Impellam Group PLC

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 2510899

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Inspection date(s): 10–11 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.

Impellam Group PLC (Impellam Group) is a specialist recruitment company providing services throughout the world. It is based in Luton and provides apprenticeships throughout the UK, primarily to client companies. The majority of apprentices are based with employers in the south east, London and the midlands. Most of the 181 apprentices are over 19 years old. Most are following a level 3 standards-based apprenticeship in team leading, business administration or customer service. Twenty-two apprentices are following a level 2 standards-based apprenticeship in these subjects and 13 follow the level 5 management apprenticeship. Impellam work with British Airways to provide 44 level 3 engineering apprenticeships on a mixture of standards and frameworks.

Themes

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

Significant progress

Leaders plan programmes very effectively in partnership with employers. They establish accurately the existing skills and knowledge apprentices have at the start of their programmes. They use this information, along with their excellent knowledge of employers' businesses, to ensure that apprentices make rapid progress in their learning programmes. For example, at British Airways, apprentices are assigned to different work areas based on their skill gaps and existing expertise.

Leaders work effectively with existing Impellam Group clients to identify and recruit apprentices. They provide highly effective information, advice and guidance to all at the application stage to ensure that apprentices enrol on the right programme for them and their employer.

Leaders ensure that programmes meet the principles of apprenticeship programmes in full. For example, they plan, track and review off-the-job training thoroughly to ensure that apprentices receive their full entitlement. Apprentices complete useful activities as part of this aspect of their learning.

Leaders and managers have worked diligently to prepare themselves, employers and apprentices for their final assessments. They stay up to date with developments and changes to the apprenticeships and communicate this highly effectively to all involved. This includes up-to-date knowledge and preparation for changes to qualifications in English and mathematics.

The managing director of apprenticeships provides highly effective challenge to senior managers. He supports them to provide high-quality apprenticeship programmes. Leaders provide honest and informative reports to the board which enable the board to challenge performance effectively. As a result, there has been swift improvement to the quality of the provision since the apprenticeship programmes began two years ago.

Leaders track the progress apprentices make highly effectively. They use their up-to-date information about each apprentice's progress to intervene swiftly when an apprentice falls behind. As a result, the vast majority of apprentices make excellent progress towards timely completion in all aspects of their apprenticeship.

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

Apprentices quickly develop significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours. They apply new skills adeptly in their workplaces. Apprentices on team leading standards develop excellent coaching skills which they use to develop their team members further. Apprentices on business administration programmes understand legal implications of everyday tasks, such as minute-taking. Many apprentices gain additional responsibilities at work or advanced roles.

Apprentices benefit greatly from individualised training programmes. Trainers accurately assess apprentices' prior knowledge and skills at the start of training and understand apprentices' job roles well. They meticulously plan training activities for each apprentice that enable rapid progress.

Employers are fully committed to the apprenticeship programmes. For example, senior managers from employers attend off-the-job training sessions with their apprentices to share their experiences. They help guide apprentices to apply knowledge gained at training sessions to their specific work roles.

Trainers are credible experts in their subject areas. They have the excellent skills, knowledge and expertise required to deliver high-quality training. They regularly complete professional development activities to stay up to date both in their subjects and in improving their teaching skills.

Apprentices develop good skills in English and mathematics. Trainers are adept at helping apprentices improve these skills through training and link them effectively to

apprentices' workplaces. They adapt sessions to accommodate apprentices' development needs in these subjects. For example, apprentices on level 2 programmes are supported to calculate percentages to understand their own performance in winning bids.

Apprentices are fully aware of the requirements of their final examinations. Trainers have high expectations for their apprentices. They ensure that apprentices are aware of the grades they can achieve and that they aim for the highest standards in their work.

Apprentices have a very good working knowledge of British values. They recognise how these values relate to their organisations' values, and how they apply to the workplace. For example, apprentices consider unconscious bias when shortlisting from application forms.

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

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is central to the apprenticeships. As a result, apprentices have a sound understanding of safeguarding, staying safe at work and outside of work. For example, apprentices working in finance can relate bribery and corruption to accounts and the law. Apprentices and their employers know how to report concerns about themselves or their peers.

Staff, employers and apprentices understand well the policies and procedures designed to safeguard them. Leaders ensure that staff are suitable to work with young and/or vulnerable learners.

Two leaders act as designated safeguarding leads (DSLs). Both have an excellent understanding of safeguarding and their responsibilities. Staff complete mandatory training in both safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty and receive regular updates from the well-qualified DSLs to ensure their full understanding of its importance. Leaders have an effective process in place to fully and promptly resolve any concerns raised.

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