

J & E Training Consultants 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 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.

J & E Training Consultants Limited (JET) have been operating since 1998 and specialise in providing education and training to hairdressing and barbering apprentices. Most of this time JET were a subcontractor for their apprenticeships and traineeships provision with South Essex College and Central Training Group. Awarded an ESFA direct contract in January 2018, JET currently offers provision in level 2 hair professional standards to 59 apprentices mostly aged 16-18. 5 apprentices work towards level 2 barbering qualifications, and a further 14 apprentices aged 19 and over are working towards completing frameworks at level 3.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers use their extensive experience and knowledge well to design effective training programmes that meet both apprentices' and their employers' individual training and development needs. Seminar sessions delivered in the provider's training salon by industry experts are carefully tailored to provide not only current and emerging trends but also the history of hairdressing. As a result, learners develop a broad awareness of both modern hairdressing and its historical context, for example the influence of Vidal Sassoon on modern hairdressing practice.

Apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job training, often supplemented by in-salon learning opportunities in the workplace. Staff work closely with employers to ensure that they understand and meet their responsibilities to their apprentices.

Leaders and managers provide good resources for learning. The spacious, well-appointed training salon is a vibrant learning space. It is well-resourced with a wide range of digital and hairdressing learning materials. Teaching staff have good sector knowledge and experience and use this very effectively during training sessions to develop apprentices' technical skills and knowledge.

Leaders' and managers' own assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision is thorough and evaluative. They accurately identify the provision's strengths and weaknesses and set appropriate actions for continuous improvement. However, they do not use the full range of information they gather on individual apprentices to provide a strategic overview of critical factors that need to improve further, such as apprentices' attendance or whether apprentices are making good progress in developing their English and mathematics skills. As a result, senior leaders and those with external expertise who advise them, are not fully aware of the overall progress of different levels or cohorts of learners over time.

Although current apprentices are making good progress towards achievement and in the development of new skills, knowledge and behaviours, too many apprentices have previously left their training early. Leaders and managers responded to this by changing the design of the curriculum and as a result, a smaller proportion of apprentices now leave their training early.

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

Apprentices make good progress in the development of new skills and knowledge. Salon educators and other support staff use a range of creative and good quality resources to gain and keep apprentices' interest. For example, in hairdressing theory sessions, apprentices mix food colourants to create primary and secondary colours so that they know how to neutralise unwanted tones in clients' hair.

Employers benefit from the good client care and communication skills their apprentices develop. Staff are positive role models and place a keen emphasis on apprentices' development of high professional standards. For example, apprentices carry out effective client consultation by adapting their speech when talking with elderly clients or those hard of hearing. As a result, most apprentices develop good skills for work. However, staff take insufficient action to ensure high attendance and a small minority of apprentices do not have good attendance at training sessions.

Apprentices benefit from well-coordinated on and off-the-job training. Salon educators work closely with employers so that the training apprentices receive in their own salons is carefully matched to the training provided by their salon educator. For example, a seminar on balayage at the provider's training salon was enhanced by a follow-up session at work, so the apprentice quickly developed their skills.

Salon educators and support staff understand the importance of developing English and mathematics skills and create opportunities for apprentices to use these skills in practical and theory sessions. However, the strategies used are not consistently applied by educators and support staff and therefore, apprentices' spelling errors, including the repeated incorrect spelling use of key words such as 'client', persist.

Apprentices have a good basic awareness of British values and how these apply at work. For example, they adapt their approach to wheelchair-using clients so that they receive the same positive experience as other clients.

Apprentices are prepared thoroughly for their end-point assessments. Salon educators continually reinforce the high expectations of these tests by using verbal questions and time management techniques to develop their apprentices' confidence and knowledge. Apprentices preparing for these assessments are confident and aiming for high grades.

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

Apprentices have a sound knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and staff equip them with a good range of strategies to keep themselves safe at work and at home. For example, they know how to manage travel to and from work safely and how to remain safe online through management of privacy settings.

Leaders and managers have suitable policies and procedures to safeguard apprentices. All staff have appropriate training so that they are aware of their responsibilities. This enables staff to know how to report and record any safeguarding concerns appropriately and efficiently.

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