

Wildes Education 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 '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.

Wildes Education Limited (Wildes Education) provides hospitality, hairdressing, barbering, business administration, health and social care, and management apprenticeships for businesses across Yorkshire and the north west of England. Wildes Education began to deliver its own apprenticeships in January 2018. The range of programmes includes standards-based apprenticeships for hair professionals, adult care workers, chefs and hospitality team members, supervisors, and managers. It also provides framework apprenticeships in hairdressing, barbering, cleaning, team leading, and management. At the time of the visit, Wildes Education had three apprentices on programmes at level 5, five at level 4, 27 at level 3 and 64 at level 2. Just under three quarters of apprentices are over 18 years of age.

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 work effectively with employers to ensure that they meet the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship. They work supportively with employers in care, hospitality and hairdressing to help them establish a knowledgeable, skilled and qualified workforce.

Managers and assessors ensure that employers and apprentices understand the on- and off-the-job training requirements of an apprenticeship. Consequently, apprentices become valuable members of staff and gain new knowledge, skills, behaviours and understanding related to their job roles.

Managers and employers match apprentices to suitable job roles to be sure they have new experiences and gain substantial new knowledge and skills. Managers and employers recruit apprentices appropriately through a carefully managed selection process. This includes a thorough review of the apprentices' prior experience, knowledge and qualifications.

Managers have a good understanding of the progress apprentices make from their starting points. Managers and assessors react and intervene quickly to provide help for the few apprentices who do not make the progress expected of them. Consequently, a high proportion of apprentices are on target to complete by their planned end date.

Managers ensure that assessors have the required subject knowledge, qualifications and experience they need to help apprentices make rapid progress. Employers correctly value the expertise and support that assessors give to their apprentices, including assessors sharing their experiences of working and shadowing experienced staff in hotels and food production facilities.

Company directors and managers have a good understanding of the quality of their provision. Their knowledge of the areas of the provision that they need to improve is accurate. They have implemented a number of effective improvement actions since they started to deliver apprenticeships. For example, managers have appointed new delivery staff who are suitably qualified and subject specialists.

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

Managers and assessors ensure that employers provide meaningful opportunities for apprentices to gain the knowledge, skills, behaviours and understanding that they require in their various job roles. Apprentices become useful members of teams at work very quickly.

Managers and assessors determine apprentices' starting points and prior knowledge and skills accurately. They make good use of this information and arrange programmes and activities that enable apprentices to become competent in their job roles. For example, apprentices improve their confidence significantly in dealing with the public by working alongside experienced colleagues on busy hotel reception desks.

Assessors use assessment effectively to inform future learning and to prepare apprentices for their end-point assessment (EPA). However, a few assessors do not plan learning routinely or provide developmental feedback to enable apprentices to build on their knowledge and understanding, and to recall previous learning.

A high proportion of apprentices make the progress expected of them. Assessors make regular visits to apprentices' workplaces. They help apprentices to improve their subject knowledge through one-to-one discussions, assessment and learning sessions. They focus effectively on the knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices need in their current job roles. For example, hairdressing apprentices who have some experience of working in a calm beauty therapy environment

appreciate the need to be more outgoing and gregarious when working in a busy, modern hair salon.

Assessors work cooperatively with employers and provide good support and advice to apprentices. Managers, assessors and employers check, through a detailed induction process, that apprentices are suitable for their job roles. However, a few apprentices do not have a good enough understanding of their EPA or what their next steps could be on completion of their apprenticeship.

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

Managers make sure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place and that staff use them effectively to keep apprentices safe. The designated safeguarding officers and all staff benefit from safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training. They update their qualifications regularly. Managers inform staff appropriately of any developments about which they need to be aware.

Apprentices are safe and feel safe in their workplaces. Apprentices, especially those working with elderly people in care homes, have a good understanding of health and safety and the need to keep people safe. Apprentices are aware of the possible risks associated with extremist groups and the need to keep themselves and other people safe.

Apprentices and their employers receive relevant information about how to report any concerns they may have and to whom they should report them. When they visit apprentices, assessors reinforce the importance of safeguarding routinely and the need to keep people safe.

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