

SIMI AN Risk Management Limited

Re-inspection monitoring visit report

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

SIMIEN Risk Management Limited (SIMIAN) was inspected in March 2019. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision as requires improvement.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in addressing the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

SIMIEN is an independent training provider based in Warrington. There is an additional training site in the London borough of Waltham Forest. SIMIAN offers apprenticeships in scaffolding at level 2. At the time of the monitoring visit there were 31 apprentices, 29 on standards-based apprenticeship programmes and two on apprenticeship frameworks.

Themes

What progress have leaders and managers made in improving the standard of training apprentices receive? **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have introduced a comprehensive foundation to the scaffolding industry. This means that apprentices fully understand the role and the expectations of the apprenticeship.

Assessors test thoroughly apprentices' skills and abilities before they are introduced to scaffolding equipment. For example, apprentices, on their first day at SIMIAN, are required to undergo a height confidence test, by walking on an open mesh steel platform, to introduce them to the concept of working at height and to adopt safe working practices. The induction period prepares apprentices well for their apprenticeship and their future career.

Off-the-job training is planned well. Apprentices experience a two-week block of training followed by 12 to 16 weeks in the workplace. This allows them to practise and hone their new skills. Apprentices build their knowledge, skills and behaviours for the workplace throughout the programme. For example, apprentices develop the skills to erect and dismantle complex structures by learning to read drawings and by practising with roof saddles on simulated roof structures.

Apprentices are well supported both in the training centre and through site visits. The planning and coordination of the on-the-job training is less well planned. A few employers do not have a detailed understanding of what skills the apprentice needs to practice or any knowledge deficits that need addressing. The link between the

apprentices mentor and assessor is underdeveloped. Therefore, these employers do not know how to underpin and reinforce the apprentices' off-the-job training. Consequently, the pace of progress of a few apprentices is slow.

Leaders have made improvements in the design and implementation of the mathematics and English curriculums. There is a logical order to the development of apprentices' skills and a useful range of activities to link learning to the workplace. However, due to the length of time between off-the-job training sessions, coupled with a lack of opportunity to practise the new skills in mathematics and English in the workplace, apprentices forget what they have learned because the skills are not embedded in their long-term memory.

What progress have the board of directors made in holding senior leaders to account for making improvements outlined in the previous inspection report? **Reasonable progress**

Leaders have ensured that the ordering of the curriculum supports apprentices to develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Initially apprentices develop key understanding in safety before embarking on working at height using fall protection equipment, including harnesses. As a result, learners return to the workplace with more confidence and greater understanding of the role of a scaffolder. Employers value the training their apprentices receive at the training centre as apprentices are more productive and work better as part of a team.

Leaders are improving the quality of education throughout the organisation. Since the last inspection they have completed a full review resulting in a staffing restructure and have reviewed roles, responsibilities and remuneration. This has led to greater accountability and improved performance management.

Leaders have ensured that the board has a clear understanding of the weaknesses and actions needed to bring about improvements. They have improved the rigour of reporting to the board by establishing a reporting cycle and range of reports that help board members understand the business better. As a result, leaders have initiated actions that have reduced the number of apprentices at risk of leaving or failing their apprenticeship.

Leaders have established excellent partnerships and links in the scaffolding industry. They work with leading employers and statutory authorities. Leaders use these links to develop and enhance the curriculum. For example, employers use the training base for development and testing of new products. As a result, staff use and test the latest safety equipment and kit. This maintains their skills, knowledge and currency in the industry and helps them in planning and ordering the curriculum.

Leaders have a clear vision and business plan for the future of the organisation. This is based on the needs of the industry. Leaders undertake thorough research. They have identified a national shortage of skilled and qualified scaffolders. They rightly recognise their niche position in the industry to address these gaps.

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