

Raise the Bar Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2539233
Name of lead inspector:	Elaine Price, Her Majesty's Inspector
Inspection date(s):	14–15 January 2020
Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	13a Tiger Court Kings Business Park Prescot Knowsley L34 1PJ

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.

Raise the Bar Limited (RtB) became an approved training provider to deliver levy-funded apprenticeship programmes in 2017. They began recruiting apprentices in September 2018. At the time of the monitoring visit 343 apprentices were in learning, of which 308 were enrolled on the level 3 team leader/supervisor apprenticeship standard and 35 on the level 5 operational management standard. RtB operates across the country with a range of international, national and local employers.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders have used their experience of providing training and development in a commercial environment to design an apprenticeship programme that meets the needs of employers and their apprentices. They make good use of their links with employers to plan programmes tailored to meet the needs of individual organisations. For example, when planning training for coaching sessions, specific models used by individual organisations influence the content delivered. This helps apprentices become more knowledgeable and effective within their organisations. Leaders have integrated the level 3 Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) diploma within the team leading/supervisor standard at the request of employers. This provides additional challenge to apprentices and enables them to gain a valued and useful qualification for progression.

Since introducing the apprenticeship programme, leaders have expanded the organisation's workforce to support its implementation and development. They use their links with high-profile leadership and management speakers to deliver motivational and challenging specialist workshops for apprentices. Leaders have invested in producing bespoke resources that give apprentices access to high-quality digital materials to support their training.

Employers and apprentices benefit from the training and development provided. Apprentices working in human resources speak confidently about their ability to challenge unconscious bias on areas such as maternity and paternity leave. Apprentices gain confidence and self-awareness as a result of the training that helps them to deal with the challenging aspects of managing staff.

Leaders have a thorough overview of the progress apprentices make. Actions are put in place to address any concerns. For example, feedback from employers and coaches early in the programme identified that some apprentices were not fully engaged in the programme. As a result, leaders put in place more robust recruitment and induction processes. Apprentices and their managers meet the requirements of the apprenticeship programme. The vast majority of apprentices enrolled remain on programme.

Leaders do not ensure that coaches challenge apprentices to achieve the grades of which they are capable in their end-point assessment. They have accurately identified that currently there is no external scrutiny to challenge them on improving the quality of education and training that apprentices receive.

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 receive appropriate information, advice and guidance at the start of their course. Apprentices and their line managers receive detailed and high-quality information on the content and commitment required to complete the apprenticeship programme successfully. Coaches work closely with apprentices and their line managers to ensure that apprentices receive their off-the-job training time.

Managers have planned a curriculum that helps apprentices develop their knowledge in a logical order. For example, they learn how to manage themselves, followed by managing others and managing teams within their organisation. Consultants use their extensive subject knowledge and experience to plan and deliver monthly workshops that greatly benefit apprentices and their employers. They use a range of learning activities that help apprentices understand new concepts such as organisational culture.

Apprentices are supported with a range of high-quality resources including podcasts, webinars and videos through a bespoke mobile digital application. Consultants help apprentices link the theory they cover in workshops to their own job roles. Apprentices support each other through sharing their team-leading experiences.

Coaches provide individual support and coaching to apprentices between workshops. They set apprentices tasks that help prepare them for assessment. Coaches use assessment to check and clarify any misunderstanding or misconceptions. This helps

apprentices become confident in applying their new skills in the workplace. However, coaches do not set targets or provide apprentices with precise and useful feedback to help them prepare to achieve the highest grades of which they are capable at end-point assessment.

Apprentices who need functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics are supported to improve their skills through specialist coaching sessions. However, apprentices exempt from these qualifications are not challenged by coaches to improve specific skills gaps they may have in these subjects.

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

Leaders have put in place appropriate safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty policies and procedures, which are frequently reviewed and updated, to safeguard apprentices. All staff complete safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty training when joining RtB. Leaders ensure that staff are appropriately checked.

The safeguarding team have developed useful and effective resources including videos, and online training to raise apprentices' awareness of safeguarding concerns such as extremism, terrorism, online safety and welfare issues. Each month, coaches focus on a 'hot topic' in their individual coaching sessions. For example, apprentices learn about computer security and the importance of changing passwords to protect themselves and their organisations.

Consequently, apprentices feel safe and know how to report any concerns they may have. Most apprentices have a broad understanding of the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremist behaviour. However, they are not all fully aware of how these issues may impact their personal and professional lives.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can complain to Ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020