

Cambridge Marketing College

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 the Education and Skills Funding Agency 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.

Cambridge Marketing College (CMC) received a direct contract to provide levy-based apprenticeships in January 2018 and enrolled their first apprentices in September that year. CMC specialises in providing training to marketing and public relations professionals and has 72 apprentices on levels 3 and 4 apprenticeship standards. They have an additional 26 apprentices in marketing management at level 6.

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 staff make good use of their experience and knowledge to deliver high-quality apprenticeships in marketing and public relations. Leaders and staff meet the needs of employers and apprentices in line with the requirements of an apprenticeship.

Apprentices improve their planning skills and their efficiency at work. They identify key project milestones, plot these and provide clear costings and outcomes. Employers value these skills.

Tutors are highly qualified and experienced marketing and public relations professionals. They bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to their teaching practice. Tutors keep their knowledge current by using the research and development materials produced by their professional bodies. They use this research to produce high-quality learning materials. These provide apprentices with an interactive and stimulating learning programme.

Leaders and managers continually improve the quality of provision. Their self-evaluation is mostly accurate and identifies the key areas for improvement. They respond quickly to identified weaknesses.

Leaders and managers have adequate oversight of apprentices' progress. They review each apprentice's progress monthly and provide appropriate help.

Governance arrangements are effective. The current governor has a good understanding of the quality of training and provides an appropriate level of challenge to leaders.

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 gain new, occupationally relevant skills and knowledge. As a result, apprentices progress well in their job roles, benefiting their employers. For example, public relations apprentices manage controversial signage campaigns that require clear branding and enhanced negotiation skills. They understand the dynamics of maintaining corporate social responsibility.

Apprentices benefit from high-quality training in the workplace. They shadow and work with design and product teams, gaining valuable practical experience. Consequently, apprentices apply, extend and reinforce good theoretical training in their job roles.

Tutors monitor and review apprentices' progress effectively. Tutors meet frequently with apprentices and their managers. They provide useful feedback that informs apprentices' next steps. Most apprentices use this feedback well to improve the standard of their work.

Apprentices develop sector-specific English skills. For example, apprentices develop social media posts that are relevant and accessible to readers across a range of age groups. Apprentices also improve their understanding of technical language over time. Marketing apprentices use plain English and clear images in materials for communities for whom English is not their first language.

Assessors do not establish apprentices' starting points at the start of their programme. They do not identify effectively the full range of apprentices' skills, including mathematics. Leaders have acted to remedy this. For example, they have recruited a mathematics specialist. However, it is too early to judge the impact of these measures.

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

Apprentices feel safe. Leaders and managers have developed a culture of safeguarding apprentices. They understand their duties well. Leaders have appointed a designated safeguarding officer who is suitably trained. They have appropriate procedures for reporting and dealing with safeguarding incidents and act upon these in a timely manner. A few apprentices are insufficiently clear about how to refer safeguarding issues to staff at the start of their programmes.

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