

RHG Consult Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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Address:	Harborough Innovation Centre Market Harborough LE16 7WB

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.

RHG Consult Ltd obtained a contract to provide levy-funded apprenticeships in May 2017 and began enrolling apprentices in June 2018. It currently has 168 apprentices. The large majority of apprentices study safety, health and environment technician level 3, junior management consultant level 4 or operations/departmental manager level 5 apprenticeships. RHG only delivers standards-based apprenticeships.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders exploit their knowledge and experience of corporate management to deliver apprenticeships that address employers' and apprentices' needs successfully. Good curriculum planning ensures that apprentices gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to become more effective in the workplace. For example, in addition to their apprenticeship, apprentices can achieve high-level qualifications that make them more valued employees.

Leaders work closely with employers to recruit only apprentices who could gain from participating in the high-quality work-based training offered. Consequently, most apprentices stay on the programme and achieve their planned learning goals. All the apprentices who take English and mathematics examinations pass at their first attempt.

Leaders have established appropriate end-point assessment (EPA) procedures. Apprentices receive comprehensive assessment preparation. As a result, the one apprentice who has undertaken the EPA has passed.

Leaders have a good understanding of the provision's quality. Quality assurance processes improve programme standards for apprentices effectively. Managers' use of direct observation to evaluate training quality is good. Tutors receive suitable help to improve their practice. Extension of quality assurance arrangements to all training methods, such as webinars, is at an early stage. Leaders have taken the prudent

decision to not increase the provision's size until they have established all the necessary quality assurance processes.

Governance arrangements are adequate. Governors hold senior leaders to account for the effectiveness of their decision making. Challenges from governors are generally effective in improving training standards. However, governors do not receive enough reports to allow them to scrutinise all aspects of training and the curriculum.

All apprentices receive their full apprenticeship entitlement to participate in personal study during paid work time. Leaders have correctly identified that weaknesses in the tracking of apprentices' study hours hamper their ability to intervene quickly when needed. Improvements to rectify this weakness are yet to have an impact.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices?

Significant progress

Apprentices receive high-quality training which meets their needs. Tutors ensure, through detailed discussions with apprentices and their employers, that they are on the right programme. Apprentices can clearly explain how their programme meets their career aspirations. For example, apprentices acknowledge that they lack the breadth of understanding to move to the next management tier. As a result, they are highly motivated to follow their apprenticeships in areas such as operations management.

Tutors carefully assess the existing knowledge and skills of each apprentice at the beginning of the programme. They use this information well to design and structure a curriculum that progressively builds on what apprentices know and can do. For example, during interactive workshops, apprentices share their understanding of business and this quickly extends their understanding of company structures.

Tutors constantly test apprentices' understanding through webinars, knowledge checks and individual discussions. Apprentices receive very prompt feedback from tutors to help them progress rapidly. For example, they usually receive feedback the same day on their weekly reflective logs. Tutors give clear guidance on how apprentices can improve their assignments. They provide carefully targeted support so that apprentices develop their skills in English and mathematics.

Tutors have the necessary skills to deliver training of a high standard. For example, tutors use their extensive experience in auditing at a senior level to develop apprentices' skills in risk assessment. As a result, apprentices quickly became competent in carrying out risk assessments for colleagues working in community venues such as schools.

Employers are very supportive of their apprentices and are closely involved in their programmes. Consequently, apprentices make rapid progress towards achieving their goals. Employers recognise the benefits that apprentices progressively bring to their businesses. Apprentices grow in confidence as employers trust them to carry out increasingly complex tasks independently in the workplace.

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

Leaders and managers have established a caring culture that protects the well-being of all apprentices and staff. They place an appropriately high priority on safeguarding apprentices' mental health. For example, a high number of apprentices attend well-received mindfulness training sessions. Staff carefully assess apprentices' vulnerability. Consequently, managers respond effectively when apprentices are susceptible to adverse influences such as extremism or radicalisation.

All safeguarding arrangements are well established and current. Managers review them routinely to improve their usefulness. Staff receive suitable training. They know how to respond to safeguarding disclosures made to them. Leaders record, monitor and resolve the small number of concerns raised effectively. Managers rigorously check staff prior to their working with apprentices.

Apprentices know to whom they should go if they have any safeguarding concerns. They feel safe and are confident that managers will deal with any issues appropriately. Apprentices know how to use the internet and digital devices safely.

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