

University Academy Holbeach

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.

University Academy Holbeach is an established secondary school and sixth form, based in Lincolnshire. It has offered directly delivered levy-funded apprenticeships since May 2017. It has 14 apprentices, funded through the employer levy, who follow framework apprenticeships in children in young people's workforce, supporting teaching and learning in schools, plumbing, motor vehicle and brickwork. Of these, four are on level 2 and 10 are on level 3 programmes. Apprentices work in a range of businesses in the public and private sectors in the region.

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 a clearly defined rationale for their apprenticeship programmes. They select employers carefully to ensure their suitability to work with apprentices. Leaders work closely with employers to design programmes specifically to support apprentices' interests and fill job vacancies. For example, an apprentice who wants to develop particular skills in plumbing has moved to a new employer who offers this. In other examples, managers plan specific off-the-job training for different sectors and employers. Apprentices in business administration receive their training in the workplace, whereas motor vehicle apprentices attend weekly classes at the provider. As a result, apprentices do well. The vast majority achieve their qualifications on time. Most subsequently move on to better jobs.

All programmes meet in full the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship. Apprentices enjoy developing significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours in their sectors. This, in turn, develops their confidence, independence and understanding of professional standards. As a result, they enjoy greater responsibilities in their jobs.

Apprentices complete an assessment of their prior knowledge, skills and behaviours. This ensures that they are on the right programme. Assessors do not always use this

information to monitor progress fully. As a result, apprentices do not receive sufficient challenge to make the progress they should.

Leaders ensure that staff are well qualified and knowledgeable in their roles. Apprentices use good-quality resources and equipment in their learning. Consequently, apprentices want to do well in their apprenticeships and their future careers.

Leaders understand appropriately the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They listen carefully to employers and apprentices, and evaluate performance accurately. They identify appropriate actions, most of which they achieve. This improves standards.

Leaders and managers work closely with governors, who scrutinise the provision carefully to check that it is safe and effective. Governors challenge leaders appropriately to support improvement.

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 thoroughly enjoy their programmes. During off-the-job training, they benefit from sharing ideas and experiences. As a result, they develop new knowledge and understanding, which they use to good effect in their workplaces.

Teachers and assessors support apprentices effectively to achieve their qualifications. Assessors provide frequent encouragement and helpful verbal feedback. This helps apprentices to make timely progress. Most apprentices achieve qualifications in English, mathematics and digital skills. Apprentices' work is of a good standard, presented professionally and with few errors. Written feedback is not always sufficiently detailed to help apprentices reflect on their work and to challenge them to improve.

Employers are very supportive of apprentices. They provide high-quality training in their workplaces. They ensure that apprentices have sufficient time and effective resources to achieve their qualifications. For example, apprentices on the supporting teaching and learning in schools programmes attend training alongside teaching staff to learn about health and safety, child development and welfare. They also receive specific training to plan and deliver phonics. Employers are right to recognise the positive impact apprentices have on their businesses.

Apprentices receive appropriate advice and guidance before, and during, their programmes. Assessors frequently inform apprentices about career opportunities. As a result, apprentices explore different career pathways, which raises their aspirations. For example, assessors supported an apprentice who has a motor vehicle background to become a teacher.

Apprentices receive a thorough and informative induction. It provides them with detailed information about their apprenticeship and living in Britain. This helps them to settle quickly into learning.

During reviews, assessors do not always concentrate sufficiently on achievement. Apprentices do not always know clearly what to do to develop their skills. Assessors do not routinely extend apprentices' knowledge and understanding of topics such as equality and diversity. As a result, apprentices do not fully understand the relevance of these to their jobs.

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

Safeguarding practices are well established, highly organised and effective. Leaders and managers keep appropriate records. Staff receive suitable training. They know what to do should they have concerns. They act promptly when an incident occurs. Leaders ensure that employers understand their responsibilities to safeguard apprentices. Staff check apprentices are safe in their workplaces.

Staff understand local risks and priorities, including the dangers of extremism and radicalisation, online safety and gun crime. They put appropriate procedures in place to mitigate these. For example, staff and apprentices understand fully what to do in a lockdown. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that practices are current and effective. Staff know when, why and to whom they should direct apprentices for specific support. Apprentices know how to stay safe and most understand local risks and priorities.

Leaders carry out extensive background checks on staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with apprentices.

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