

Itec Training Solutions Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Lynda Brown, Her Majesty's Inspector

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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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.

Itec Training Solutions Ltd (Itec) is a national independent training provider, with a training site based in London. These form part of Itec Training Solutions Holdings, whose head office is based in Wales. The group gained a contract to provide courses in England, funded directly by the ESFA, in May 2017. Itec provides standard-based apprenticeships at levels 2 to 5 in operations/departmental management manager, team leader/supervisor, business administrator and customer services practitioner. At the time of the monitoring visit, 35 apprentices studied at level 5 and 57 at level 3. The 16 apprentices who study at level 2 were on a break in learning. Itec has delivered apprenticeship programmes since January 2019.

Themes

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

Significant progress

Leaders and managers have established a clear vision to provide high-quality training in business and administration to employers across London. They have planned their programmes carefully to meet the different needs of the employers with whom they work. They work effectively with employers and subject experts to design a curriculum that enables apprentices to meet the requirements of the apprenticeship standard.

Leaders review the curriculum frequently. They consult effectively with apprentices, employers and industry experts to ensure that the programme content is up to date, challenging and appropriate. For example, in the team leader apprenticeship at level 3, managers have changed the order in which units are taught so that apprentices have a thorough understanding of the link between strategic planning and their roles as team leaders.

Leaders have very good oversight of the quality of the provision. Senior leaders and directors have established highly effective reporting mechanisms so that they have a

good understanding of the progress that apprentices make. Directors receive frequent reports on apprentices' attendance and completion of work.

Leaders use robust procedures to monitor the quality of teaching. They identify good practice effectively and ensure that mentors and trainers work together to improve their performance. As a result, apprentices benefit from high-quality and interesting teaching.

Programme mentors and associate trainers are well qualified and highly experienced in their subject areas. They skilfully provide apprentices with expert knowledge of the industries in which they work. Mentors have relevant teaching qualifications.

Leaders provide detailed information for employers and apprentices at the start of the courses, so that they understand the requirements of apprenticeship programmes. Leaders monitor carefully how well apprentices complete these requirements. When, in a few cases, employers and apprentices do not fulfil the requirements for off-the-job training, leaders intervene swiftly to rectify this concern.

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

Mentors carefully plan apprenticeship programmes. They ensure that apprentices learn fundamental knowledge and skills first and are well prepared to understand more complex concepts later in their courses. For example, apprentices on the team leader/supervisor programme at level 3, learn to evaluate their own skills and competences before they progress to more complex topics such as strategic leadership.

Trainers use their extensive experience to teach apprentices valuable new skills and knowledge. As a result, apprentices become confident in using these to improve their performance at work. For example, level 5 apprentices use their new knowledge of budgeting competently to improve their management of projects.

Mentors check apprentices' understanding of topics thoroughly. They help apprentices revise their learning using probing questions and discussions. As a result, apprentices recall and apply their knowledge confidently to new situations. Apprentices on the level 5 operations/department manager apprenticeship, for example, reflect on how they use emotional intelligence to manage different teams effectively.

Mentors provide apprentices with detailed and helpful feedback on their work. As a result, apprentices understand how to improve. Mentors monitor apprentices' progress often. They swiftly provide additional support if apprentices fall behind. As a

result, most apprentices are up to date with their work and are on target to achieve their qualifications within the planned timescales.

Employers support apprentices effectively to achieve their qualifications. They contribute to the planning of apprenticeships and attend reviews frequently. Almost all employers support apprentices to attend off-the-job training. Attendance at workshops is very high. A few apprentices at level 5 do not give enough priority to completing additional off-the-job activities, or do not record their off-the-job training frequently enough.

Mentors prepare apprentices well for their end-point assessments. At level 3, mentors guide apprentices skilfully in preparing for their project work. They support apprentices to identify strengths and areas for development in their preparation for carrying out meetings.

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

Staff have created a very positive culture of safeguarding throughout the organisation. The safeguarding team members have clear responsibilities, which they perform diligently to keep apprentices safe.

The designated safeguarding lead has attended appropriate training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. All staff receive relevant training at induction and frequent update training in a broad range of safeguarding topics.

Leaders have established good links with external safeguarding partners, including the Department for Education. They receive useful information and attend external networks and training. They know how to refer apprentices who require additional support.

Leaders carry out relevant pre-employment checks to ensure that staff are safe to work with apprentices. They keep detailed, accurate and current records.

Apprentices feel safe. They have a good understanding of safe working practices. They know how to report any concerns that they might have.

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