

Phoenix4Training LLP

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1280310

Name of lead inspector: Emma Barrett-Peel, Her Majesty's Inspector

Inspection date(s): 7–8 October 2020

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 the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and/or the apprenticeship levy. This provider received a monitoring visit under these arrangements and was found to be making insufficient progress against one or more themes.

On 17 March 2020, all routine inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. As part of our phased return to routine inspections, we are carrying out additional monitoring visits to new providers that were judged to be making insufficient progress against one or more themes at their previous monitoring visit and would have been due their full inspection up to or during the interim phase but have not received it because of the suspension of routine inspections. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements, as outlined in the [interim phase operational note for further education and skills](#) and with reference to the further education and skills handbook, and is focused on the themes set out below.

Phoenix4Training LLP (P4T) was established in 2007, offering a range of commercial and funded training to the health and social care and rail sectors. In March 2017, they received funding directly from the ESFA to deliver apprenticeships. Training takes place at employers' premises, through one-to-one coaching sessions. At the time of the monitoring visit, P4T delivered training to 26 apprentices. Of these, 12 apprentices were studying an apprenticeship framework in warehousing or manufacturing, nine of the apprentices were studying a health and social care standard. The remaining apprentices were on a framework apprenticeship in business management and business administration and law. P4T also provides funding for one subcontractor, London Learning Consortium (LLC) to deliver non-levy funded apprenticeships to seven apprentices. Apprentices at LLC were studying a mix of framework and standards in health and social care, business administration and law and customer service.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders make sure they meet the requirements of an apprenticeship. Commitment statements detail the programme, including on- and off-the-job training and end-

point assessments. Leaders do not reinforce what apprentices and employers need to know about the end-point assessments. As a result, neither have a good enough understanding of what they include or when they will take place.

Leaders make sure assessors complete frequent training courses related to the subjects they teach. This ensures that they have current knowledge of the sectors which apprentices are working in and helps them to develop apprentices' knowledge and skills. However, leaders do not use the information gathered during teaching observations well enough to make sure assessors continue to develop their teaching skills.

Leaders have improved their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision since the previous monitoring visit. For example, the slow progress apprentices made to completing functional skills qualifications contributed to current apprentices going beyond their planned end dates. Leaders now have staff that provide dedicated support and most apprentices have now achieved the English and mathematics qualifications they need to complete the apprenticeship.

Leaders introduced a governance board after the previous monitoring visit to hold themselves to account on quality improvement. The board receive updates on performance and progress of apprentices. However, governors do not yet ensure that the resulting actions lead to rapid enough improvements.

Leaders manage their subcontracted provision well and have a good understanding of the quality of the training which staff at LLC provide. Managers at LLC report monthly on all aspects of the apprenticeship, so leaders at P4T have an accurate view of the progress which apprentices make. Leaders from P4T have regular and direct contact with apprentices to ensure that they are making progress and training is high quality.

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 benefit from developing new knowledge, skills and behaviours that they apply at work. For example, business administration apprentices design high-quality digital content for company websites and features for events. Apprentices value the opportunity to study. They speak confidently about what they have learned, the next steps in their careers and the reasons why they chose the apprenticeship.

Apprentices complete additional qualifications. For example, most health and social care apprentices attend training in medication and mental health. The qualifications add value to the workplace and broaden apprentices' knowledge of the sector they work in.

Apprentices are now better supported to improve their English and mathematics skills. Apprentices who speak English as an additional language improve their writing skills, their sentence structures and their use of grammar and punctuation. Apprentices working in manufacturing use the numeracy support they get well, for example to balance costings and storage space.

Assessors use a variety of methods to support assessment of apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, manufacturing apprentices produce good photographic and work product evidence. However, some assessors do not sufficiently check apprentices' work to make sure they reference sources used for research. For those few apprentices who are keen to move on to higher-level qualifications, assessors do not help them to develop some of the relevant skills that would benefit future studies.

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

Leaders have suitable policies and procedures in place and implement them well. Leaders use management meetings to review and update the 'Prevent' duty action plan, which meets the statutory requirements. The designated safeguarding lead and deputy are appropriately trained. Staff, apprentices and employers know how to report concerns and to whom.

Since the previous monitoring visit leaders have continued to develop the safeguarding resources for staff and apprentices. Apprentices refer to training they have completed on radicalisation and extremism and they demonstrate a basic awareness of the key themes.

Staff revisit safeguarding topics with apprentices during assessment plans and review meetings. As a result, apprentices understand processes and protocols and their awareness of safeguarding remains current.

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