New Model Business Academy Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	1280367
Name of lead inspector:	Steve Hunsley HMI
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	St Andrews House St Andrews Road Huddersfield HD1 6NA

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 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.

New Model Business Academy Limited began to deliver apprenticeships in April 2018. At the time of the monitoring visit, 96 apprentices were on level 4 standards-based apprenticeships, of whom 78 were on financial adviser programmes and 18 were on paraplanner programmes. New Model Business Academy Limited works with employers in the financial services sector across England.

Themes

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

Senior leaders and managers do not ensure that the apprenticeships that they offer meet the needs of apprentices or their employers. Managers do not structure programmes well enough. As a result, apprentices struggle to gain the skills and knowledge that they require to become confident and able financial advisers or paraplanners. Apprenticeship development managers (ADMs) focus too much on helping apprentices pass their financial services examinations and not enough on the development of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices need in their current or future job roles.

Apprentices and their employers appear unsure about the requirements of an apprenticeship. Many consider the programme to be purely examination based, and do not focus enough on the requirements of the apprenticeship standard. For example, apprentices are not made aware of any contemporary issues that are affecting the financial services sector. Leaders do not involve employers well enough in planning the apprenticeship. This means that employers do not provide apprentices with the high-quality, on-the-job training opportunities that they need.

Although leaders and managers recognise the strengths and weaknesses of their provision, they have been too slow to address weaknesses identified at the previous monitoring visit. The actions that they have taken, such as working with external partners to identify the improvements they need to make, have not had enough positive impact for apprentices and their employers.

Managers ensure that staff are highly experienced in the financial sector. However, most staff are not appropriately skilled in the delivery of apprenticeships.

Senior leaders recognise the skills shortages in the financial sector and have a clear rationale for the delivery of financial adviser and paraplanning apprenticeships. They use their experience and contacts effectively to work with small- to medium-sized businesses to meet the growing demand in the industry.

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

Managers and ADMs concentrate too much on tasks that focus solely on helping apprentices to pass their financial examinations, and do not pay sufficient attention to the development of apprentices' skills and behaviours. Consequently, apprentices make slow progress towards achieving the expected outcomes of their apprenticeship, and too many continue in learning beyond their expected end date.

Leaders and ADMs do not recognise the importance of on- and off-the-job training in the apprenticeship programmes. They do not provide enough information to employers about the training or include them in its delivery. This limits the opportunities for apprentices to learn in the workplace. Apprentices' learning is too often limited to working through specific chapters of a textbook to prepare for taking their next examination.

Managers do not plan programmes in a way that enables apprentices to fill the gaps in their knowledge of the financial services sector. ADMs and trainers do not assess apprentices well enough to monitor or evaluate their progress. For example, apprentices who do not know enough about financial protection do not have the knowledge that they need to pass their examinations.

Senior leaders and managers have been slow to improve the quality of the provision and the performance of staff. They have made changes to their quality assurance processes and have begun to involve employers in reviewing apprentices' progress.

However, it is too early to see impact on the progress that apprentices make or on the quality of the training that they receive.

Few apprentices improve their English and mathematical skills beyond the requirements of the apprenticeship. Managers do not support apprentices to be more confident in their communication skills when dealing with clients. Apprentices benefit from support to practise their mathematical skills prior to the completion of examinations.

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

Leaders and managers have effective safeguarding arrangements in place. All staff are suitably qualified, benefit from regular updates, and participate in mandatory training. Staff understand safeguarding procedures and use them effectively whenever there is a need.

Apprentices feel safe in their workplaces and have a sound understanding of safeguarding practices. They know how to report any concerns that they may have and whom to contact.

Apprentices know about the possible criminal activities that may be related to the financial services sector, such as money laundering. However, they do not have a good enough understanding of the wider risks that they may be exposed to, such as radicalisation and extremism.

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