

# LAGAT Limited

Interim visit report

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<b>Unique reference number:</b>	52902
<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Emma Woods, Her Majesty's Inspector
<b>Visit dates:</b>	10 to 11 December 2020
<b>Type of provider:</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Address:</b>	Newton House 24–26 Corporation Street Lincoln LN2 1HN

## Interim visit

### Context and focus of visit

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 'interim visits' to further education and skills providers. Interim visits are to help learners, parents, employers and government understand how providers are meeting the needs of learners and apprentices in this period, including learners with high needs and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below and the findings are based on discussions with leaders, managers, staff and learners.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, we made this visit remotely to reduce pressure on the provider.

### Information about the provider

LAGAT Limited is part of the LAGAT Group, established in 1987. It provides training and recruitment services for people in Lincolnshire and the East Midlands. There are 98 apprentices: 40 are aged 16 to 19. Apprentices follow programmes in childcare, learning support, administration, accountancy, information and communication technology (ICT), digital, and hospitality and catering. One subcontractor works with nine of LAGAT's apprentices.

LAGAT Limited provides a small number of traineeships and offers programmes to help unemployed adults to develop the skills they need to secure work.

### **What actions are leaders taking to ensure that they provide an appropriate curriculum that responds to the reasonable needs of learners and stakeholders and adapts to changed circumstances?**

Leaders and managers moved teaching online for students and apprentices prior to the national COVID-19 restrictions. This happened swiftly so learning was not disrupted. Training was provided to support tutors, students and apprentices work online.

Leaders and managers prioritised access to technology. During the first national restrictions they surveyed staff and students to understand their needs. They provided laptops to students and apprentices and staff were given desks and chairs so they had work stations at home.

Leaders and managers planned by subject how face-to-face teaching would restart when national restrictions ended. This subject-based approach continues as

restrictions change. For example, vulnerable students on traineeships attend training centres as they need more support while childcare apprentices study online due to restrictions in the workplace.

Students and apprentices are said to progress well studying online and achieve their qualifications. A few hospitality and childcare apprentices are struggling to complete their final assessments because they are furloughed. Managers are discussing with awarding organisations adjustments that will allow them to complete them in the near future.

The needs of the community are important to leaders and managers. In response to the pandemic they have developed new courses to support the local area. For example, they have opened a new community centre with a local charity to provide training in budget management and digital skills.

Leaders modified their quality checks for teaching, learning and assessment. They drop into online lessons and visit face-to-face lessons to review tutors' practice. Monthly one-to-ones provide managers with a vehicle to discuss students' and apprentices' progress with tutors, as well as their personal well-being.

### **What steps are leaders, managers and staff taking to ensure that the approaches used for building knowledge and skills are appropriate to meet the reasonable needs of learners?**

Prior to COVID-19, tutors used an online platform in the classroom. They expanded this and redeveloped learning materials, research tasks and assessments. Online classes were supported with follow-up emails, telephone calls and individual tutorials.

Tutors continue to adapt teaching and assessment in light of the circumstances created by COVID-19. In hospitality, tutors design recipe cards for furloughed apprentices to prepare meals at home, so they continue to develop practical skills. Apprentices in ICT and digital marketing are very busy in their jobs, so tutors are flexible with reviews and training times to accommodate this.

Attendance is monitored through an online platform and is consistent with previous academic years. Managers and tutors monitor students' and apprentices' progress and intervene if required. Tutors know their students and apprentices well, so they are quick to notice a decline in the standard of their work or a dip in motivation. Tutors are pleased with students and apprentices progress despite the challenges from COVID-19.

Students and apprentices say they find learning online engaging and enjoyable. Adults like the flexibility it offers them to study in their own time. Employers are supportive and contribute to online lessons. Tutors speak about the benefits of using technology for teaching.

Leaders and managers have adapted careers advice and guidance in light of COVID-19. Interviews and one-to-one support sessions take place online, with flexible timeslots. Employability skills training includes online interview techniques and how to communicate while wearing a face mask. A few apprentices have lost their jobs due to the pandemic; the careers team has supported them all to secure new employment.

**How are leaders ensuring that learners are safe and well informed about potential risks, including from online sources?**

Managers are aware of the risks faced by students due to COVID-19. Online safety is a priority. Tutors work with students to protect their data, set safe passwords and spot phishing scams. Students and apprentices recall this guidance and apply it.

A few vulnerable students experienced mental health issues during the national restrictions. Tutors made weekly contact with them, with more frequent support to those most at risk. Tutors ask students to keep 'lockdown diaries' to help to monitor their well-being.

Managers meet with tutors weekly to formally discuss safeguarding and students' well-being. Tutors value these meetings with managers where they can address any concerns. In turn, tutors place a strong emphasis on students' and apprentices' welfare.

Students and apprentices know who to contact if they have any concerns about their safety. They feel well supported by their tutors and managers.

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