

Estio Training Limited

Progress monitoring report

Unique reference number:	1276525
Name of lead inspector:	Jonny Wright, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	Central Park New Lane Leeds LS11 5EB

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Estio Training Limited received a new provider monitoring visit in August 2018. At that time, inspectors made progress judgements under three themes.

This monitoring visit focused on the extent to which leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action to provide education and training in the current circumstances. It was undertaken as outlined in the [operational note on visits carried out from January 2021](#) and with reference to the further education and skills handbook.

These visits are to help learners, parents, employers and government understand how providers are meeting the needs of learners in this period, including those with high needs and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, inspectors carried out this monitoring activity remotely. As a result, the range of evidence available to inspectors was narrower than would be the case during an on-site inspection. Therefore, this report provides a more limited level of assurance.

The impact of COVID-19 has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgement below. Inspectors did not evaluate leaders' response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer of 2020, when the provider was not open to all learners and there were no national expectations regarding remote education.

Theme

<p>What progress are leaders and those responsible for governance making to ensure that staff teach a curriculum and provide support to meet learners' needs, including the provision of remote/online learning?</p>	<p>Significant progress</p>
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Since the previous monitoring visit, leaders and governors have worked effectively to address the areas for improvement that inspectors found. They have brought additional expertise into the leadership team to improve the quality of apprenticeships. Leaders and governors have restructured the business to ensure that apprentices are recruited to the right programme and that they develop the new skills that they need to be successful in their careers.

Governors have clear oversight of the provision and effectively hold leaders to account to make improvements to apprenticeships. They have frequent meetings

with senior managers and scrutinise closely information that leaders provide regarding the progress of apprentices, the quality of education and safeguarding. Consequently, leaders have made improvements to teaching, planning and monitoring off-the-job training, monitoring apprentices, careers advice and guidance, and functional English and mathematics provision.

Leaders and managers have rapidly implemented an online curriculum and approach to teaching that enables apprentices to continue to develop their knowledge and skills during the restrictions caused by the pandemic. They have trained staff successfully to teach using a range of online platforms and to meet apprentices' and employers' requirements. Prior to the pandemic, leaders and managers had planned to move completely to online teaching and had already developed appropriate resources. This meant that they were able to make the necessary changes quickly.

Managers work closely with employers to plan the content of apprenticeships. They hold extensive discussions with employers to identify appropriate programmes that support apprentices to develop the skills that add value to employers' businesses. Managers respond to employers' requests for bespoke training modules that develop apprentices' vocational skills. In level 3 digital marketing, managers plan training in the fundamentals of online marketing tools to develop important skills for apprentices that are not included in the apprenticeship standard.

Most trainers use their vocational expertise well to plan and sequence training. They create useful guidance documents, resources and videos that help apprentices to revise key content and apply their skills to workplace tasks. As a result, apprentices make rapid progress in developing and demonstrating their technical understanding. However, in a few areas, such as level 4 network engineering, trainers are not sufficiently involved in the planning and designing of curriculum content.

Staff make effective use of a variety of assessment methods to identify apprentices' existing knowledge, skills and behaviours. They work closely with employers to identify swiftly the specific tasks that apprentices need to complete to develop their skills. For example, apprentices on level 4 network engineer apprenticeships benefited from taking a level 3 module to cover the key concepts of networking, as they had no previous knowledge or experience of this.

Staff provide effective support to apprentices who fall behind on their programme. They work closely with employers to identify tasks and projects that apprentices can be involved in to help them to catch up. Staff use regular meetings with employers to ensure that apprentices get the right level of support from their workplace mentor. As a result, apprentices who fall behind address gaps in their knowledge, improve their skills and make more rapid progress.

Most trainers have extensive industry-based knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They use their expertise well to provide apprentices with an understanding of key terminology that is vital in their job roles. However, a few trainers who have worked with the organisation for a number of years do not get sufficient

opportunities to carry out tasks to extend and keep current their industrial knowledge.

Staff successfully support apprentices who have additional needs to settle into their programme and start work. For example, they recognise that apprentices with Asperger syndrome may experience anxiety in new situations. Staff meet these apprentices from the bus and walk to work with them when they first start their job. This helps to increase apprentices' confidence in the new working environment.

Designated officers have addressed the areas for improvement in safeguarding since the previous monitoring visit. They have established contact with 'Prevent' duty coordinators in areas where Estio provides apprenticeships and have updated policies in line with current legislation. As a result, apprentices have an improved awareness of the risks local to them.

During the pandemic, managers and staff have continued to support apprentices with frequent communication and by providing extra help when required. Apprentices value the support that they receive. They say that it is helpful that staff check on their well-being each month given the challenges they face working from home during the pandemic.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to:

- ensure that all trainers are involved in the planning and designing of curriculum content
- provide all trainers with sufficient opportunities to expand their industrial knowledge and keep themselves current with industry developments.

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