

Capital 4 Training

Progress monitoring report

Unique reference number:	1278614
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Inspection dates:	18–19 February 2021
Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Capital 4 Training received a new provider monitoring visit in November 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

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? Insufficient progress

Too many apprentices do not develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours during their apprenticeship. At the beginning of programmes, trainers do not adequately assess what apprentices already know. As a result, they cannot identify what skills, knowledge and behaviours apprentices have gained since starting their apprenticeships. Too many highway maintenance apprentices have been in the same or similar job roles for many years. They receive certification through their apprenticeship for knowledge, skills and behaviours that they already had prior to starting the programme.

Apprentices on all programmes make slow progress. Over half of current apprentices are beyond their planned end date and many are still not ready for their end-point

assessment. Since the previous inspection, only a very small number of apprentices have successfully completed their apprenticeship.

Too few apprentices receive helpful careers advice before starting their programme. Too often, advice does not consider apprentices' future career aspirations or their pre-existing knowledge and skills. As a result, too many apprentices start programmes without understanding fully the benefit of the apprenticeship to their work or future career.

Trainers do not monitor or review apprentices' off-the-job training closely enough. For highway maintenance apprentices, too much of their off-the-job training requires them independently to research topics that they are already familiar with. Across all subject areas, apprentices include tasks in their off-the-job training logs that are part of their job roles and that they are already familiar with. For example, highway maintenance apprentices record that they take part in health and safety briefings, and leadership and management apprentices record that they interview new staff. This means that too many apprentices do not develop new knowledge and skills through their off-the-job training.

Trainers do not plan the curriculum well enough. Too often, the curriculum and assessment plans are generic and directly taken from the published apprenticeship standard without appropriate consideration of apprentices' individual starting points. Trainers do not involve employers sufficiently in the planning of apprentices' learning programmes. Employers rely on the knowledge of the trainer to lead the planning of the programme.

Highway maintenance apprentices achieve industry-recognised qualifications as part of their programme that are in addition to the requirements of their standards-based apprenticeship, such as awards in working in confined spaces and the safe use of abrasive wheels. As a result, they can complete more technical tasks at work. However, in too many instances, apprentices already have the existing knowledge and skills to achieve these qualifications.

Too often, apprentices do not benefit from helpful and constructive feedback on the quality of their work. In highway maintenance apprenticeships, the assessment evidence is mainly observations of apprentices at work, supported by photographs. Trainers do not record any feedback on the quality of apprentices' practical work. In business management, when apprentices submit written work, trainers provide feedback that only occasionally identifies areas of further development. As a result, too few apprentices can demonstrate improvements in the quality of their work over time.

Staff continue to support apprentices well throughout the national COVID-19 restrictions. They make frequent telephone calls to apprentices to check on their well-being and mental health. Leaders recognise the potential risk that boredom during the ongoing restrictions could lead to an increase in the risk of apprentices being drawn into radicalisation and extremism. In response, leaders provide

apprentices with appropriate support materials to ensure that they are aware of the risks and how to avoid becoming radicalised.

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) uses his previous experience as a police officer working in child protection well to support apprentices and identify any possible concerns. The DSO has strong links with multi-agency support networks to draw on should apprentices have concerns that need external support.

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

- identify the prior experience and qualifications of all potential apprentices to ensure that they can develop substantial new knowledge, skills, and behaviours as a direct result of their participation on programmes
- ensure that apprentices who are in learning beyond their planned end date make swifter progress and complete their apprenticeship as soon as possible
- review and improve the arrangements for apprentices' off-the-job training to ensure that this element of their programmes helps apprentices to develop new knowledge and skills.

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