

Took Us A Long Time Limited

Progress monitoring report

Unique reference number:	1278678
Name of lead inspector:	Mike Finn, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Employer
Address:	32 Charlotte Street London W1T 2NQ

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Took Us A Long Time Limited was last inspected in January 2020. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

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

Took Us A Long Time Limited is a subsidiary training company of Tasty PLC, a national restaurant chain. The provider has been significantly impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. Leaders resumed the delivery of apprenticeships in October 2021, despite apprentices remaining furloughed. Having decided not to put apprentices on a break in learning during the recent national restrictions, leaders have not managed to maintain a full apprenticeship curriculum. The major focus of tutors has been on supporting apprentices to complete functional skills assessments.

Leaders have not managed to improve the teaching of English and mathematics since the previous inspection. Tutors do not teach all of the knowledge components of the subjects. For example, in mathematics functional skills level 1, tutors restrict coaching to areas that apprentices struggle to understand, to help them to pass the examination. As a result, tutors do not build upon apprentices' knowledge of basic concepts across the topics, so that they can complete more complex tasks in the future.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have ensured that apprentices learn beyond the practical and theoretical elements of the apprenticeship. For example, apprentices attend mental health workshops. Consequently, they have been able to draw upon their knowledge of mental health when supporting colleagues in the restaurants.

Leaders have strengthened recruitment and selection procedures. They report that a small group of newly recruited apprentices about to start their apprenticeship are on a level of study that takes into account their prior knowledge and skills.

Tutors provide insufficient challenge to ensure that apprentices complete work in a timely way. For example, outstanding practical projects from the level 2 production chef programme from 12 months ago remain incomplete. This contributes to delays in apprentices completing their apprenticeship.

Tutors do not ensure that apprentices receive adequate reviews about the progress they make. Records used by apprentices to check their own apprenticeship completion are often inaccurate. As a result, apprentices do not understand precisely what they need to do to complete their apprenticeship.

Tutors skilfully teach apprentices how to improve their verbal communication skills. This is particularly the case for those who speak English as an additional language. As a result, employers recognise that their improvement in spoken English helps apprentices to gain confidence when they communicate with customers and colleagues.

Tutors do not provide apprentices with constructive feedback about how they can improve the standard of their work or practical skills. For example, in English functional skills, tutors do not routinely highlight spelling and grammatical errors in apprentices' work. As a result, apprentices do not understand how they can improve their work, or how they can avoid making similar errors in the future.

Apprentices speak highly of the pastoral support that they receive from tutors. Apprentices feel safe and they know they can turn to their tutor if they have any worries or concerns.

Apprentices benefit from close working relationships within the restaurants that they work in. As a result, employers are supportive of the apprenticeships that employees are taking, and support them well with their work in restaurants.

Employers provide useful careers information and guidance to apprentices. Consequently, the majority of apprentices know about the next steps available to them upon completing their apprenticeship. For example, those who currently work as head chefs know what they need to do to become an area chef. Many apprentices gain promotion while they are in training and they are highly motivated to progress within the industry.

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

- ensure that all apprentices back in learning are taught a full curriculum so they can complete all the parts of their apprenticeship programme in a timely manner
- ensure that tutors provide constructive feedback on apprentices' work so that they understand how to improve the standard of their written and practical work
- ensure that tutors more adequately review with apprentices their progress in developing new knowledge, skills and behaviours so that they know what they need to do to complete their apprenticeship.

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