

Heritage Skills Academy Limited

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector:	Montserrat Pérez-Parent, Her Majesty's Inspector
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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 monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the *Further education and skills inspection handbook*, especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Heritage Skills Academy Limited (HSA) began delivering apprenticeships in 2017, initially as a subcontractor. HSA currently delivers training to over 100 apprentices, of which 54 are directly funded. This directly funded provision was in scope for the monitoring visit. All apprentices are studying the standards-based apprenticeship in heritage engineering technician at level 3. Of these, 38 apprentices are following the vehicle mechanical technician option and 16 are studying the vehicle coach building and trim technician option. Four apprentices are levy funded.

Apprentices work for about 80 different employers across the country. They attend week-long training sessions on block release every 5 to 6 weeks throughout the year. Training takes place at either HSA's headquarters in Bicester or at its new site at Brooklands Museum.

At the time of the visit, apprentices had returned to face-to-face training, following remote teaching during the period of national restrictions. The impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgements below.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders started HSA with the clear aim of teaching new generations the skills needed to replace the ageing workforce in the heritage engineering sector. Leaders worked with employers and highly experienced sector experts to develop an apprenticeship standard that qualifies apprentices in the relevant skills and knowledge they need to work in this industry. Employers value that the skills apprentices develop cover the skills deficit in the sector and help them maintain the viability of their businesses.

Leaders and managers recruit apprentices with integrity. They assess applicants' aspirations and motivation to work in the sector when assessing their suitability for the apprenticeship. Leaders and managers understand the employers they work with

and their company values well. They use this knowledge to match employers with suitable candidates and they support them with the recruitment process. As a result, most apprentices remain on programme.

Apprentices complete assessments to establish their existing knowledge of engineering and tools. Staff use the results of these assessments to match apprentices to appropriate training groups. For example, apprentices with prior qualifications and knowledge in motor vehicle engineering join cohorts that have already covered part of the training programme to ensure that they develop new knowledge and skills. Staff support these apprentices with additional one-to-one sessions to cover any gaps they may have. As a result, all apprentices make progress in their studies at a good pace.

Governors use their business acumen and expertise to support leaders and managers well. However, they do not have sufficient understanding of high-quality training to challenge leaders and managers on the quality of training that apprentices receive.

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

Apprentices develop substantial new skills, knowledge and behaviours that enable them to become more independent and over time take on more complex projects in the workplace. For example, apprentices manage restoration work which involves liaising with customers, ordering stock and completing technical work to a high standard.

Apprentices are proud of their apprenticeship and talk with confidence about the knowledge and skills they have learned. For example, they describe the reduction in the volume of lead in heritage paints over time and how these differ from the paints used in modern vehicles.

Staff are suitably qualified and have extensive expertise in vehicle maintenance and restoration. They train and support apprentices well to develop the knowledge and skills they need for their final assessments. Apprentices benefit from frequent oral feedback that enables them to develop their skills, such as producing high-quality, error-free job cards. Written feedback to apprentices and their managers is generally brief and focused on the marks apprentices have attained on their assignments. It does not identify what apprentices have done well or the areas they need to improve. As a result, a few employers are unclear about what areas their apprentices would benefit from having workplace learning and mentoring on to consolidate what they learn on their course.

Trainers and employers instil high expectations in all apprentices. Many apprentices achieve high marks in their assignments and develop skills that will enable them to

progress in their careers. For example, apprentices learn about the administrative tasks needed to run a business.

Apprentices who need to take functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics do not benefit from teaching that enables them to rapidly develop the skills they need.

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

Apprentices feel safe and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They know who to report concerns to if they have any. Safeguarding staff are suitably trained in managing any concerns that apprentices raise.

Apprentices adopt safe working practices and understand the potential risks associated with their work. They are able to describe how to manage these risks appropriately. For example, apprentices have a thorough knowledge of the legislation that applies to the corrosive fluids they work with, such as brake fluid. Staff work with apprentices so that they understand appropriate behaviours in the workplace. For example, they discuss why banter in the workplace can be inappropriate and how to identify when this is the case.

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