

Solveway Limited

Progress monitoring report

Unique reference number:	1278582
Name of lead inspector:	Sambit Sen, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	Barnwell School Barnwell Stevenage Hertfordshire SG2 9SW

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Solveway Limited (SL) received a new provider monitoring visit in February 2019. 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?

Reasonable progress

SL provides finance and information technology (IT) apprenticeship training predominantly in Hertfordshire. Apprenticeship programmes include assistant accountant, infrastructure technician and business administrator at level 3 and level 4 professional accounting or taxation technician and network engineer. Since the national pandemic in March 2020, SL have moved all their classroom-based training online. Most of the apprentices have continued working and learning remotely.

Leaders provide the same accountancy apprenticeship programme irrespective of whether all course content meets employers' business needs. Employers are not

involved in the design of the apprenticeship to better meet their employment needs. In addition, employers do not plan workplace tasks and activities that appropriately link to the training apprentices receive from their tutors. As a result, apprentices sometimes are unable to practise accountancy concepts and develop their understanding further within their workplace.

IT apprentices benefit from good-quality, vocational training provided by tutors and employers. Apprentices quickly develop technical knowledge and employment-related skills such as speaking to external customers and resolving IT-based issues accurately. As a result, employers are confident in giving apprentices more responsibilities and promoting them quickly.

Tutors and work coaches provide timely and detailed feedback to apprentices. This helps apprentices improve their work and achieve higher grades in their final exams. For example, IT apprentices improve their report writing and research skills based on the feedback they receive from their tutors.

Accountancy tutors do not always effectively assess the starting points of apprentices in their lessons. For example, in bookkeeping lessons, tutors do not identify or adapt their teaching to meet the needs of those apprentices who have prior knowledge of bookkeeping practices in their workplace.

A small minority of accountancy apprentices fail to achieve their full qualification. Leaders and managers recognise that they have been slow to take steps to improve the learning experiences of apprentices. They have recently made changes to rectify this. However, as yet, its impact is not fully realised.

Senior leaders have put effective governance arrangements in place. Governors have good oversight and provide effective support and scrutiny to senior leaders and managers. As a result, senior leaders are confident in the actions they take to improve the quality of training.

Managers, tutors and work coaches safeguard their apprentices effectively. They discuss and provide good personalised support to their apprentices. As a result, apprentices feel safe and know who to contact if they have any welfare or well-being issues.

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

- ensure that managers and tutors provide a flexible accountancy apprenticeship programme that meets the employment needs of employers and the training and development requirements of apprentices
- ensure that accountancy tutors adapt their teaching appropriately to take account of apprentices' prior learning and knowledge
- ensure that employers of accountancy apprentices provide appropriate work-related tasks and activities enabling apprentices to practise their skills and knowledge appropriately.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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