

# Apprentify Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Name of lead inspector:** Ruth Stammers, Her Majesty's Inspector

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**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** Crown House  
Manchester Road  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 1BH

## 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.

Apprentify Limited is an independent learning provider based in Wilmslow, Cheshire. It specialises in providing training to the digital marketing sector. It delivers two level 3 standards-based apprenticeships. At the time of the visit, there were 81 apprentices studying the junior content producer apprenticeship and 69 apprentices studying the digital marketing apprenticeship. Apprentify Limited work with one subcontractor, The Juice Academy, who provide training for most of the junior content producer apprentices.

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 have a clear rationale for the delivery of apprenticeship provision in the digital marketing sector. They identified skills gaps for junior content producers and digital marketers across the Greater Manchester region. Leaders plan to introduce higher apprenticeships in digital marketing to provide progression opportunities for current apprentices.

Leaders have doubled their apprenticeship recruitment in the last five months. They have responded to this by employing additional development coaches and staff who monitor the quality of training. Leaders have recently introduced new quality checks to monitor the progress of individual apprentices. This is so that they can be assured staff are managing higher numbers of apprentices effectively. It is too early to see the impact of these new checks on the quality of training for apprentices.

Leaders work with one subcontractor who delivers training to most of the junior content producer apprentices. The Juice Academy is a not-for-profit organisation that

is part of a digital marketing business. Tutors work in digital marketing and deliver training on a voluntary basis as part of their job role. Tutors provide apprentices with up-to-date training from industry experts.

Leaders have an appropriate understanding of their areas for improvement. For example, they identified that employers and apprentices were unclear about the requirements for their final assessments. Employers now attend final assessment webinars. Apprentices continue to benefit from mock final assessments. Apprentices are now better prepared for their final assessment.

Governors are suitably experienced to carry out their roles. They have an appropriate understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement and challenge leaders effectively. Governors provide advice and guidance, such as the benefits of including a female safeguarding contact for female apprentices. Leaders use this external scrutiny to make improvements to the quality of training and support they provide.

**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**

Development coaches identify what apprentices already know and can do at the start of the programme. They use this information to develop individualised learning plans. Development coaches give extra activities to apprentices with prior knowledge of marketing software, such as video editing and blog writing. Consequently, apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours which they use to make a positive contribution to their employers' businesses.

Leaders work closely with employers to develop the apprenticeship curriculum. They provide training that closely aligns to employers' businesses. For example, they provide specific training for apprentices on social media marketing or website optimisation depending on the focus of the employers' marketing strategy. As a result, apprentices are able to target the chosen market for their employers' business.

Development coaches plan the curriculum in a logical order. Apprentices clearly understand each topic before moving onto the next and make swift progress in their studies. For example, junior content producer apprentices learn about the digital marketing industry and supplier relationships before they learn how to build a target audience and how to plan digital content.

Development coaches provide effective support for apprentices with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They identify apprentices' needs early in the programme. They provide specialist spectacles for apprentices with sight impairments. They support apprentices with hearing impairments to utilise subtitles during online lessons. This ensures that apprentices with SEND have equal access to learning materials as their peers in online sessions.

Development coaches provide helpful feedback to apprentices. They guide apprentices to improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar and to use more creative marketing styles, such as different camera angles for images. Apprentices use this feedback to improve the quality of their work.

Leaders are developing plans to improve their careers advice and guidance. Most apprentices are aware of their next steps. However, they are unclear what future career opportunities may be available to them.

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

Leaders prioritise safeguarding. The designated safeguarding lead and deputy leads are appropriately qualified and trained. Development coaches complete training using simulated referrals on current issues such as online gambling. Leaders use the analysis of development coaches' responses to inform further training and to reinforce understanding.

Leaders practice safe recruitment. All staff undergo the appropriate checks prior to contact with apprentices.

Apprentices feel safe and know who to contact with any concerns. Leaders deal appropriately with any safeguarding concerns. Where necessary, they refer apprentices to external agencies to receive specialist support.

Leaders provide training for apprentices on the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Apprentices' understanding of how this relates to them and the industry they work in is limited.

Leaders have introduced 'Well-being Wednesday'. Apprentices and staff use this as an opportunity to socialise with others. Staff and apprentices benefit from this to prevent isolation during COVID-19 restrictions.

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