

Limm Skills Academy Limited

Monitoring visit report

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| Name of lead inspector: | Gayle Saundry, 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.

Limm Skills Academy Limited was founded in 2012 as a provider of work-based learning covering a range of subjects, including health and social care, childcare and business administration. Since 2019, Limm Skills Academy Limited have provided apprenticeship training in lead adult care worker level 3, business administrator level 3 and leader in adult care level 5 standards. At the time of the monitoring visit, the provider had 10 apprentices in training, the majority of whom were working towards the lead adult care worker level 3 standard.

As a result of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, at the time of the monitoring visits, Limm Skills Academy Limited were providing all training and support to apprentices online. The impact of COVID-19 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?

Insufficient progress

Leaders do not consistently produce commitment statements that demonstrate a shared understanding between apprentices, assessors and employers of how the apprenticeship will be taught. The majority of commitment statements are not signed by apprentices. As a result, leaders have not taken appropriate actions to meet the requirements of the apprenticeship.

Leaders do not collect appropriate evidence in order to assure the quality of their assessors' work. Leaders rely heavily on the information provided by assessors and employers about apprentices' progress, and this information is not always accurate. As a result, leaders are not aware of the strengths and areas of weakness within their apprenticeship, nor do they have in place appropriate plans to make improvements.

Leaders do not keep accurate records of the training that each apprentice receives and do not know whether their apprentices complete training in their own time or during work hours. They do not accurately track the attendance of apprentices at training sessions. Leaders have no records of any training completed by apprentices outside of taught sessions. They do not keep accurate records of those apprentices who are in learning and those who have left.

Leaders gather an appropriate range of information about apprentices' prior knowledge and experience at the start of the course, including skills scans, training records and functional skills assessments. However, they do not use this information to inform the training that each apprentice receives.

Leaders and tutors do not ensure that apprentices' work is collated and recorded appropriately. Portfolios of apprentices' work seen by inspectors were incomplete with considerable omissions. Tutors do not adequately verify that apprentices' work is their own and much is identical in different portfolios.

Leaders have a good understanding of the care sector and the needs of employers within that sector. They have selected appropriate qualifications for their apprentices to meet those needs.

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

Leaders have developed curriculum plans which are appropriately sequenced to develop new knowledge over time. However, assessors do not teach apprentices effectively. As a result, apprentices have a limited understanding of what they have been taught. Apprentices are not able to clearly explain the new knowledge they have gained through taught sessions or the content of the most recent work they have submitted.

Assessors do not provide apprentices with useful feedback on what they are doing well or what they need to do to improve. Assessors do not give feedback that is specific to, or helpful for, each individual based on the work that they have done. Apprentices cannot recall any details of the feedback they have received.

Assessors do not conduct effective reviews with apprentices. During reviews, mentors do not discuss with apprentices the knowledge, skills or behaviours they have developed through their training or at work. During reviews, employers do not provide apprentices with any meaningful feedback on how they are performing at work. Assessors do not take into account apprentices' past experience, qualifications or current performance when setting them targets.

Leaders do not have an accurate oversight of the progress apprentices make on their course and who may be falling behind. Tutors of mathematics are unable to identify specific areas in which apprentices have learned new knowledge.

Through their roles in a variety of care settings, apprentices learn the behaviours necessary for their jobs. For example, they use appropriate strategies to communicate with residents with hearing difficulties or who have a limited understanding of English.

Leaders have gained a reasonable understanding of the development needs of their assessors by observing them teach. For instance, they have identified that assessors need to improve their use of strategies to check what apprentices have learned in lessons.

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

Leaders responsible for safeguarding have a limited understanding of their responsibilities. Leaders have put in place a safeguarding policy. However, they do not consider the safeguarding risks posed to apprentices in the care sector or the risks that may arise through online rather than face-to-face teaching.

Leaders have not effectively communicated to apprentices who they should contact if they have a safeguarding concern. Leaders do not maintain an appropriate log of safeguarding and welfare concerns or of any actions taken by leaders to support apprentices.

Leaders do not keep adequate records relating to staff appointments, including references for tutors and assessors. As such, leaders do not follow their own safer recruitment policy.

Leaders are aware of some of the risks which their apprentices may face in their local communities, for example female genital mutilation. They take appropriate steps to educate their apprentices about such issues.

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