

# Flexible Training Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 1248051

**Name of lead inspector:** Penny Fawcus, Her Majesty's Inspector

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**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** Devonshire Business Centre  
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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.

Flexible Training Limited (FTL) is an independent learning provider based in Hertfordshire. They offer standards-based adult care apprenticeships since October 2018.

At the time of the visit there were 21 apprentices working towards level 2 adult care worker, level 3 lead adult care worker, level 4 lead practitioner in adult care, and level 5 leader in adult care. Most apprentices were adults and no apprentices were in receipt of high needs funding. The provider has no subcontracted provision.

Almost all apprentices are employed with one domiciliary care employer. The owner of this company is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for FTL but is not employed by them. The DSL completes the annual appraisals for the assessors employed by FTL. Assessors are wholly responsible for the training of apprentices.

Since the introduction of national COVID-19 restrictions, apprentices' face-to-face teaching has been suspended and assessors have been unable to access the workplace for face-to-face reviews and workplace observations.

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?**

**Insufficient progress**

Leaders do not provide an ambitious curriculum for apprentices. They do not enable apprentices to develop new knowledge and skills beyond the care qualification. Assessors do not consider apprentices' existing knowledge and skills so are unable to provide a well-planned curriculum.

Leaders do not use performance management of their staff to improve quality. Their current arrangements are inappropriate and lack accountability. Leaders have not

ensured that apprentices have continued to learn during the pandemic. They are too accepting of apprentice's reluctance to use technology to participate in lessons. During national restrictions, assessors have carried out progress reviews through telephone contact. However, they have not continued to teach apprentices to enable them to make good progress. Leaders do not ensure that assessors plan apprentices' wider learning and skills development beyond achievement of the qualification.

Leaders have well-established relationships with the employers they work with. They are responsive to requests from employers to provide the short courses and accredited qualifications they need. For example, they provide short courses in medication and care planning, as well as introducing the level 5 leader in adult care apprenticeship.

Leaders use peer review effectively to share assessor's practise of teaching and learning activities. They plan for all assessors to participate in peer reviews within the organisation. They work with an external partner to gain validation and feedback on teaching practises.

Leaders ensure that adult care sector training and development is current. They ensure that assessors are up to date and understand the new guidance and legislation in the care sector resulting from the pandemic.

**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**

Apprentices do not benefit from high quality off-the-job training. Assessors do not use apprentices' existing knowledge and skills to tailor the curriculum appropriately. They do not make effective use of the available online resources to teach apprentices so that they make good progress. Assessors do not teach apprentices the digital skills they need to support them in their learning, careers, and everyday lives.

Assessors do not use assessment effectively to check apprentices' understanding and plan further training. Often, apprentices' complete assessments on topics they already know. Assessors do not provide detailed and consistent feedback to apprentices on how to improve their submitted work. Much of the feedback they provide is confirmatory. On the level 4 apprenticeship, assessors provide clear guidance for apprentices on how to improve their answers. However, too often assessors do not provide follow up feedback to confirm the additional work is of the right standard.

Most apprentices do not have a secure understanding of the requirements and expectations of their final examination. They do not know what they need to do to achieve pass, merit, or distinction grades.

Apprentices do not receive sufficient careers advice and guidance to enable them to plan their next steps. Assessors provide effective initial advice and guidance at the start of their programme. However, they do not revisit careers discussions throughout the apprenticeship.

Assessors monitor and support apprentices to make good progress in completing their care qualification. They carry out reviews frequently with apprentices and they use employer feedback appropriately to inform the reviews.

Apprentices effectively use and develop their English and mathematics skills in their job roles. For example, they use English skills to write better care plans and to be better communicators. They use mathematical skills accurately to administer medication.

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

Apprentices are apprehensive about reporting safeguarding concerns to the provider. Leaders have not established a robust culture of safeguarding. Safeguarding leadership and responsibility is external to the organisation but not impartial to the needs of apprentices. Current arrangements are inappropriate and are a conflict of interest.

Apprentices do not have a secure understanding of how the dangers of radicalisation and extremism applies to their job roles or daily lives. They are not aware of local or regional risks that may affect them. This puts them at risk of harm when working with vulnerable people in the adult care sector.

Apprentices feel safe in the workplace and have received up-to-date safeguarding training. They know how to keep themselves safe in client's homes and recognise the importance of safeguarding in their job roles.

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