

The Training Place Of Excellence Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2556393
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
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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.

The Training Place Of Excellence Limited is a training provider based in south London which was established in 2011. The provider trains apprentices in accountancy and finance. At the time of the visit there were 65 apprentices working towards apprenticeship standards at levels 2, 3 and 4.

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 put in place a suitable suite of apprenticeship standards that provides apprentices with a clear career pathway into the accountancy and finance sector. Leaders regularly update the curriculum to meet the requirements of the industry and awarding organisations. As a result, apprentices learn relevant new knowledge and skills and remain in employment.

Leaders and managers use work experience placements well to prepare potential apprentices for their training. This ensures that apprentices are on the right course and prepares them well to start employment.

Leaders and managers ensure that employers understand their responsibilities towards apprentices. They complete appropriate commitment statements with employers. They ensure, for example, that apprentices receive their entitlement of off-the-job training time. Where employers report concerns about apprentices' performance at work, managers intervene quickly to help apprentices improve. Leaders and managers recognise that they need to work more closely with employers so that they are clear about the progress that apprentices make.

Leaders recruit highly qualified tutors who are experienced accountants and teachers. Leaders check the quality of their teaching but do not identify training that will help tutors further improve their practice. Apprentices' attendance at training sessions has fallen considerably since moving teaching online and leaders are in the early stages of rectifying this.

Leaders and managers do not have any form of governance in place to support and challenge them to improve the quality of education that apprentices receive. Leaders do not keep accurate enough records of apprentices' progress across their programme. For example, leaders and managers discuss apprentices' progress in weekly meetings and arrange appropriate support, however, they do not record or monitor their actions. They do not feedback enough information to employers on the stage each apprentice is at.

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 learn new knowledge, skills, and behaviours which benefit their employers. As a result, they take on more responsibility at work. For example, apprentices learn about processing purchase ledger invoices and credit control. They then move on to reporting, using spreadsheets and using accounting software. As apprentices grow in confidence, they complete increasingly complex tasks with greater independence. The majority of apprentices apply what they learn off-the-job well at work, for example, through producing a trial balance reconciling different company accounts. Apprentices develop behaviours at work that they need to pursue jobs and careers in accounting. They are better able to meet deadlines and become valued employees.

Tutors support apprentices effectively outside of their online classes to help fill gaps in their knowledge and make progress. Apprentices benefit from a good range of resources online that help them study and prepare for their examinations. Tutors provide apprentices with useful feedback that helps them to improve their work and gain accurate knowledge.

Apprentices make progress in their studies and most develop a sound knowledge of what they are taught. However, a minority do not grasp basic concepts quickly enough. In online classes, tutors do not always check that all apprentices retain what they have learnt. For example, a minority of apprentices cannot recall basic calculations that they have recently studied as they had not completed their independent study activities.

Staff do not record accurately enough the progress that apprentices make. They do not involve employers sufficiently in apprentices' reviews. Tutors do not inform apprentices frequently enough about all the components of the programme. As a result, a few apprentices are not clear about what grade they are working towards or whether they need to complete any English or mathematics qualifications.

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

Staff know their apprentices well. As a result, apprentices are comfortable to raise any concerns they have about their safety or well-being. Managers make suitable arrangements for apprentices who require additional support. Leaders tailor interventions well to meet apprentices' needs and work in partnership with external agencies. Leaders rightly recognise the need to improve their recording and monitoring of any apprentices who are at risk of harm.

Leaders and managers implement necessary safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty policies. The designated safeguarding lead has enrolled onto suitable training to gain more thorough safeguarding expertise. Leaders follow safer recruitment practices to check tutors are safe to work with young people.

Apprentices are aware of risks associated with working in the financial sector, such as online practices when handling client information and money laundering. Staff do not teach apprentices sufficiently enough about other risks of working online, including potential exposure to radicalisation and extremism.

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