

London Vocational College Limited

Monitoring visit report

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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.

London Vocational College Limited (LVC) is an independent learning provider based in east London. They hold a contract for teaching apprenticeships and adult learning programmes predominantly in the adult care and childcare sectors.

At the time of the visit, 24 apprentices studied standards-based apprenticeship programmes across adult care courses at level 2, lead adult care at level 3 and leader in adult care at level 5. Two apprentices studied the early years practitioner qualification at level 2.

There were 112 learners studying on a range of short courses, including English, mathematics and English for speakers of other languages up to level 2, and level 2 diploma qualifications in care, business administration and early years. All apprentices and learners are aged over 19.

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 and managers carefully create a well-planned curriculum to meet local and regional skills shortages. They work effectively with employers to train an appropriately qualified workforce in the health and social care and childcare sectors.

Leaders and managers ensure that employers fully understand their role in providing a successful apprenticeship programme. Assessors' and apprentices' line managers jointly plan the on- and off-the-job training so that they are closely linked. Employers provide apprentices with good opportunities to develop their skills. For example, apprentices practise observing children's behaviour in childcare settings. In care

settings, apprentices learn how to administer medications. Most employers know well the progress apprentices make and when they fall behind. As a result, employers support apprentices effectively when they struggle with the workload.

Teachers and assessors are appropriately qualified and knowledgeable. They understand the care sector very well. They draw on their vocational experience to use real examples when explaining concepts, such as the personalisation of care.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that teachers and assessors have sufficient skills in using information and communication technology. As a result, a few teachers and assessors do not support learners and apprentices well enough to use online learning tools effectively. For instance, a minority of learners and apprentices do not know how to upload their work to the electronic portfolio system. As a result, in a few cases teachers and assessors do not mark learners' and apprentices' work quickly enough and feedback is too slow.

Governors have a reasonable level of understanding of LVC's main strengths and areas for improvement. They identify accurately that leaders have taken steps to address weaknesses in the quality of training.

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

Assessors plan the curriculum well so that apprentices gain the essential knowledge and skills they need for their roles in the care sector early in their programme. For instance, assessors teach the safeguarding and communications modules first. Apprentices apply this new knowledge effectively at work. Apprentices quickly recognise that a rash on a service user might be a sign of neglect. Apprentices develop additional skills, such as learning Makaton. This helps them communicate effectively with service users with limited speech and language.

Assessors teach lead adult care workers the value of working with partner organisations well. As a result of the training they receive, apprentices now ask for help from experts when they need to explain the implications of refusing treatments to service users with mental capacity.

Leaders and managers rightly recognise the disruption that COVID-19 had on apprentices' overall progress when their workloads increased. Line managers ensure that apprentices receive appropriate support when they need to catch up with their work. Assessors provide useful, additional one-to-one sessions when apprentices struggle to clearly understand new topics. They give apprentices helpful verbal feedback when checking their learning. Apprentices join lessons at the weekend when they need more tuition. As a result of the extra help, apprentices remember well what they learn.

In progress reviews, assessors focus well on apprentices' achievement of the qualification. However, assessors do not clarify sufficiently enough the knowledge, skills and behaviours apprentices need to develop further.

A few apprentices do not receive enough information about the requirements of their apprenticeship. This means that they do not know what the apprenticeship entails. They are not clear about how much time they need to spend on their studies. Consequently, they do not feel fully prepared for their training.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aims and/or personal goals? Reasonable progress

Teachers help the majority of learners consolidate new knowledge, skills and behaviours relevant to the role of care practitioner well. Learners remember confidently what they know about the roles and responsibilities of the carer. They know how to keep personal information private, such as the details of service users' medical conditions.

Teachers use a range of effective ways to check learners' levels of understanding of new topics. For example, teachers question learners, give mock tests and conduct professional discussions at the end of a unit of learning. Consequently, teachers know that most learners have a secure understanding of new subject content, such as barriers to communication.

Teachers provide encouraging and positive feedback on learners' work. This helps learners improve the standard of their work. As a result, learners' written work demonstrates a good knowledge and understanding of, for example, how to handle medicines safely.

As on apprenticeships, in a few cases, teachers on adult learning programmes fail to set learners clear actions in progress reviews. Targets focus on the next units and assignments learners need to complete. Consequently, a few learners do not know what they need to do to improve the gaps in their knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Staff provide learners with suitable careers guidance. Teachers advise learners about the next level of course they can progress on to. Staff also refer learners to relevant job vacancies and work placements with employers they know. For example, teachers help learners on early years practitioner courses gain valuable work experience in school nurseries.

Teachers do not use information about learners' specific needs adequately enough. This means that in some cases learners do not receive the specialist support they

need, such as help with dyslexia. As a result, a few learners fall behind with their course work.

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

Leaders and managers have developed a suitable culture of safeguarding throughout LVC. However, learners and teachers new to LVC, particularly those meeting in community centres, do not receive information about the safeguarding contacts in LVC quickly enough.

Teachers and assessors teach learners and apprentices appropriately at the start of the course about how to keep themselves safe. They re-visit safeguarding topics at monthly review meetings. Consequently, learners and apprentices say they feel safe in lessons and at work. For example, they know how to leave the building if they are in danger and how to get assistance if they need help with manual handling.

Teachers of English develop effectively apprentices' knowledge of the rule of law and individual liberty. For example, apprentices discuss topics, such as modern slavery, which they then present skilfully for their end of unit assessment.

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