

# Empentis Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 2626883

**Name of lead inspector:** Chloe Rendall, Her Majesty's Inspector

**Inspection dates:** 9–10 June 2021

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** 38 Collingwood Street  
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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.

Empentis Limited began to deliver apprenticeships in July 2020. There are currently 29 apprentices, of whom 15 are on the level 3 team leader/supervisor apprenticeship and six on the level 5 operations/departmental manager apprenticeship. The remaining apprentices are on level 4 sales executive, level 3 junior content producer, and level 3 digital marketer apprenticeships. All apprentices 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?**

#### **Insufficient progress**

Leaders and managers have not responded quickly enough to tackle concerns about the quality of teaching that they have identified in the level 3 team leader/supervisor and level 5 operations/departmental manager apprenticeships. As a result of insufficient and weak teaching, too many apprentices have made slow progress from the start of their programme.

Leaders have recently recruited well-qualified members of staff to improve the quality of teaching that apprentices receive. The new tutors have identified the significant gaps in apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours, and have developed sensible plans to fill those gaps. It is too soon to identify any discernible impact of these recent changes.

Leaders lack sufficient oversight of apprentices' progress. They have acted too slowly to ensure that all apprentices have access to informative reviews of their progress. Consequently, too many apprentices do not know what they need to do to improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours to the required level.

Leaders use well-qualified external advisers to provide advice about how to improve apprenticeship quality. However, leaders take this advice on an ad-hoc and informal basis and they do not provide these external advisers with sufficient information on the progress that apprentices make. As a result, the external advisers are not able to hold leaders to account to make rapid improvements to the quality of training that apprentices receive.

Leaders work closely with employers to select the content of the curriculum. They have responded well to employers' changing needs and now provide apprenticeships, such as digital marketing and junior content producer to meet these needs.

Leaders ensure that apprentices are recruited appropriately. They assess apprentices' prior knowledge before enrolment to confirm that apprentices are suitable for the apprenticeship and can develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours relevant to their job roles.

**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**

Tutors and managers do not use the information that they have about apprentices' starting points to help apprentices recognise the gaps in their knowledge, skills and behaviours and what they need to do to fill those gaps.

Most apprentices have received little off-the-job training since the start of their course. Changes to teaching staff have meant that the intended curriculum has not been taught as leaders originally planned. This has impeded apprentices' development of new knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Staff have provided very few assessment opportunities for team leader/supervisor and operations/department manager apprentices to demonstrate and receive feedback on the new knowledge and skills that they are learning. This means that most apprentices have made little progress since the start of their course. Staff have encouraged team leading apprentices to reflect on their own management style, but they have not taught apprentices how to manage differently or more effectively.

Staff work closely with employers of the small number of apprentices on level 4 sales executive and level 3 digital marketer apprenticeships. These employers understand their responsibilities, and the apprentices receive useful on- and off-the job training, which enables them to apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace. Digital marketer apprentices design and manage employer websites and increase search engine optimisation to increase customer traffic.

Tutors of apprentices on level 4 sales executive and level 3 digital marketer prioritise the content they teach to meet employers' expectations of apprentices in the workplace. They teach sales executive apprentices different sales techniques and strategies. Tutors then teach apprentices how to set sales goals and targets and how to undertake research about clients. This enables apprentices to understand fully their customers' needs and reach their sales goals.

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

Leaders follow safe recruitment processes. They ensure that all staff have appropriate checks and references before joining the organisation and they have appointed experienced designated safeguarding lead staff. Apprentices and staff receive regular and helpful communications about safeguarding topics.

Apprentices know how to keep themselves and others safe. They receive basic safeguarding training at the start of their apprenticeship to ensure that they are familiar with risks and threats they may face in and outside the workplace.

Leaders have developed useful internal training materials that develop a positive culture of safeguarding and protection. Apprentices access helpful safeguarding materials online if they need to refresh their knowledge about cyber-bullying and internet crime. Apprentices know who they would approach if they had a concern relating to safeguarding and are confident that appropriate actions would be taken to support them.

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