

Aim 2 Learn Limited

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector:	Andrea Shepherd, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

From March 2019, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of adult learning provision which began to be funded from August 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. 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.

Aim 2 Learn Limited is an independent learning provider based in the centre of Leeds. It was established in 2011, and in 2017 leaders secured funding for the delivery of training to adult learners. Aim 2 Learn Limited specialises in the delivery of training to support adults into employment in the telecommunications industry. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 10 learners studying the level 2 diploma in professional competence in telecommunications and information and communication technology (ICT), alongside a certificate in occupational studies. Half of the learners are also studying functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics.

The impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgements below.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant adult learning provision that has a clearly defined purpose? Insufficient progress

Leaders do not have enough oversight of the progress that learners make. They receive informal information about learners from staff, but do not know which programmes learners are studying or the extent to which learners develop new knowledge and skills. This means that leaders do not know whether learners are being sufficiently prepared for their intended next steps.

Leaders have been too slow to implement appropriate teaching in functional skills for the small number of current learners who are enrolled on these qualifications. They have not planned the curriculum or staffing well enough to enable learners to complete their English and mathematics training in a timely way. Therefore, learners have only a short amount of time to complete functional skills courses in English and mathematics. Leaders have recently employed a new functional skills tutor, but it is too early to see the impact of this change.

Leaders and managers have a clear aim of providing training to support people to gain sustainable employment in the telecommunications industry. Managers make good use of their informal networks to plan a curriculum that is responsive to industry changes. For example, following feedback from recruitment organisations, managers introduced fibre-splicing to the curriculum. However, leaders and managers do not have enough information about what learners go on to do after they complete their programme. As a result, they cannot evaluate whether the training gives learners the knowledge and skills that they need to be successful in the telecommunications industry.

Managers use their industry experience well to design a meaningful telecommunications curriculum. They include an additional module that prepares learners to install, test and find faults in cabling systems. This supports learners to develop practical skills in addition to the knowledge they gain from completing the core qualification. However, all learners complete the same occupational studies programme, regardless of their prior knowledge and skills.

How much 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 aim and/or personal goals? Reasonable progress

Managers and tutors plan the telecommunications curriculum effectively so that learners build their knowledge and skills over time. For example, tutors start their teaching with a basic introduction to working with ICT before explaining installation techniques and fault-finding. This enables learners to develop knowledge that is important for gaining work in this area.

Tutors use their industry expertise well to teach the telecommunications curriculum in a way that helps learners to develop appropriate workplace behaviours. Tutors have a strong focus on health and safety and professional practice to help long-term unemployed learners develop their work readiness. For example, tutors make learners aware that they cannot be on site without safety goggles.

Tutors provide effective guidance so that learners can replicate skills they will need in the workplace. Learners use tools skilfully and clean down their workstations after each task, which prepares them well for working on employers' premises or customers' houses. Learners enjoy the programme and value the way that their tutors help them know what to expect in the workplace.

Tutors use questioning well in practical sessions to test learners' understanding. They ask learners to identify where things have gone wrong with practical tasks in order to find faults and identify solutions. Learners value this immediate and helpful advice. However, tutors do not provide feedback on learners' written work quickly enough. As a result, a few learners are unclear about whether their understanding of some of the theory they learn is correct.

Learners complete a self-assessment of their skills at the start of their programme. However, tutors do not use the results of this assessment well enough to plan training that is tailored to individual learners. A few learners already had skills in the use of email and found this part of the curriculum to be an unnecessary repetition.

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

All staff, including the designated safeguarding lead, have completed appropriate safeguarding training. Leaders support staff to update their knowledge of a range of relevant topics. For example, managers have completed specific health and safety training that focuses on counterterrorism.

Managers and tutors focus heavily on ensuring that learners are knowledgeable about health and safety. They talk to learners about the dangers of small screws used by telecommunications engineers and how these can be a choking hazard for young children.

Leaders take reasonable steps to comply with the 'Prevent' duty. For example, they provide general information to learners and have prepared a basic risk assessment. However, they do not consistently discuss with learners risks they may encounter in the workplace. Learners know that they should report risks such as suspicious packages or threatening emails, but they are not clear about specific risks that might occur in the telecommunications industry.

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