

University of Suffolk

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

Unique reference number:	146206
Name of lead inspector:	Michael Worgs, Her Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	13–14 July 2021
Type of provider:	Higher education institution
Address:	Waterfront Building Neptune Quay Ipswich IP4 1QJ

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

The University of Suffolk received a full inspection in March 2020. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement. At a recent monitoring visit in February 2021, inspectors judged the progress made to improve the quality of education as insufficient progress.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in actioning the main areas for improvement identified at the full inspection of March 2020.

The University of Suffolk is based in Ipswich. It provides additional provision of higher education programmes through further education colleges located in Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth (East Coast College), Bury St Edmunds (West Suffolk College) and Suffolk (Suffolk New College).

At the time of the visit, there were 211 apprentices on the level 5 nursing associate and healthcare assistant practitioner higher apprenticeships. There were also 233 apprentices on level 6 and level 7 apprenticeships that were not in scope for this visit. The University of Suffolk has continued to develop its partnerships with healthcare trusts to expand foundation degree apprenticeships.

Themes

What progress have leaders and managers made in improving the quality of the apprenticeship curriculum to ensure that apprentices make rapid progress?

Significant progress

Since the previous inspection, leaders have taken swift action to improve the quality of the apprenticeship curriculum. They have provided substantial and appropriate training for lecturers and clinical coaches on specific aspects of apprenticeships, such as the importance of high-quality progress reviews. As a result, apprentices are set meaningful targets that help them to improve their clinical practice rapidly, while supporting their specific academic development needs. Leaders have ensured that suitably qualified and experienced staff are now in place to provide effective apprenticeship training.

Leaders have taken decisive action to resolve specific concerns about the appropriateness of the assistant practitioner apprenticeship programme. Leaders have taken the strategic decision that this programme no longer meets the skills and knowledge requirements of employers. As a result, leaders will not recruit new apprentices on this programme.

Leaders have made effective adjustments to the assistant practitioner curriculum to ensure that the remaining apprentices benefit from high-quality training. They have introduced a new clinical skills package to enable apprentices to better link their theoretical learning to their clinical practice. Lecturers have reviewed their assessment practices to provide more opportunities for apprentices to reflect on how their theoretical learning affects their clinical practice. As a result, apprentices proactively reflect on their clinical skills. They can apply their theoretical understanding effectively to their own practice through written assignments. Apprentices have a better understanding of the factors that influence health and ill-health to provide better care for their patients. Apprentices remain motivated to complete the apprenticeship programme successfully despite the previous disruptions to their training plan.

Leaders have strengthened further their monitoring of the quality of the apprenticeship provision. They ensure that robust quality improvement targets are set and managers are held to account for improving the quality of the apprenticeship programme.

What progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that apprentices benefit from effective careers advice and guidance?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have improved the impartial careers advice and guidance available to apprentices. They have recently introduced a new careers package to ensure that apprentices are clear about their wider career choices on completion of their apprenticeship. Apprentices have access to careers workshops, careers fairs, a new careers online platform and wider careers events to help them plan their next steps. However, most apprentices are not aware of these new career planning options. Lecturers and clinical coaches still do not have ongoing discussions with apprentices about their next steps. Leaders are taking positive action to deal with these issues, but it is too early to see any impact.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021