

First Face to Face Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2636541
Name of lead inspector:	Jacque Brown, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	Gateshead International Business Centre Mulgrave Terrace Gateshead NE8 1AN

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.

First Face to Face Limited is an independent learning provider based in Gateshead, Tyne and Wear. In August 2020, it began to receive funding from the North of Tyne Combined Authority to provide courses for adults who are interested in setting up their own business. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 12 learners enrolled on a level 1 computerised accountancy programme and fewer than five on a level 1 understanding enterprise programme.

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 have not focused sufficiently on providing an ambitious curriculum. They recruit too many learners onto their level 1 programmes who are undergraduates or have degrees and who are not planning to set up their own business. These learners have enrolled on the programmes simply to enhance their curriculum vitae.

Leaders do not have effective oversight of learners' progress and do not intervene quickly enough when learners fall behind on the computerised accountancy programme. These learners have made slow progress, and leaders were not aware of this until near the end of the course.

Leaders do not have effective oversight of the quality of the programmes. Although they carry out observations of the training provided by some of their tutors, they do not have adequate arrangements in place to ensure that high-quality training is delivered by all tutors. Leaders do not collect sufficient information about the progression and destinations of learners or use this information well enough to identify and make improvements to the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that learners receive useful information about relevant careers to help them to plan their next steps. Tutors discuss with learners the possibility of progressing to other accountancy programmes and direct them to local enterprise agencies for specialist support. However, leaders do not ensure that learners have access to impartial careers advice about other opportunities that are available, particularly for learners who are not sure what they want to do next.

Leaders work closely with a number of appropriate external agencies and organisations who provide support to people who are disadvantaged, such as the Department for Work and Pensions, Karbon Homes and Building Steps. However, they do not work with sufficient agencies and organisations who can refer to them those adults who are least likely to participate in education or training.

How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aim and/or personal goals? Insufficient progress

Leaders and tutors do not ensure that learners are enrolled on programmes at the appropriate level. They gather information about learners' prior qualifications, knowledge and experience, but then too often enrol learners onto programmes that are not sufficiently challenging. All learners receive the same programme content, regardless of their prior knowledge, skills and behaviours. Too many learners can competently complete the activities in the course workbook before they begin their programme. These learners already demonstrate a thorough understanding of business concepts, such as bankruptcy, before training sessions begin.

Tutors do not provide effective support to learners on the computerised accountancy programme. Learners complete online learning activities independently without sufficient support from tutors. As a result, learners' progress is too slow and none of the learners have completed the programme in the allocated time.

Tutors plan and deliver the understanding enterprise curriculum in a logical order to enable learners to complete the programme successfully. They start by identifying the personal goals of learners and the skills that they need to develop. They then move on to teaching about how to start a business. Learners finish the programme by putting what they have learned into practice by presenting their business idea.

Leaders recruit specialist tutors who have appropriate qualifications and experience, such as a degree in marketing and management, previous employment as a head of marketing and experience of running their own business. Tutors use their knowledge and experience to develop the skills and behaviours of those learners for whom the programme is appropriate. These learners improve in confidence and develop useful networking opportunities.

Learners for whom the programmes are appropriate receive useful support to enable them to complete their assessment workbook and to reassure them that they are on the right track.

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

Leaders do not ensure that all teaching and pastoral staff complete safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training quickly enough. As a result, they do not know if all tutors have the appropriate knowledge to pass onto learners.

Leaders do not have effective arrangements in place to ensure that all staff are appropriate to work with vulnerable adults. They ensure that employed tutors and pastoral staff have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, but they do not check thoroughly enough the suitability of the associate tutors who they do not employ directly.

Most tutors provide learners with safeguarding basic information at the start of their programme. Most learners have a reasonable understanding of safeguarding and the risks of radicalisation and extremism, but this is often as a result of previous learning.

The designated safeguarding leads have appropriate training and experience to be effective in their role. Leaders have an appropriate safeguarding adults policy and procedure in place which clearly outlines the process for reporting and dealing with concerns. Learners know who to contact if they have a safeguarding concern.

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