

Liverpool John Moores University

Monitoring visit report

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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 the Education and Skills Funding Agency 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.

Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) is a higher education institution in Merseyside. It offers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in a variety of sectors. LJMU has been training apprentices since 2016. Apprenticeship provision is offered in seven schools within the university. These include the schools of justice studies, civil engineering and built environment, computer science and mathematics, engineering, nursing and allied health, pharmacy and biomolecular sciences and leadership and organisational development. The university subcontracts to three subcontractors. The largest of these subcontractors is the Chief Constable of Merseyside who co-delivers the level 6 police constable degree apprenticeship.

At the time of the visit, there were just over 1,500 apprentices in learning. Most apprentices study at level 6, with the higher enrolments in police constable, chartered surveyor, civil engineer and building services design engineer. Around 130 apprentices study the level 5 nursing associate apprenticeship. At level 7, there were just under 300 apprentices on the senior leader apprenticeship, just over 60 apprentices on the advanced clinical practitioner apprenticeship and a small number of apprentices studying the risk and safety management professional apprenticeship.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have a clear strategy for the degree apprenticeships they offer. They co-develop programmes with employers to meet skill needs in the region and nationally. Leaders work in partnership with the police and the NHS to provide a pipeline of trained police officers and nurses. Leaders have taken the decision to stop offering a few apprenticeships where there is less demand from employers in the region. These include digital and technology solutions and real estate management.

Leaders ensure that staff are experienced and well qualified, with a balance of professional and academic experience to deliver high-quality training for apprentices. Many are members of external professional bodies, which ensures their currency and relevance for the programmes they teach. However, leaders recognise that they need to recruit more staff to ensure that they can increase the frequency of reviews of apprentices' progress.

Leaders have a university-wide quality monitoring process in place for the degree component of the apprenticeship. However, they recognise that they are still in the early stages of implementing a quality framework for the monitoring of apprenticeships, including the end-point assessment. A minority of chartered surveyor apprentices have completed their degree programme but are yet to complete their end-point assessment. Leaders have improved their communication with employers and apprentices to ensure that they are fully aware of their commitment to the entire apprenticeship.

Leaders recognise that their process for self-assessment was based on individual school performance and did not include a holistic view of the degree apprenticeship provision across the university. Leaders have improved this process through their newly formed apprenticeship steering group. They now receive a more insightful view of the areas for improvement. Actions arising from this process include alterations to timetabling and the provision of further electronic books to improve the quality of training apprentices receive.

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

Apprentices develop significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours as a result of their apprenticeship. For example, nursing associate apprentices develop skills in catheterisation and venepuncture. They grow in confidence and take on more responsibility in clinical areas. Chartered surveyor apprentices learn about procurement and contracts. They put this knowledge into use by leading the renewal of the minor works framework on their current projects.

Tutors plan the curriculum in a logical order so that apprentices build their knowledge and skills incrementally. For example, level 6 police constable apprentices learn the powers of arrest before they learn skills in physically arresting a person. As a result, apprentices learn how to act in accordance with the law before exercising their powers to protect the public.

Apprentices benefit from constructive and developmental feedback which allows them to develop their academic skills and achieve higher grades. Apprentices use feedback on grammar and the structure of their essays at the beginning of the

programme to improve the quality of their work. Consequently, their academic grades improve throughout the apprenticeship.

Tutors' monitoring of apprentices' individual progress does not sufficiently focus on apprenticeship requirements and is based mainly on completion of the degree component. In most cases, reviews of progress are too infrequent, and, occasionally, paperwork is incomplete. Tutors do not routinely involve apprentices' employers in the planning of their training. As a result, tutors and employers do not plan on- and off-the-job training well enough to ensure that all apprentices are able to practise their skills at work.

Tutors do not always take account of apprentices' prior knowledge or experience at the beginning of the apprenticeship. For example, a few level 6 chartered surveyor apprentices with prior experience in the sector but no formal qualifications, complete the same programme as new entrants to the sector. These apprentices do not make the progress of which they are capable.

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

Leaders provide appropriate safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training for their staff. The designated safeguarding lead and their deputies are appropriately trained to carry out their roles.

Leaders recruit staff safely. They ensure that they carry out the appropriate checks on staff who come into contact with the very few apprentices under the age of 18 or vulnerable adults.

Leaders have a suitable procedure for monitoring and referring safeguarding issues and welfare concerns. This includes links with external agencies such as organisations to assist with counselling. Leaders follow up and record concerns appropriately.

Apprentices feel safe. Leaders recognise that they need to strengthen the training they provide for apprentices on safeguarding and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Apprentices receive training during induction, but it is not reinforced throughout their programme. Many apprentices are unable to recall what they have learned.

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