

Achievement Training and Skills Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2654148
Name of lead inspector:	Michael Worgs, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	5 to 6 Castle Meadow, Norwich NR1 3PY

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.

Achievement Training and Skills Limited (ATSL) is an independent learning provider. ATSL has its head office in Norwich, supported by training centres across England, in areas such as Norwich, Ipswich, Gorleston, Beccles, Lincoln, Chichester, Mansfield, Redcar, Hereford, Lowestoft, Liverpool, Workington, London and Diss. ATSL gained a contract to provide apprenticeships in August 2020.

At the time of the inspection, there were 319 apprentices in training. Apprentices study the level 2 hair professional, level 3 advanced and creative hair professional and level 2 beauty therapy standard. Around a quarter of apprentices are studying level 1 and level 2 functional skills mathematics and English qualifications. There are no apprentices in receipt of high needs funding. ATSL has two subcontractors based in Portsmouth and Poole.

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 carefully selected and implemented an appropriate curriculum. Leaders have a good overview of the demands for apprentices in the hairdressing and beauty sector. Leaders have used this knowledge to provide suitable progression routes for apprentices. For example, leaders have developed a new level 3 hairdressing apprenticeship programme. This has benefited apprentices, most of whom aspire to continue to work and progress in the sector.

Leaders ensure that staff have the training and qualifications to provide a high standard of education for apprentices. Tutors have the appropriate teaching and assessor qualifications. Tutors carry out frequent training to update their skills. This enables them to teach new techniques and hairstyles during their teaching sessions.

Leaders work effectively with employers to plan a programme that meets the apprentices' needs. For example, leaders work with the apprentices' line manager to create an individualised training plan based on the apprentices' prior learning. This enables a few apprentices to complete their programme in a shorter time.

Apprentices receive effective support from their tutors. Tutors make frequent checks on the progress that apprentices are making in developing new knowledge and skills. Tutors identify apprentices who fall behind and take swift action to support them with their studies. As a result, most apprentices are making good progress towards completing their qualifications.

Leaders do not have sufficient oversight of the quality of training provided by their subcontractors. Leaders are taking appropriate steps to deal with this issue, but it is too early to see any impact.

Leaders have not yet implemented formal governance arrangements. However, they have taken suitable action to use an experienced external adviser to accurately review the quality of training. As a result, leaders have a sufficient understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the quality of education and training they provide.

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 appropriate new skills and professional behaviours at their workplace. For example, hairdressing apprentices know how to colour, cut and style hair. Apprentices communicate in an appropriate manner to clients. Apprentices are confident in carrying out consultations. They can assess their clients' needs and expectations. Apprentices are punctual. They understand the importance of good time management in order to complete appointments and treatments on time.

Tutors develop apprentices' knowledge and skills effectively. Tutors make good use of their experience of working in salons to link theoretical learning to practice. They ensure that apprentices practise basic techniques before moving on to more complex tasks. For example, apprentices first learn how to section hair correctly to enable them to use rollers to set a hair style. Apprentices understand the reasons for different techniques. For example, they can explain the effect of bleach on their clients' hair. Apprentices take this into account when they apply permanent colour to bleached hair.

Tutors carry out effective assessments of apprentices' previous mathematics and English skills. They use this information to adapt the individual training plans based on the apprentices' starting points. As a result, apprentices swiftly develop their

knowledge of English and mathematics. This benefits them at work and in their personal lives.

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders have ensured that apprentices are safe. The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) identifies safeguarding concerns quickly. The DSO takes appropriate actions to support apprentices.

Apprentices feel safe and are confident to report safeguarding or welfare concerns. Apprentices have a good knowledge of health and safety. They wear the required personal protective equipment. Apprentices continually clean and sterilise their work areas. This helps them to reduce risk of infection to themselves and their clients.

Most apprentices do not have a detailed understanding of the local risks that could impact them at work and in their personal lives. Leaders have been slow to take effective action to deal with this issue.

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