

Next Level Impact Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 2654160
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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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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 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.

Next Level Impact Limited (NLIL) is an independent learning provider based in Belfast. NLIL has been training apprentices since 2020 on the level 5 operations or departmental manager standard. At the time of the inspection, there were eight apprentices on programme, all based in Norfolk. There are no apprentices in receipt of high-needs funding and the provider has no subcontractors.

Themes

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

Insufficient progress

Leaders have not developed and implemented an ambitious curriculum. Leaders have planned a programme that places too much emphasis on apprentices completing their level 5 Chartered Management Institute diploma qualification rather than their apprenticeship. Leaders have been slow to plan activities that would substantially enhance the wider learning experience of apprentices.

Leaders do not work effectively with employers to plan off-the-job training. Leaders did not ensure that employers understood the off-the-job requirements of the apprenticeship. Most apprentices have struggled to complete their self-study off-the-job training hours. They do not receive enough time from their employers to study away from their work duties. Additionally, leaders do not check the quality of the self-study training activities that apprentices carry out.

Leaders do not have effective oversight of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Leaders do not have the mechanisms to identify aspects of training that need improving. For example, leaders do not know if the standard of online training provided to apprentices is good or needs to improve.

Governance arrangements are inadequate. Leaders do not have governance arrangements or external scrutiny in place to hold them to account for the quality of apprenticeship training.

Leaders have ensured that trainers have appropriate qualifications and management experience to provide high-quality training. Trainers effectively communicate the requirements of the final end-point assessments to apprentices and employers. As a result, apprentices are prepared appropriately for their final apprenticeship assessments.

Leaders ensure that apprentices are recruited appropriately. Leaders work effectively with employers to ensure that before apprentices begin the programme they manage or supervise teams and projects. Leaders ensure that the projects that apprentices undertake support them in developing the knowledge, skills and behaviours required of the standard.

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 management skills and professional behaviours at work. Apprentices have acquired new skills in budgeting and project management. They use these skills to develop and put in place projects as part of their planned training programme. Apprentices can lead and manage their teams effectively by using the different coaching techniques that they have learned as part of their apprenticeship. Apprentices have learned how to adapt their management styles and improve their communication skills. This has enabled them to better manage their teams through recent organisational changes. Apprentices have built their confidence in delegating tasks to their teams. They are better able to motivate their teams to work independently to tackle and resolve operational issues themselves.

Trainers do not carry out effective reviews that cover the wider aspects of the apprenticeship programme. Trainers focus too narrowly on completing the level 5 diploma qualification. Trainers do not focus on the broader development of the knowledge, professional behaviours and skills that apprentices need to acquire, to complete their apprenticeship.

Trainers provide clear and constructive feedback on apprentices' assessment work. This enables apprentices to understand clearly what they need to do to improve further. Apprentices produce high-quality assessments and complete their apprenticeships with high grades.

Trainers provide good quality training and support to apprentices. Trainers teach high-quality masterclasses throughout the programme. Trainers ensure that teaching sessions are well-structured and taught at the right level. They provide effective one-to-one coaching sessions to support those apprentices who fall behind. Apprentices value these sessions and are enthusiastic to attend.

Leaders have not ensured that apprentices receive suitable ongoing impartial careers advice and guidance. Apprentices do not receive effective support to plan their next steps. Leaders have not implemented a planned careers programme.

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

Leaders have not developed an effective culture of safeguarding within the organisation. The designated safeguarding officer is not suitably trained to perform the role. Leaders have not ensured that safeguarding policies are up to date. Leaders have not established appropriate mechanisms to enable apprentices to report concerns.

Leaders do not ensure that apprentices receive appropriate safeguarding training. Apprentices are not aware of how to report safeguarding concerns. Apprentices do not have a secure understanding of the local risks that could affect them at work or in their personal lives.

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