

# Inspection of Anglia Ruskin University

Inspection dates: 24 to 27 May 2022

## Overall effectiveness

## Requires improvement

The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this provider

Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) is based in Chelmsford, Essex. It operates from three additional campuses in Cambridge and Peterborough. It has approximately 2,087 apprentices studying 22 different standard-based apprenticeship programmes from level 4 to level 7. Ninety-six apprentices are on a break in their learning. ARU offers apprenticeship programmes for the healthcare, construction, digital and business management sectors. The two largest cohorts of apprentices are on the level 6 registered nurse degree and the level 5 healthcare assistant practitioner.

Most apprentices are training at level 6, including social worker apprentices. In the business sector, ARU offers chartered manager, project manager and operating department practitioner apprenticeships. In construction, apprentices are training as chartered surveyors, civil engineers and construction site managers. Level 6 digital apprenticeships include digital and technology solutions professional, data scientist and digital marketer.

The level 7 apprenticeship programmes include advanced clinical practitioner, digital and technology solutions specialist, chartered town planner and senior leader. At level 5, apprentices are studying hearing-aid dispenser and nursing associate programmes. ARU has a small amount of provision at level 4, including construction quantity surveying technician and construction site supervisor apprenticeships.

Most apprentices are over 19 years of age, with only 20 apprentices aged 18. ARU has no apprentices in receipt of high-needs funding. ARU works with four subcontractors to offer the level 6 police constable and the level 6 data scientist apprenticeship programmes.

## **What is it like to be a learner with this provider?**

Apprentices' experience is too variable and dependent on the programme for which they are training. For example, too many healthcare assistant apprentices struggle to keep up with the workload associated with the programme. Too few chartered surveyor apprentices successfully complete their apprenticeship programme.

Apprentices appreciate the support they receive from tutors. Apprentices feel valued and respected. They enjoy the collaborative environment, and the discussions and seminars that tutors facilitate. Apprentices learn from highly specialist expert employers, alongside university lecturers. For example, both university lecturers and police trainers teach the police constable apprentices.

Apprentices learn effectively from their peers and colleagues. Chartered manager apprentices develop networking links with senior leaders in their organisations. Senior leader apprentices learn about management concepts, such as mentoring and coaching. Most apprentices develop good professional behaviours and gain increased responsibility at work.

Apprentices become more valued members of staff for their employers. They complete challenging work-based assignments that provide real solutions for their organisations. Data scientist apprentices create code to a high industry standard. Their employers adopt their work and use it daily. As a result, apprentices influence change and bring about improvement.

Apprentices feel safe. They regularly discuss safeguarding topics, such as bullying and harassment. They have a good understanding of safeguarding and how to identify and report it at their workplaces.

## **What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders' planning of apprenticeship programmes is poor on a minority of programmes. Leaders have not considered the need for chartered surveyor apprentices to provide client advice. As a result, these apprentices do not have the opportunity in their job role to gather this essential evidence for their final assessment. Leaders do not always consider the study requirements of the professional body when planning. Registered nurse apprentices report having to work above their contracted employment hours. They do this to complete the theoretical learning hours required by the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

Leaders do not ensure that apprentices are able to reach the end of their programme within the planned timescales. Too many apprentices take breaks in their learning, withdraw from their programme or face other barriers to achieving in time. Most apprentices who reach the end of their programme achieve their degree qualifications. Most apprentices who reach their final assessment pass them. Many of these apprentices achieve higher grades. However, the proportion who achieve the apprenticeship overall remains low.

Leaders have a clear strategic focus to increase the proportion of people entering higher education in the region. They have developed an ambitious curriculum that aligns with their curriculum expertise. Lecturing staff are highly qualified experts in the subjects they teach. Leaders aim to meet regional and national skills priorities, such as NHS and police training. Leaders have developed strong relationships with employers and subcontractors. Managers ensure that English and mathematical skills are not a barrier to entry to higher education. As a result, apprentices can access pathways to careers that historically have recruited at degree level.

Leaders work effectively with employers to offer highly specialist niche provision, such as bioinformatics. They have developed effective partnership teaching models. For example, leaders outsource the provision of specialist modules to a subcontractor on the data scientist programme. Subcontractor specialist staff teach a specific computer programming language and sequential training to data scientist apprentices. As a result, apprentices acquire these in-demand skills swiftly.

Too few staff consider apprentices' existing skills and knowledge when planning the curriculum. Apprentices self-assess their existing skills, knowledge and behaviours against those required by the apprenticeship standard. However, too few staff validate these self-assessments to ensure their accuracy. They do not know whether apprentices develop significant new skills and knowledge as a result.

Lecturers ensure that the order of learning is effective in building apprentices' essential knowledge. Most lecturers check apprentices' understanding effectively during taught sessions. They use a variety of methods to check apprentices' understanding of the subject, such as frequent recall activities, repetition techniques, technology-based quizzes and full-class discussions. Lecturers regularly plan for apprentices to recap prior learning through a range of spoken assessment methods in class. Most lecturers plan to teach more complex concepts that apprentices can apply in the workplace. Consequently, apprentices learn and deepen their understanding.

Too few apprentices with a learning difficulty and/or disability (LDD) receive effective support to enable them to make progress in line with their peers. Staff do not identify apprentices with LDD early enough in their programme. Too few apprentices with known LDD access the support available through the university. Staff do not monitor whether apprentices make use of the support on offer until they fall behind with their work. The small proportion of apprentices who choose to access this support benefit from one-to-one support that helps them make better progress.

Staff in most areas are too slow to identify apprentices who are at risk of falling behind. The support that apprentices receive to develop their academic study skills varies considerably between the different apprenticeship programmes. While the university provides central support services, too few apprentices elect to use this service.

Most apprentices use technical vocabulary with ease. They develop their critical professional skills effectively. Data scientist apprentices use the dual languages of code and bioinformatics well. They fluently use and explain complex terminology with great ease. As a result, they can present information to a range of stakeholders with great success.

Most apprentices develop critical skills, autonomy and valuable employment skills. Bioinformatics apprentices debate ethical considerations early on in their course. They understand the ethics around the highly sensitive data they work with. Nursing associate apprentices learn about stereotyping and awareness of unconscious bias.

Most lecturers use a range of assessment techniques effectively to assess apprentices' acquisition of knowledge, particularly in relation to the degree element of the apprenticeship programmes. Lecturers provide highly effective feedback to apprentices on their assignment work. As a result, apprentices improve their standards of higher level academic written work over time.

Staff do not ensure that apprentices are clear about the progress they are making or their priorities for development. For too many apprentices, reviews of their progress are infrequent. Where reviews do occur, staff do not challenge apprentices to consider their learning more deeply. Staff do not encourage apprentices to identify individual strengths or areas they need to develop.

Most apprentices are well prepared for their final assessments from an early stage in their learning. Staff provide additional training workshops to prepare apprentices for what to expect. Apprentices say that this helps them manage their anxieties and helps them focus, in readiness for their assessment. They expect to achieve high grades. Furthermore, most employers are well informed about the final assessment of the apprenticeship.

Most apprentices receive good-quality and relevant careers advice and guidance. This helps them to make informed decisions about their next steps. Leaders have allocated dedicated careers advisers who work with apprentices. Staff encourage apprentices to reflect on their practice and prepare for their next steps. Apprentices benefit from a wide range of careers information available at the university. They have access to an online careers centre and masterclasses in topics, such as using professional online networks. Staff organise helpful talks for apprentices from companies to discuss their recruitment focus.

Senior leaders and those responsible for governance do not have a robust central oversight of the progress apprentices are making. Managers have different systems for recording aspects of apprentices' progress, such as completion of assignments. However, leaders and managers do not track the overall progress that apprentices make for all elements of their programme. Consequently, leaders and managers do not have a secure grasp on apprentices who are at risk of not achieving.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a positive culture of safeguarding for apprentices. Senior leaders and those responsible for governance have established effective safeguarding arrangements. They ensure that they have dedicated oversight through safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty committee meetings.

Leaders reflect on, and learn from, safeguarding concerns. They have reviewed policies in response to concerns coming forward, such as the introduction of a sexual misconduct policy. Leaders have recruited specialist support where needed, such as a sexual violence advocate. They have a dedicated student investigation officer with a police and higher education background.

Apprentices have a good understanding of safeguarding. They feel confident to report any concerns. They feel that any disclosures they may make would be dealt with appropriately by university staff.

## What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders must ensure that the curriculum is well planned to enable apprentices to remain in learning and successfully complete their programme in the time originally planned.
- Leaders and governors must have good oversight of the progress that apprentices make across all elements of the apprenticeship programme.
- Leaders need to ensure that staff use apprentices' existing skills and knowledge at the start of the programme to plan individual programmes of study. Staff must ensure that apprentices develop significant new skills and knowledge.
- Leaders must train lecturers to be able to identify and support apprentices with LDD.
- Staff must identify swiftly apprentices, including those with LDD, who are at risk of falling behind. Staff must ensure that these apprentices are fully supported to make good progress over time.
- Staff must ensure that apprentices understand incrementally the skills and knowledge they are gaining and the areas they need to develop.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133803
<b>Address</b>	Rivermead Campus Bishop Hall Lane Chelmsford Essex CM1 1SQ
<b>Contact number</b>	01245 493131
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.anglia.ac.uk">www.anglia.ac.uk</a>
<b>Principal</b>	Professor Roderick Watkins
<b>Provider type</b>	Higher education institution
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	Cambridge Spark Limited Proactive in Partnership Training Limited Essex Police Kent Police Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Police

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy academic registrar, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous monitoring visit report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

## Inspection team

Penny Fawcus, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rebecca Perry	Her Majesty's Inspector
Nicky Witton	Ofsted Inspector
Ramita Tejpal	Ofsted Inspector
Vikki Edmondson	Ofsted Inspector
Montserrat Perez-Parent	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sambit Sen	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alastair Mollon	Her Majesty's Inspector
Saskia Niderost	Ofsted Inspector

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022