

# Bishop Grosseteste University

Monitoring visit report

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<b>Unique reference number:</b>	133835
<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Russ Henry, His Majesty's Inspector
<b>Inspection dates:</b>	4 and 5 October 2022
<b>Type of provider:</b>	Higher education institution
<b>Address:</b>	Longdales Road Lincoln LN1 3DY

## 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.

At the time of the visit, Bishop Grosseteste University had 110 apprentices at various stages of their courses. There were 15 level 6 career development professionals, 26 level 6 chartered manager degree apprentices, 44 level 7 senior leaders, and 25 level 7 senior leader Master's degree apprentices. This latter group were approaching their end-point assessment. None of the university's apprentices had completed their studies.

### Themes

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

#### **Reasonable progress**

Since 2020, managers have introduced a small number of apprenticeship programmes that focus on those training needs of regional employers that align with the university's areas of expertise. Managers are planning a small expansion to the range of apprenticeships offered, but their main focus is to ensure that current courses offer a high standard of training.

Staff ensure that the university only recruits apprentices who will benefit substantially from their studies. All apprentices participate in a selection process and university staff hold discussions with employers to ensure that they understand their commitments.

Courses consist of formal lessons, taught by university lecturers, complemented by guidance from apprenticeship support officers. Lecturers are very knowledgeable and well qualified. They draw upon relevant work experience and current research in their teaching, and they develop and use high-quality teaching resources.

Apprenticeship support officers develop positive relationships with employers. They meet with them frequently and provide useful updates about the progress of their

apprentices. However, arrangements for staff to work with employers to coordinate on-the-job activities is limited.

Managers do not work closely enough with employers to plan in detail the content and structure of apprenticeships. For a few apprentices, this means that their course does not always fully match their specific training needs. For example, finance modules do not address some of the requirements of apprentices who work for small businesses.

Staff have adopted the university's quality assurance processes, but these rely too much on self-reflection and not enough on the collection and interpretation of performance data. As a result, it is difficult for managers to judge if self-assessments are accurate. Managers have recently introduced a formal lesson observation process, but it is too early to judge the impact of this.

**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 participate in an appropriate amount of off-the-job training. Career development professionals and chartered managers attend weekly lessons that are either face-to-face or online. Senior leaders spend less time in the classroom and lecturers expect them to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

Apprentices benefit from interesting and informative lessons that equip them with a good range of knowledge and skills that they then apply at work. Lecturers make lessons interactive and enjoyable, and apprentices participate wholeheartedly.

Frequent reviews with employers, who commit fully to apprenticeships, help to keep apprentices on track with their studies. Nevertheless, on-the-job activities are not always planned effectively and university staff seldom visit apprentices' workplaces to see how apprentices are performing.

Staff provide suitable support for the few apprentices who need to complete functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics, all of whom pass. A few apprentices struggle with the academic writing required or the more challenging mathematical material, and staff signpost them to individualised help and support. However, managers are not clear how many take up this support or how much impact it has.

Lecturers provide apprentices with frequent assessment opportunities throughout their courses. This helps apprentices to practise and apply their new knowledge and to understand how well they are doing. Lecturers provide comprehensive feedback that helps apprentices to improve future coursework, highlighting strengths, weaknesses and specific areas for improvement. Effective use of plagiarism detection

software helps apprentices to identify where they have poorly paraphrased other authors' work and they improve their academic writing as a result.

Apprentices benefit from useful careers information from experienced lecturers. They have access to a careers team at the university that provides advice and guidance and helps apprentices with things like interview preparation. However, it is not clear how many apprentices use this facility.

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

Managers have developed a range of suitable policies and procedures to keep apprentices safe. They have implemented clear systems for recording and monitoring safeguarding concerns, which are applied effectively across the university. There have been no safeguarding concerns relating to apprentices.

The designated safeguarding lead is a senior member of the university's staff and is well placed to deal with safeguarding matters. She is appropriately trained and has a good knowledge of safeguarding topics. Two deputies support the lead. They too have good safeguarding knowledge, but they have not undertaken the same training as the lead. One deputy is also the university's 'Prevent' coordinator. He is knowledgeable and participates in a range of relevant networks.

Teaching staff are subject to pre-employment checks and undertake safeguarding and 'Prevent' training, which is updated biennially.

Apprentices feel safe, know how to report concerns and are confident that they will be dealt with well.

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