

# OTM Apprenticeships Limited

Monitoring visit report

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<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Victor Reid, His Majesty's Inspector
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<b>Address:</b>	Unit 6, Holly Park Spitfire Road Birmingham B24 9PB

# 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.

OTM Apprenticeships Limited (OTMA) is a privately owned independent training provider based in Birmingham and is a wholly owned subsidiary of ANETO Education and Training Limited. OTMA specialises in the provision of travel-related training to employers and their workforces across the United Kingdom. In June 2022, the company was admitted to the register of apprenticeship training providers, and its first cohort of apprentices commenced training shortly thereafter.

At the time of the monitoring visit, 14 apprentices were in learning, the large majority being aged 16 to 18. Almost all apprentices were studying towards a level 3 standards-based apprenticeship in travel consultant, with the remaining few apprentices working towards a level 3 team leader/supervisor or level 4 sales executive apprenticeship. Apprentices are based in many regions across England, with training delivered in the workplace using a blended approach of online learning and face-to-face tutor support on site.

## Themes

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

### Reasonable progress

Senior leaders and managers make effective use of their industry insight and expertise to develop a clear strategy for their apprenticeship programme of supporting the upskilling of existing and new entrants into the travel-related industry sector. Managers and trainers ensure that employers play an active role in supporting their apprentices' vocational skills development.

Leaders invest in appropriate staffing and learning resources to support the apprenticeship programme. Trainers have the appropriate vocational and industrial knowledge and skills to train apprentices. They benefit from regular updates, which build their professional competence. As a result, they have a good understanding of the strategies that help apprentices to learn.

Workplace supervisors work closely with tutors to provide apprentices with content-rich on-the-job training that enables them to make positive contributions to their employers' businesses. In addition, leaders and managers ensure that employers adjust work patterns to allow apprentices to take part in off-the-job training, which fulfils the relevant apprenticeship requirements. As a result, all apprentices benefit from access to appropriate study time to learn new knowledge, skills and behaviours linked to their qualification.

The senior management team has an informed understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of their apprenticeship provision. They make effective use of quality evaluations of training to support improvements, which are, in turn, enhancing apprentices' learning experiences. Leaders and managers have a good understanding of how their staff perform, with regular meetings and performance appraisals.

Senior leaders and board members work well together to develop and shape the vision and business strategy for the organisation. Governors use their collective skills and experience effectively to provide appropriate scrutiny and challenge of leaders' actions.

While leaders have developed a range of key performance indicators related to their oversight of the provision, few of these have formalised qualitative targets that enable them to closely monitor progress or improvement. In addition, internal observation procedures do not report on or evaluate the impact of wider learning undertaken by apprentices in respect of their personal development and/or attitudes to their apprenticeship.

**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**

Leaders ensure that apprentices undertake an initial assessment to confirm their vocational starting points prior to joining the programme. Tutors ensure that learning plans for apprentices who are new to the travel industry and for those with prior experience are suitably tailored to ensure that they develop significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours throughout their apprenticeship.

Training staff ensure that all apprentices who need to achieve English and/or mathematics functional skills qualifications as part of their apprenticeship receive discrete tuition to extend their confidence in these essential skills. In addition, apprentices with additional needs are identified at the start of their programme, and appropriate support plans are put in place by tutors so that they receive the necessary help and assistance.

Tutors work closely with workplace supervisors to coordinate apprentices' on- and off-the-job training so that they improve their confidence and acquire relevant work-related skills. Leaders and tutors ensure that the curriculum follows a logical order. For example, travel consultant apprentices begin by learning aspects of the regulatory environment related to travel, including such matters as the legal requirements when processing client's personal data and being vigilant to matters such as money laundering.

Training staff use group sessions effectively to introduce new topics and encourage group discussion and one-to-one sessions. They provide apprentices with feedback on their work, individual role-specific support, and help to catch up if they fall behind. However, in a few instances, the feedback provided to apprentices by trainers is overly positive and does not always provide sufficient information on what they need to do to improve the standard of their work and perform in line with their identified potential.

Tutors support apprentices to develop their knowledge beyond standard requirements through the inclusion of additional training specific to travel companies and tour operators. Consequently, most apprentices deepen their product knowledge and develop confidence in providing knowledgeable advice to customers. However, in a small minority of instances, the vocational enrichment work set by tutors for apprentices is not achievable within the stated deadlines set.

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

Governors, leaders, managers and staff place a high priority on the health, well-being and safety of apprentices. Designated safeguarding officers are appropriately qualified and act promptly to support apprentices.

Apprentices receive appropriate, age-related information on how to keep themselves safe from risks such as extremism and radicalisation and from online threats such as phishing scams and fraud. Apprentices have a secure understanding of the need to keep separate their professional and private online profiles.

Leaders ensure safeguarding policies are in line with prevailing regulatory requirements. They use effective recruitment and right-to-work practices to check that tutors are suitable to work with apprentices.

A few younger apprentices do not have a secure understanding of matters related to online grooming and informed consent. Training delivered to apprentices by tutors as part of their wider apprenticeship curriculum is not successfully retained into their long-term memory. Leaders' links with local safeguarding partnerships are underdeveloped.

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