

Empentis Limited

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Empentis Limited was inspected in April 2022. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in resolving the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

At the time of the visit, there were fewer than five apprentices on the level 3 digital marketing standards-based apprenticeship programme.

Themes

How effective have leaders' actions been in ensuring that staff have a clear oversight of apprentices' progress in order to support apprentices to complete their programmes in a timely manner?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have taken effective steps to improve the quality of the apprenticeship provision. They have appointed staff, who have relevant experience as teachers and in carrying out quality assurance roles, to oversee the quality of the provision. Leaders and managers have worked with these staff to put in place procedures to monitor and improve the quality of the provision. They hold weekly meetings to discuss apprentices' progress and identify issues that may affect delivery.

Leaders and managers have put in place appropriate processes to monitor the progress that apprentices make. Staff and managers clearly outline apprentices' progress on the level 3 digital marketing standard. For example, staff share tracking documents that identify expected module completion dates and the actual dates that apprentices complete the module. They use these documents well to identify apprentices who fall behind. At the time of the visit, no apprentices were behind target or required intervention to catch up.

Tutors maintain frequent contact with apprentices to ensure that they do not fall behind. Apprentices submit work on time and develop their knowledge in line with the planned curriculum. As a result, all apprentices are making the expected progress in developing new knowledge and skills.

How successful have leaders' actions been in ensuring that staff have the right expertise to design effective apprenticeship programmes that provide high-quality teaching for apprentices to prepare them for their end-point assessments?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have reviewed the curriculum and the way in which they recruit apprentices. They have a carefully planned approach to introducing new apprenticeship programmes, specialising in recruiting digital marketing apprentices from small and medium-sized businesses and team leader apprentices from larger companies. At the time of the visit, there were a small number of digital marketing apprentices in the early stages of their programme.

Leaders and managers have appointed very well-qualified and experienced marketing and team-leading tutors, who have experience of teaching and relevant employment. Tutors have used their expertise well to redesign the curriculum plan. They have a clear understanding of how to address the weaknesses in the provision. As a result of the changes that tutors have made to the curriculum, apprentices now apply their marketing knowledge to plan and run events in their business that create additional revenue for the company. They hone their digital marketing skills on a practice site and then apply their knowledge to set up social media accounts and use posts to generate sales for the business.

Leaders and managers provide useful opportunities for staff who are new to the organisation to learn through shadowing more experienced colleagues. They ensure that staff are familiar with and have a detailed understanding of the requirements of an apprenticeship programme and end-point assessment criteria. This means that staff share useful information with the apprentices to help develop their understanding of what they need to do to prepare themselves for their end-point assessments.

How effective have leaders' actions been in ensuring that apprentices benefit from having sufficient time to complete their apprenticeship programmes successfully?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have ensured that staff have an effective plan in place to identify the off-the-job training specific to each unit of the apprenticeship standard. Tutors have created an off-the-job training plan for apprentices that clearly shows the activities that apprentices should complete alongside taught sessions. They plan a range of activities to develop apprentices' understanding of key concepts. Tutors provide apprentices with a range of resources such as reading materials, videos and worksheets. They also provide apprentices with access to free courses in copywriting and familiarisation with digital marketing tools. As a result, apprentices develop the knowledge that they need to be successful in their job roles.

Leaders and managers have ensured that employers are aware of their responsibilities regarding apprentices' off-the-job training. Most employers ensure that apprentices have sufficient time to complete the work. In a few instances, apprentices struggle to find time to complete tasks during busy times at work and have to do this in their own time.

Managers have implemented a clear and sensible plan to ensure that new apprentices who are due to start the programme have sufficient time to complete their off-the-job training. Staff plan to deliver a session with apprentices' managers as part of induction to outline the expectations of the apprenticeship.

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