

# University of Nottingham

Monitoring visit report

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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Ofsted undertakes to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision funded 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.

The University of Nottingham provides higher level apprenticeship courses from campuses in Nottingham and distance learning to apprentices across England. At the time of the inspection, there were 339 apprentices with around half studying level 7 advanced clinical practitioner (ACP) within healthcare or veterinary. Others study a broad range of courses at levels 6 and 7. There are 61 architects, 41 electro-mechanical engineering, 70 laboratory, data or bioinformatics scientists and nine senior leaders. All apprentices are adults.

The university works with two subcontractors. Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust offer specialist healthcare clinical training to support the level 7 advanced clinical practitioner healthcare apprenticeship and Runway Training who provide an online learning platform for functional skills English and mathematics.

### Themes

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

#### **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers select appropriate courses that help apprentices develop extensive new knowledge, skills and behaviours. These skills benefit apprentices and their employers. For example, the ACP healthcare course helps fill the skills gap left by the shortage of junior doctors. Apprentices are able to diagnose complex medical conditions and prescribe suitable courses of treatment.

The curriculum takes into account the needs of the local, regional or national economy. Courses are designed to meet specific skills shortages or the needs in emerging sectors. For example, the staffing for paediatric medicine and the future needs within artificial intelligence.

Managers have strong and effective relationships with a number of employers. They ensure that appropriate checks are carried out prior to enrolment of apprentices. The principals and requirements of the apprenticeship, as set out in the commitment statements, are followed.

Lecturers involve employers well in discussions about apprentices' progress at three-monthly progress reviews. Employers are rightly satisfied with training that apprentices, including those with additional learning needs, receive. They are aware of the expectations for final assessment and provide appropriate support to apprentices and employers.

Leaders have very positive partnerships with their subcontractors. They carefully monitor apprentices progress, discuss support needs and undertake relevant activities to check the quality of teaching. Apprentices training with subcontractors, including those that self-study functional skills, make good progress and achieve well.

Leaders and managers understand well the strengths and weaknesses of the apprenticeship provision. They use a range of useful quality assurance processes to accurately assess the quality of learning and create robust action plans to address issues.

Governance arrangements are satisfactory. University staff are suitably qualified and experienced. They provide effective oversight of apprenticeship courses. Leaders have recognised the further benefits of external governance and have recently appointed another member to broaden the skills and experience for governance.

**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 and managers work effectively with employers and subcontractors to develop activities that support apprentices in developing knowledge, skills and behaviours required within industry. For example, the data science course focuses on problem solving as employers need this skill to help improve business efficiency.

Managers have developed a comprehensive initial assessment process, to establish apprentices' starting points. They use this information to recognise prior knowledge and develop a logical curriculum plan to meet learner needs. For example, within ACP, those without experience or qualifications to prescribe medicine undertake additional units of study to build their knowledge in this area.

Apprentices receive high-quality on-the-job training that supports them to swiftly develop and practise relevant new knowledge, skills and behaviours. They receive sufficient and well-structured off-the-job time which is carefully monitored by

lecturers during tripartite reviews. For example, ACP apprentices have opportunities to work with other areas of healthcare, such as GPs and pharmacies, to further supplement their learning.

Lecturers have advanced knowledge of their profession and are well qualified. They use this knowledge well to provide high-quality training to apprentices. ACP apprentices benefit from guest lecturers, such as advanced practitioners and field specialists, who teach specialist content such as radiology, plastic surgery, critical and palliative care.

Apprentices develop their spoken English skills well during their studies. However, in a small minority of cases, development of written English skills are less well promoted and lecturers do not always promote the correct use of English.

Apprentices have detailed knowledge of all assessment activity taking place, including final assessment. Details of assessment dates and activity are provided to apprentices and employers in advance to support their preparation for these.

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

Leaders and managers take effective steps to ensure the safety and well-being of apprentices. They create a safe environment in which apprentices feel able to raise concerns or request support. They undertake relevant checks with employers to ensure the health and safety of apprentices in the workplace.

The designated safeguarding lead and deputies are suitably qualified. They have useful external links with relevant safeguarding organisations, including regional 'Prevent' coordinators. This ensures they keep up to date with local and national issues.

Leaders and managers carry out appropriate background checks for training staff. Staff undertake relevant training in safeguarding and 'Prevent' and receive a programme of useful bi-annual updates.

Apprentices are well informed about arrangements for safeguarding, 'Prevent' and support through a comprehensive induction process, apprenticeship handbook and online resources.

Where safeguarding issues are raised, these are appropriately recorded in a timely manner. Appropriate support is put in place through the university or external agencies.

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