

# Inspection of University of East Anglia

Inspection dates:

5 to 8 December 2023

**Overall effectiveness****Good**

The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Apprenticeships

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

**Information about this provider**

The University of East Anglia is a higher education institution in Norwich. At the time of the inspection, there were 717 apprentices in learning. Apprentices are based mainly in the East of England. They study apprenticeships from level 3 to level 7, mostly in subjects relating to health and social care or nursing and medicine. Around 250 apprentices are on level 3 pharmacy technician and are in locations across England. One hundred and fifty apprentices are on level 5 nursing associate, 81 on level 6 registered nurse degree, 61 on level 7 senior leader and 48 on level 7 clinical associate in psychology. There are smaller cohorts of apprentices on five other health and care related apprenticeships.

Almost all apprentices are over the age of 19. Approximately 60 apprentices have an identified learning need.

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

Apprentices benefit from positive working relationships with both university staff and their workplace mentors. They are motivated to learn by expert staff in learning environments and in their workplaces.

Apprentices thrive in face-to-face training environments. They value the professional discussions with their peers and the useful conversations that they have with apprenticeship advisers about their progress. However, too few apprentices find online lectures conducive to learning.

Apprentices receive highly effective support from staff at the university. They have the confidence to ask questions, to apply their learning at work and to learn from mistakes. Apprentices feel cared for and know whom to talk to should they have any academic or personal concerns.

Apprentices gain the skills they need to prepare them for success in the future. They develop quickly the skills required to manage themselves and others in their challenging professional roles. They learn to talk to patients, clinical staff and their peers with confidence and authority. Apprentices apply their understanding of safeguarding very effectively to patients in their care. Apprentices value the ongoing safeguarding training that they receive at work.

Apprentices have a well-developed understanding of fundamental British values, equality and diversity and of how these impact their personal and professional lives. They extend their understanding through frequent discussions of professional practice during off-the-job training. Social worker apprentices use the latest sociological research to challenge stereotypes.

Apprentices feel safe in their workplaces and when in learning. Apprentices are confident that their concerns will be listened to and that staff will take prompt action to support them.

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

Leaders have highly effective relationships with local health service employers and their associated professional bodies. They ensure that training programmes for each apprenticeship meet the current needs of the workforce. Leaders developed the clinical assistant psychologist curriculum to improve access to psychological services locally. They developed the senior leader curriculum in response to high staff turnover in the NHS and to meet identified skills needs in the county council, the football club and other key employers locally. Leaders' collaboration with employers ensures that the nursing associate apprenticeship meets the skills needs set out in the NHS workforce plan, and that the healthcare science practitioner apprenticeship will help to fill skills shortages in biomedical science roles.

Teaching staff work collaboratively with employers to plan the content of apprenticeships. Apprentices frequently benefit from specialist classes taught by their employers and other external experts. On the clinical associate in psychology course, employers provide specialist lessons on key concepts such as differences in child development. As a result, apprentices are well informed of current practice and can provide specific interventions for their patients.

Lecturers and apprenticeship advisers take account effectively of the existing skills and knowledge apprentices have when planning training programmes. Apprentices explore any gaps that they have in their knowledge through lectures, specialist seminars and frequent one-to-one contact with their advisers. Apprentices on the healthcare science practitioner apprenticeship take part in a comprehensive interview and induction programme. Staff identify quickly, and help apprentices fill, gaps in their learning, particularly for numeracy and biological chemistry concepts.

Lecturers and apprenticeship advisers ensure that apprentices with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate support promptly. Apprentices access a range of useful specialist help. The learning enhancement team provides assessments, useful support plans and a range of support sessions for apprentices. Lecturers and apprenticeship advisers make appropriate adjustments to their teaching to meet apprentices' needs.

Lecturers and apprenticeship advisers are highly qualified experts in their subjects. Leaders support staff to achieve their Master's in higher education practice. Apprentices benefit from staff's expertise and receive high-quality training that helps them to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be successful in their job roles and in their future careers.

Lecturers and apprenticeship advisers ensure that apprentices rapidly secure their understanding of key concepts. They present information clearly and facilitate high-quality discussions in face-to-face lessons. They work closely with workplace mentors and employers to help apprentices link theory to workplace practices. Apprentices on the clinical associate in psychology apprenticeship use highly effective reflective practice to share with, and learn from, their peers. Pharmacy technician apprentices apply their learning of biology to develop an understanding of pharmaceuticals.

Too often, lecturers do not use technology effectively in online lectures. Apprentices attend a combination of face-to-face and online learning, including lectures and seminars. Online lectures are limited to a set time frame and often finish abruptly. Where apprentices attend very large group lectures online with other students from the university, too many feel unable to ask questions. Too many apprentices are distracted during online lectures and do not have sufficient opportunities to contribute.

Leaders signpost the very small proportion of potential apprentices who do not have the required English and mathematics qualifications to local providers to gain functional skills qualifications before beginning their apprenticeship. Apprenticeship

advisers ensure that apprentices continue to develop the high levels of literacy and numeracy that they require to be effective in their professional roles. They provide specialist training, including numeracy for those studying bioscience for the first time and academic writing skills. Most lecturers provide helpful feedback to help apprentices improve their sentence structure and grammar.

Lecturers and apprenticeship advisers use assessment effectively to check apprentices' progress, skills, knowledge and understanding. They assess apprentices' progress through written work, contributions in lessons and useful progress reviews. Apprentices know what they are doing well and what they need to improve. On the healthcare science practitioner course, staff use assessment in lessons to inform apprentices' activities between lessons, and to form the basis of discussions in weekly tutorials.

Most apprentices gain experience, through placements, in new and unfamiliar contexts to broaden their interests and professional curiosity. Staff provide opportunities for apprentices to take an active part in communities of practice relevant to their profession, such as the Psychological Professions Network in the East of England and the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK. This enables apprentices to extend their professional development beyond their own workplaces and roles.

Leaders make available a range of helpful additional services and opportunities for apprentices through central student services teams. This includes help with finances, well-being support and access to social clubs and sports opportunities. Many apprentices make use of the support services, but few take part in social activities due to distance from the university and their full-time working roles.

Too few apprentices receive ongoing, impartial careers guidance. Leaders and managers have recently improved careers guidance for apprentices and ensure that the careers service in place at the university provides specific, tailored support for apprentices. However, leaders and staff do not ensure that apprentices are aware of the range of opportunities available to them.

Leaders have effective arrangements in place to ensure the quality of education in apprenticeships. They share their insights with those responsible for governance and with course teams to inform actions for improvement. They respond swiftly to emerging areas of concern that may impact apprentices' progress. Leaders use feedback from apprentices, employers and professional bodies such as the British Psychological Society to make further improvements. Leaders ensure that a high proportion of apprentices remain in learning and achieve their apprenticeship in planned timescales.

Leaders do not have effective oversight of apprentices' destinations and attendance at off-the-job training. They do not record apprentices' actual destinations on achievement of the apprenticeship. They do not know whether apprentices meet their high expectations for attendance.

Those responsible for governance have effective oversight of apprenticeships. Members of the apprenticeship-specific committee provide effective challenge to leaders. Leaders produce highly detailed quality reports that committee members review and scrutinise carefully before reporting to the university's main governance board. As a result, leaders and managers are held to account effectively for the performance, ongoing improvement and consistency of apprenticeships.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- The provider should improve apprentices' experiences when learning online.
- The provider should continue to expand the opportunities for impartial careers advice and guidance for apprentices and ensure that apprentices are aware of, and access, these opportunities.
- The provider should gather and use additional performance information, such as apprentices' destinations and attendance, to inform further improvement actions.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133853
<b>Address</b>	The Registry University Plain Norwich Norfolk NR4 7TJ
<b>Contact number</b>	01603456161
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.uea.ac.uk">https://www.uea.ac.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Professor David Maguire
<b>Provider type</b>	Higher education institution
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	n/a

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the associate director of partnerships, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection 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

Rebecca Perry, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Ruth Harrison	Ofsted Inspector
Kerry Payne	Ofsted Inspector
Robert Bamford	His Majesty's Inspector
Shane Langthorne	His Majesty's Inspector
Chris Bealey	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Richards	Ofsted Inspector

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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)

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