Bath Spa University

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	133790
Name of lead inspector:	Paul James, His Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	22 and 23 January 2024
Type of provider:	Higher education institution
Address:	Newton Park Newton St Loe Bath Somerset BA2 9BN

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Ofsted undertakes to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of adult learning provision where the provision offered is in scope for inspection. 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 monitoring visit, Bath Spa University had 101 students completing adult bootcamps. Of these, 14 adults were studying agile project management, 16 digital marketing, 11 data analytics and machine learning, 35 adobe and teams, and 25 UX/UI coding. All the teaching takes place online.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant adult learning provision that has a clearly defined purpose?	**Reasonable**

Leaders have designed training programmes that are aligned well to local skills gaps. They have worked well with employers to identify the knowledge, skills and behaviours that employees need. As a result, lecturers provide effective training that successfully supports most students to secure job interviews or move on to self-employment.

Leaders promote a culture of inclusion and innovation. They have developed innovative and effective responses to the challenges students face in securing job interviews. For example, through the newly developed 'pathway to employment' initiative, leaders match students to prospective employers and facilitate initial contact. As a result, an increasing proportion of students, often from disadvantaged demographics, successfully secure new employment.

Leaders have established effective quality assurance processes. They use these to identify the teaching skills that lecturers need to develop. At the time of the monitoring visit, plans to provide lecturers with mentoring and access to teacher training from within the university were newly in place. However, it is too soon to judge the impact of these plans on lecturers' teaching.

Senior members of the university staff hold leaders to account through committees and informal meetings. Those responsible for governance are highly skilled and well-equipped to provide robust challenge to leaders. However, leaders recognise the need to formalise further the arrangements for governance and align them to their quality assurance cycle. At the time of the monitoring visit, a new curriculum board

was being established to standardise the governance function for the bootcamps and ensure a focus on the quality of education.

How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that students benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aim and/or personal goals?	**Reasonable**

Leaders ensure that students complete a set of useful initial assessments at the start of their training to ascertain prior knowledge and identify any skills gaps. Lecturers use this information well to plan individualised training. Where necessary, they provide additional one-to-one support sessions for students to ensure that any gaps in knowledge are covered. As a result, students feel well supported and the majority make at least the progress expected of them.

Lecturers plan effective sessions which support students to apply their new skills and knowledge by using work-place scenarios. For example, lecturers on the UX/UI coding bootcamp teach students the basics of how to design apps in week one. This is taught alongside developing their knowledge of coding. By week four, students are able to build the apps they have designed. As a result, students develop a deep understanding of the design process and use of coding. Consequently, they develop valuable new skills and knowledge that prepare them well for the workplace.

Leaders and managers have ensured that students have access to high-quality careers advice and guidance. Lecturers and a specialist coach support students to understand the range of career options open to them through workshops and one-to-one sessions. Training includes how to become self-employed, which was developed in response to students' feedback. As a result, students are well-equipped to make decisions on what they do after completing their training.

Lecturers facilitate a range of employer-led talks, workshops and projects, which help students to develop the skills they need to be successful in their next steps. However, in a minority of instances, employers' expertise is not drawn on when reviewing the overall content of the bootcamps.

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

Leaders have ensured that there is an appropriately trained designated safeguarding lead (DSL). The DSL works well with the university's wider safeguarding and well-being team to support students on bootcamps. However, while the safeguarding policy identifies the university-wide accountabilities of staff, the responsibilities of the DSL's role are not formally documented.

At the start of the programme, lecturers teach students about the dangers and signs of radicalisation. As a result, students are well-informed on how to stay safe when

they begin the bootcamps. However, this information is not revisited to ensure that students have remembered it.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for students of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: http://eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024