

# Inspection of University of Bradford

Inspection dates: 14 to 17 May 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
<hr/>	
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Information about this provider

The University of Bradford provides training for apprentices across the country, but predominantly in the city of Bradford. At the time of the inspection, there were 271 apprentices on standards-based programmes from level 5 to level 7. The standard with the largest number of apprentices was level 6 chartered manager with 95. The remaining apprentices were on level 7 programmes in senior leader and advanced clinical practitioner, level 6 programmes in laboratory scientist, healthcare science practitioner and social work, and a level 5 programme in nursing associate.

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

Apprentices are successfully supported to develop their academic and analytical skills to a high level. They have access to an extensive range of literature and journals, which enables them to consider a wide range of research when writing their assignments. Apprentices who find academic writing a challenge can access support from tutors and study skills tutors. The support that they receive contributes to enabling a high proportion of apprentices to gain high marks in their assessments.

Apprentices demonstrate positive attitudes and are well motivated to learn. While on their apprenticeship programme, they grow in confidence and resilience at work. Most apprentices take on additional responsibilities at work and others gain promotion.

Apprentices attend sessions well and are punctual at work and in their training. Staff and employers reinforce the importance of attendance and punctuality, and link this to the professional behaviours required in employment and further learning.

Apprentices benefit from good-quality learning resources. These include a mock hospital ward where they can practise their skills before applying them in the workplace. Apprentices also have access to a comprehensive online learning environment, which houses many useful resources for them to use to support their studies.

Apprentices have access to the wide range of support services available to all students at the university. For example, they benefit from the university's counselling service to support their mental health. Apprentices also have access to an onsite gym and sporting facilities, which a few of them use.

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

Senior leaders ensure that their apprenticeship programmes contribute successfully to the university's role in developing high-level skills in the city of Bradford and the wider West Yorkshire area. They are ambitious to expand apprenticeships into areas where the university has particular strengths, such as engineering and manufacturing, public sector management and social sciences.

Leaders have effective oversight of the quality of their apprenticeship programmes. Following recent changes, faculty managers are now responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and the experience of apprentices in their own areas, while members of a newly configured quality team monitor the progress of all apprentices across the university. The quality team has implemented monthly meetings with apprenticeship programme leaders to review the progress of each apprentice and ensure that apprentices are gaining the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need to be successful. Staff in the quality team escalate any concerns and communicate actions needed to the higher-degree apprenticeship compliance

subcommittee. Leaders have identified concerns with the experience of level 5 nursing associate apprentices due to staffing changes and challenges that these apprentices face in the workplace, which have negatively impacted on their learning experience. They are currently taking action to address these concerns.

Managers and lecturers have planned and developed the curriculum for each apprenticeship in a logical order to build apprentices' knowledge and skills progressively. For example, level 7 advanced clinical practitioner apprentices explore the theory of applied pathophysiology and pharmacology, and then practise what they have learned by carrying out simulated clinical examinations. Lecturers frequently adapt the curriculum to ensure that apprentices have a firm understanding of core concepts and benefit from industry experts such as guest speakers when available and from specialists at the university, including researchers from the 'Born in Bradford' team.

Leaders appoint highly qualified managers and lecturers with extensive subject experience. Staff use their professional, vocational and research expertise well to motivate apprentices and develop their vocational and academic skills. In addition, leaders ensure that managers and staff carry out useful professional development activities to help them develop their teaching skills and specialist knowledge of apprenticeship provision and standards. Staff also benefit from a peer review scheme, which supports them in improving their practice.

Leaders and staff ensure that employers fully understand the requirements of an apprenticeship programme and often include them in planning the programmes. Once an apprentice has been recruited, staff emphasise the importance to the employer of attending review meetings to discuss the apprentice's progress. However, a few employers are not involved fully enough in the programme. They do not attend review meetings regularly, which results in them not receiving information about their apprentice's progress. This has caused confusion for a few level 5 nursing associate apprentices.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have taken action to ensure that apprentices are appropriately recruited and inducted. Before recruitment, staff carefully check that applicants have the necessary English and mathematics qualifications and the prior skills and knowledge needed for their programme and that the programme will enable them to achieve their aspirations.

Lecturers effectively use a range of teaching strategies to enable apprentices to develop and apply key knowledge, skills and behaviours. They use blended learning effectively. For example, level 6 laboratory scientist lecturers have designed a 'flipped' model of learning whereby apprentices work through questions, tests and resources on the virtual learning platform before attending sessions with their lecturer. Teachers use weekly quizzes after content has been taught so they can accurately assess what apprentices know and can apply to practical activities.

Lecturers provide helpful feedback to apprentices to enable them to improve their work. However, a few lecturers do not return marked work quickly enough. As a

result, a few apprentices are not clear about what they have done well or what they need to do to improve for their next assignment.

Lecturers ensure that apprentices receive helpful and impartial careers advice throughout their time at the university and after they have left. Alumni can use the university's careers advice service for five years after they have completed their apprenticeship.

Leaders have in place suitable governance arrangements. Senior university leaders receive information on the progress that apprentices make so they can hold leaders of the apprenticeship programme to account. They also engage extensively with employers, the local chamber of commerce and local, regional, and national policymakers to ensure their apprenticeship programmes are fit for purpose. Senior leaders are proud of the apprenticeship programmes and have high ambitions to grow this provision.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- Rapidly improve the learning experience for level 5 nursing associate apprentices to ensure that they benefit fully from their programme.
- Improve the timeliness of feedback to ensure that apprentices can use it to improve their subsequent work.
- Ensure that all employers are involved in review meetings to discuss apprentices' progress, so they are able to support their apprentices to make good progress and prepare for end-point assessment.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133791
<b>Address</b>	Richmond Road Bradford BD7 1DP
<b>Contact number</b>	01274 232323
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.bradford.ac.uk">https://www.bradford.ac.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Professor Shirley Congdon
<b>Provider type</b>	Higher education institution
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 to 25 March 2022
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the pro-vice-chancellor (learning, teaching and student experience), 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

Hayley Lomas, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Philippa Firth	His Majesty's Inspector
Cath Jackson	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Benson-Smith	Ofsted Inspector
Tracey Mace-Akroyd	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Tyrrell	Ofsted Inspector

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 learners 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 children looked after, 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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024