

JC Training & Consultancy Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Bob Hamp, Her Majesty's Inspector

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

From October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by ESFA 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.

JC Training and Consultancy Ltd gained main contractor status in July 2019. Leaders began the delivery of standards-based apprenticeships in January 2020. Of the 20 apprentices, four study business administration at level 3, eight study improvement practitioner at level 4, seven study operations or departmental manager at level 5 and one studies learning and skills teacher at level 5. Four apprentices are on a break in learning due to illness or redundancy.

The impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgements below.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Apprentices develop the necessary skills, knowledge and behaviours that provide them with clear pathways from supervisory level to senior positions. Most apprentices are aware of the progression opportunities open to them with their employer and how their apprenticeships are relevant to other business sectors.

Leaders ensure apprentices study programmes that are suitable and support local and national needs. For example, all probation service apprentices complete their studies during the service's move back to public ownership. Tutors work flexibly to ensure the training apprentices receive is relevant and supports their individual needs.

Leaders have a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of each apprenticeship. Employers and apprentices provide feedback at monthly reviews and quarterly surveys. Leaders use the feedback to respond swiftly to comments and update the self-assessment report and quality improvement plan.

Leaders have recruited knowledgeable and experienced teachers to deliver the apprenticeship programmes. They have recently strengthened the independent oversight of the provision in anticipation of their planned growth towards levels 6 and 7 apprenticeships.

Most apprentices make good progress. They benefit from individual progress reviews every four weeks. Those that do not make expected progress receive additional training and support.

Apprentices do not have a good understanding of end-point assessment or that their apprenticeship is graded.

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

Apprentices undertake a thorough initial assessment to establish their starting points. This includes their level of English and mathematics and prior knowledge and attainment. Tutors use this information to provide additional learning support or to develop individualised programmes.

On- and off-the job training is planned effectively. Tutors ensure the curriculum is relevant to apprentices' job roles. For example, they explore finance in the public sector or focus on legislation in areas most relevant to the apprentices' area of study.

Learning is sequenced logically. Tutors introduce simplified examples before tackling more complex ones. They build upon topics that apprentices have already covered, such as financial aspects of project management, before leading to deeper study of finance.

Tutors probe apprentices' understanding effectively by using realistic work scenarios. For example, they deepen knowledge by exploring the long-term impacts of employee dissatisfaction within an organisation. Tutors use their considerable experience to help apprentices identify where improvements can be made and maintained in the workplace.

Apprentices learn about the impact of wider events on their job roles. For example, they conduct a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis on increased unemployment and its effect on crime rates and debate how this affects apprentices working in the probation service.

Tutors systematically develop learners' practical skills. For example, they develop team-working skills through collaborative projects and encourage the use of presentations in assignments before they are covered in depth as topics on the course.

The online learning platform is well organised but takes time to use effectively. Feedback on submitted work is detailed and informative. Self-study materials are well presented and contextualised to individual businesses. Tutors use quizzes effectively to check that learners have grasped key concepts.

Tutors have suitable teaching qualifications, as well as considerable subject expertise and relevant backgrounds within industry. However, the current lesson observation process does not support tutors to develop their teaching skills further.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are comprehensive. The designated safeguarding lead is qualified to level 3 and has an appointed deputy. Safe recruitment practices are adhered to and all staff have annual enhanced disclosure and barring service checks. Safeguarding risk assessments include checks on guest speakers and online safety.

All apprentices and staff receive training in safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, fundamental British values, equality and diversity and online safety. Appropriate procedures for reporting safeguarding issues are in place, although none have been raised. Apprentices feel safe and know what to do if they have concerns. Health, well-being, safety while working from home and being safe online are all discussed at monthly reviews. Apprentices' understanding of British values and the dangers of exploitation due to 'county lines' (where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, usually by children or vulnerable people who are coerced into it by gangs) is not so clear.

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