

# Velocity 1<sup>st</sup> Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 2691323

**Name of lead inspector:** Sarah Seaman, His Majesty's Inspector

**Inspection dates:** 29 and 30 March 2023

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

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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.

Velocity 1<sup>st</sup> Limited provides training in the digital and computing sector. It began to deliver levy-funded apprenticeships in 2019 and received its own contract to deliver apprenticeships directly in November 2021. Currently, there are 58 apprentices on standards-based programmes, including level 3 digital marketer, level 3 ICT and level 4 data analyst. Velocity 1<sup>st</sup> Limited provides training to apprentices across the country but predominantly in the West Yorkshire area. Most apprentices are over 19 years of age.

### Themes

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

#### **Significant progress**

Leaders have selected and developed an effective curriculum, taking account of the needs of the local and regional area. They work closely with Wakefield Council and have aligned their curriculum offer with the pillars identified in the local skills improvement plan. They choose curriculum content that aims to meet employer requirements fully and develop apprentices' knowledge and skills beyond the minimum requirements of the apprenticeship standard. Leaders respond quickly to requests from employers to include topics not included in the qualifications.

Leaders recruit tutors who have valuable industrial experience, and tutors use this experience effectively to support apprentices. Staff carry out a thorough recruitment process, involving the apprentice and employer, to establish what apprentices already know and can do. Tutors work closely with apprentices and their employers to plan and skilfully build a curriculum that meets the needs of each apprentice and links on- and off-the-job training effectively. As a result, apprentices rapidly become highly effective at work and make good progress through their apprenticeship.

Leaders ensure that end-point assessments (EPA) are in place for apprentices and that arrangements are communicated effectively to staff, apprentices and employers.

Apprentices benefit from completing mock activities and participate in a series of EPA-focused workshops. They receive useful guidance and support from tutors to prepare them effectively for EPA.

Leaders have effective arrangements in place to monitor the quality of the provision. They carry out a range of rigorous quality assurance activities and use this information to make improvements in their provision and to maintain their high-quality standards. At frequent points in the programme, they carry out observations of lessons, one-to-one coaching sessions and progress reviews, and review the quality of apprentices' work. Leaders successfully use the information from these activities to improve teaching by providing staff with high-quality and well-structured training.

Governance is effective. Governors bring valuable skills and experience from education and safeguarding and are passionate about the apprentices and the provider. They confidently challenge the managing director, both in formal meetings and in informal conversations between meetings, and are involved fully in planning the strategic direction of the provider.

**What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? Significant progress**

Tutors structure the curriculum in a logical way to enable apprentices to gain secure knowledge, skills and behaviours. Apprentices begin by studying basic topics, such as how programming language works and website structure, and then apply their new knowledge and skills when performing more complex tasks, such as creating promotional advertisements and using software to monitor their effectiveness. They use their new knowledge and skills effectively in the workplace. For example, they carry out impactful and cost-effective digital marketing campaigns, which makes a significant contribution to their organisation's profitability.

Apprentices benefit greatly from well-structured and carefully targeted written feedback. This is complemented by highly personalised and effective video feedback, which enables them to improve their work. The feedback that apprentices receive helps them to produce work of a high standard.

Tutors and coaches monitor apprentices' progress very effectively through individual coaching sessions that take place every three weeks. They set meaningful targets and develop sensible action plans with apprentices to enable them to make the progress that they should. Employers attend these sessions at least every nine weeks, but they also benefit from reports and feedback after apprentices' reviews. As a result, employers contribute well to apprentices' future learning and the development of apprentices' skills, both on and off the job.

Leaders and managers have developed an appropriate personal development curriculum, which includes topics such as healthy lifestyles, well-being and staying safe. They identify the need to prepare apprentices fully for life in modern Britain in the context of their job roles. Although the personal development curriculum is in its infancy, business administrator apprentices speak knowledgeably and sensibly about their awareness of local threats and challenges. Digital marketing apprentices appreciate and explain well how their tutors and coaches have taught them about how to keep themselves safe, including recognising and reporting online threats.

Leaders and managers have developed curriculum content that goes beyond the standard qualification. They gather feedback from stakeholders and use this information to inform their curriculum content and include additional topics required by the sector. For example, leaders and managers introduced a coding unit and project management module, which supports digital marketing apprentices in their role at work. Apprentices benefit from well-planned on-the-job training, which enables them to gain appropriate and occupationally specific digital certificates that demonstrate well their growing competency.

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

Leaders have appointed an appropriate designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL, who are suitably trained and experienced. Leaders and the DSL require all staff to undergo safeguarding training that familiarises them with the reporting system and key safeguarding responsibilities. The DSL and deputy DSL fully understand their responsibilities in safeguarding apprentices and provide support for a wide range of issues. They understand that, working nationally, they must be prepared to provide support in response to all potential risks, including those more prevalent in different areas. They frequently disseminate useful information about risks to all staff.

Apprentices benefit from well-structured teaching about keeping themselves safe and about local risks and challenges. As part of the programme, tutors provide apprentices with a range of information on safeguarding, extremism and radicalisation. Apprentices remember what they have been taught and can give examples of how they apply this learning at work. This enables apprentices to gain a deeper understanding of these topics. Apprentices know who to contact if they have a concern.

Leaders have implemented appropriate safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty policies and procedures, which outlines a clear reporting process. They have a clear, succinct 'Prevent' duty action plan in place, which is frequently reviewed and updated. The DSL and deputy DSL work with a number of regional 'Prevent' coordinators across the country. They use the information from this liaison to identify any activity or risks in each area in which they work and disseminate this sensitively and appropriately.

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