

Teesside University

Higher education institution

Inspection dates

29 January–1 February 2019

Overall effectiveness		Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding	Apprenticeships Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding	
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding	
Outcomes for learners	Outstanding	
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings

This is an outstanding provider

- Leaders and managers have very successfully established a culture of high expectations for apprentices through providing challenging, high-quality apprenticeships that lead to secure careers.
- An expertly designed curriculum very effectively meets the needs of employers and regional economic priorities.
- Leaders rapidly tackle any concerns that they identify through rigorous quality improvement to ensure that provision for all apprentices is of a very high standard.
- Leaders, managers and governors place a high priority on apprenticeships and ensure that apprentices benefit significantly from excellent resources and learning environments.
- Expert tutors plan learning that enables apprentices to gain an in-depth understanding of their subjects and a good awareness of the challenges and rewards of working in the laboratory science, health and care sectors.
- Tutors use learning activities that motivate and meet the needs of apprentices exceptionally well.
- Well-trained and fully briefed practice mentors provide high-quality support and guidance for apprentices in their workplaces.
- Staff have very high expectations of apprentices, and the support that they provide is excellent. As a result, apprentices gain significantly in confidence; they are able to participate in learning at a higher level than previously and respond successfully to the rigour and academic challenge of their apprenticeships.
- Apprentices make excellent progress in improving their skills, knowledge and behaviours; they make significant improvements to the quality of their work so that it meets and often exceeds industrial requirements.
- Apprentices are conscientious and diligent, and they participate enthusiastically in learning and work.
- A very high proportion of apprentices achieve within the planned timescale.
- In a few cases, tutors do not combine the findings of the separate academic and workplace reviews to provide employers with comprehensive information about apprentices' progress to enable them to provide specific support where needed.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Teesside University provides higher education courses for around 19,500 students. The university's main campus is located in the centre of Middlesbrough, with a smaller campus in Darlington. The university provides apprenticeships from level 5 to degree level in a range of subject areas.
- The provision in scope for this inspection was level 5 apprenticeship programmes on which 287 adults are enrolled. Just over a half of apprentices are enrolled on the nursing associate apprenticeship standard. A very small number of apprentices are enrolled on the laboratory scientist apprenticeship standard. Almost all the remaining apprentices are enrolled on the healthcare assistant practitioner apprenticeship standard, with a further very small number enrolled on the healthcare assistant practitioner apprenticeship framework.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that tutors use the findings of the separate academic and workplace progress reviews to provide employers with a comprehensive overview of all aspects of their apprentices' progress so that they can provide specific support when this is needed.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Governors, leaders and managers have very successfully established a culture of high expectations for apprenticeship provision. They place a high priority on ensuring that high-quality apprenticeships provide life-changing opportunities for individuals who would otherwise struggle to participate in higher education. Apprentices benefit significantly from this accessible route into degree-level study and secure careers.
- Senior leaders' strategic vision for apprenticeships is informed particularly well by a strong commitment to equality and promotion of diversity in higher education. Senior leaders very successfully target apprenticeships to provide high-quality education for disadvantaged communities and groups in the North East region. Apprentices from diverse backgrounds feel welcome and valued by the university. Leaders' strong social justice ethos ensures that British values are promoted very effectively through apprenticeships.
- Leaders and managers provide an expertly designed curriculum that very effectively meets the needs of employers. They use incisive labour market information to ensure that the curriculum meets regional economic and healthcare priorities. The well-designed curriculum supports employers to contribute successfully to regional economic regeneration in the healthcare and growing bioindustry sectors.
- Leaders and managers have established very strong partnerships with a wide range of local, regional and national organisations and employers. These include local hospitals and National Health Service trusts, private healthcare providers, Health Education England, the Nursing and Midwifery Council, and clinical commissioning groups. Through these highly effective partnerships, leaders ensure that the curriculum is designed exceptionally well to enable apprentices to develop significant new skills that are much needed by employers to address, for example, shortages of healthcare professionals.
- Leaders and managers use the university's established quality assurance processes very effectively to ensure that apprentices follow excellent programmes and achieve outstanding outcomes. They take rapid and effective action to ensure that the recommendations from quality improvement and programme review activities are used to make further improvements.
- Leaders and managers review tutors' performance robustly and hold tutors to account very well for the quality of the teaching and learning that they provide and the outcomes that their apprentices achieve. They ensure that tutors have sufficient time to participate in high-quality professional development. This successfully creates a culture of high expectations where tutors are motivated to seek out ways of improving their professional practice.
- Leaders and managers implement highly effective quality checks of apprentices' employers. Through these, they ensure that apprentices are taken on by employers who support fully the principles of apprenticeships. For example, employers adapt working patterns and shifts so that apprentices can attend off-the-job training, and they provide well-structured and high-quality on-the-job training. Leaders and managers ensure that employers provide secure employment in promoted positions for apprentices when they

complete their programmes.

- Leaders and managers ensure that apprentices have access to high-quality, impartial careers advice and guidance. Specialist advisers from the university's careers service use the significant resources available to them, including detailed labour market intelligence, employment databases and research tools, to work with teaching staff to provide apprentices with expertly tailored advice about future career choices.
- Leaders and managers place a high priority on supporting apprentices to improve their English and mathematical skills. They audit effectively all off-the-job learning modules to ensure that English and mathematics are embedded throughout the curriculum. Leaders and managers ensure that tutors consider fully apprentices' progress in developing their skills in these subjects. They ensure that those apprentices who need support access the wide range of specialist help available through the library and online resources.

The governance of the provider

- Governors and other senior leaders are highly supportive of the apprenticeship programmes that the university offers, including those at level 5, and set high expectations for the provision. They ensure that apprenticeship programmes are integral to the university's strategic priorities. They take very effective steps to ensure that apprenticeship programmes are well resourced. Consequently, apprentices benefit significantly from their access and exposure to excellent resources and learning environments.
- Governors oversee the quality of apprenticeship provision very effectively through the university's academic board. Senior leaders who sit on this board receive accurate and detailed information about all aspects of the apprenticeship provision. This enables them to evaluate the quality of the different aspects of apprenticeships with precision, and to support and challenge the relevant academic schools to make any necessary improvements. The academic board provides detailed reports to governors, who use these to provide a very high level of scrutiny, support and challenge relating to the quality of apprenticeship provision.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, managers and staff at all levels in the university place a high priority on apprentices' safeguarding and well-being. They ensure that apprentices have a very good awareness of the steps that they need to take to stay safe and know how to report any concerns that they may have. Apprentices have access to a very wide range of services and resources at the university to help them to stay safe and to support them with any problems that they are experiencing.
- Tutors have a high level of expertise in safeguarding, particularly in relation to apprentices in their workplace and professional practice. They transmit this knowledge very effectively to apprentices, who gain a very good awareness of how to stay safe, and safeguard others, at work. Staff and employers, the very large majority of whom are from the healthcare sector, raise apprentices' awareness of the risks of radicalisation and extremism very effectively. Apprentices consider these risks as part of their curriculum

and tutors ensure that the delivery focuses on the local context of the North East of England.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Tutors have excellent subject knowledge and they make very effective use of their professional experience when planning and using learning activities. This enables apprentices to gain an in-depth understanding of their subjects and insights into the challenges and rewards of working in the science and healthcare sectors. The vast majority of apprentices make exceptional progress. Tutors lead rich discussions in lessons through which apprentices successfully apply theory to practice. For example, healthcare and nursing apprentices understand fully their legal responsibilities when administering medicines.
- Tutors work very effectively with employers to establish prospective apprentices' starting points. Tutors and workplace practitioners comprehensively assess apprentices' existing vocational skills, their motivation and attitude before enrolling them onto an appropriate apprenticeship.
- Tutors plan and use learning activities very carefully so that the pace and content of lessons motivate and meet the needs of all apprentices exceptionally well. Tutors make it a priority to get to know their apprentices thoroughly. As a result, they have a very good understanding of their needs, interests and individual workplace experiences. They use this information very effectively in lessons so that apprentices can share and learn from each other's experiences.
- Tutors make very effective use of the excellent learning environments and resources available to apprentices. Apprentices improve their skills and confidence significantly in simulated hospital wards. In these, they practise a wide range of procedures and techniques, such as taking blood pressure readings, extracting blood and giving injections safely on prosthetic patients.
- Tutors have very high expectations of apprentices and provide excellent support and encouragement. Apprentices find this particularly helpful at the beginning of their apprenticeships, when they often lack confidence. Their confidence improves rapidly, and their aspirations are raised significantly when tutors explain the career progression routes available to them.
- Apprentices, most of whom have had limited recent experience of education, find the well-planned inductions to their apprenticeships particularly helpful. They very quickly become familiar with the university's high expectations and respond to them well. Apprentices value significantly the 'learning to learn' module, which they take early in their apprenticeships. Through this, they develop quickly their analytical and academic writing skills and make marked improvements to their information and communication technology and research skills, which are essential for success on their programmes.
- Apprentices are encouraged very successfully to take responsibility for their own learning. Tutors help them to develop rapidly their independent learning and critical thinking skills. For example, guided self-study prepares apprentices extremely well for in-course assessment, module examinations and potential progression to degree-level qualifications when they complete their apprenticeships. Apprentices set personalised targets as part of

their learning contracts and evaluate in detail their learning and progress against these throughout their apprenticeships.

- Tutors provide precise and helpful feedback to apprentices that helps them to improve significantly their knowledge and skills. As a result, apprentices' work becomes much more critical through their time on the programme, and the depth of their analysis and reflection improves.
- Apprentices make very good progress in developing their English skills. Tutors encourage apprentices to use accurate terminology and to develop their academic writing skills to a high standard. For example, in lessons about infectious diseases, such as the causes of bacterial meningitis, apprentices confidently discuss and write about technical concepts such as the transmission vectors of pathogens. The vast majority of apprentices improve their skills over time to write persuasive and well-referenced assignments and reflections on clinical and scientific practice.
- Tutors ensure that apprentices make extremely good progress in developing their mathematical skills through well-designed learning activities. For example, nursing and healthcare apprentices learn how to calculate drug dosages so that patients are kept safe, and laboratory science apprentices use calculations to estimate the incidence of disease in different demographic groups.
- Practice mentors are well trained and fully briefed about apprentices' programmes. As a result, they provide high-quality support for apprentices in the workplace. Tutors have very good working relationships with practice mentors and are very knowledgeable about the learning taking place in apprentices' working environments. As a result, on- and off-the-job training dovetail together extremely well, supporting apprentices to make exceptional progress.
- Tutors promote equality and diversity well through the context of apprentices' professional practice. They ensure that apprentices have a very good understanding of the importance of the principles of person-centred care when dealing with diverse groups of clients.
- Tutors meet with apprentices and their employers regularly to review progress against the competencies and behaviours of the apprenticeship standards. However, in a few cases, tutors do not combine the findings of the separate academic and workplace reviews to provide employers with detailed information about all aspects of apprentices' progress. Employers are not always aware of any specific support that they can provide if needed.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

- Apprentices develop particularly good attitudes to their work and studies. They become highly confident and self-assured, and they enjoy their apprenticeships thoroughly. Apprentices appreciate greatly the encouragement and support that they receive from their employers and university tutors that enable them to be successful and develop in their careers. They respond very well to the university's open culture, which actively promotes tolerance and fairness.
- Because of the excellent and extensive guidance that staff provide, apprentices have a detailed understanding of the wide range of learning and personal support that they can access at the university. Apprentices are able to access help and support related to a wide

range of personal development, health and welfare issues.

- Through the highly effective university careers service and the extensive sector-based knowledge of their tutors, apprentices receive very clear and effective advice and guidance which helps them to prepare very well for their next steps in their career and learning. Apprentices have a very good understanding about progression opportunities available to them in the fields of medical care and science. They know in detail what they need to do and achieve to access these opportunities.
- Apprentices consider an exceptionally broad range of topics related to their own and other people's personal development, health and well-being. They do this through the academic qualifications that are a required component of all three apprenticeship standards. Apprentices develop an in-depth knowledge of how to stay physically and medically safe and a good awareness of how to protect themselves when using the internet and social media. They develop highly sensitive interpersonal skills and behaviours when dealing with customers and work colleagues.
- Apprentices gain significantly in their confidence to participate in learning at a higher level than they have experienced previously. Tutors prepare them very well to deal with the rigour and academic challenge of level 5 apprenticeships.
- Apprentices improve significantly their knowledge and understanding of a wide range of safeguarding issues, including the risks of radicalisation and extremism, throughout their apprenticeships. Tutors and apprentices' employers ensure that apprentices receive extensive training in safeguarding, including in the 'Prevent' duty. This training is specifically focused on issues relating to the North East of England.
- Apprentices are conscientious, diligent and keen to participate in learning and work. The attendance of the vast majority is excellent. Personal tutors deal swiftly with any instances of non-attendance. They work closely with employers to provide effective and considerate support for apprentices to help them overcome any difficulties they have in participating, whether personal or educational. Employers are routinely notified of any non-attendance so that they can support and challenge apprentices to attend well.

Outcomes for learners

Outstanding

- Apprentices make excellent and sustained progress in improving their skills, knowledge and behaviours from their starting points through challenging apprenticeship programmes. A very high proportion of apprentices complete their programme successfully within the planned timescale.
- Apprentices work at a very high standard. A high proportion of apprentices achieve distinction or merit grades in the foundation degree component of their apprenticeships. Tutors provide apprentices who are approaching the end-point assessment of their standard-based apprenticeships with good support and guidance to aim for high grades.
- Tutors and practice mentors ensure that apprentices are challenged significantly by, and enjoy, all aspects of their learning, both in the university and at work. Apprentices are curious and keen to learn and, as a result, they make exceptional progress in developing their knowledge and skills. They achieve well and gain the skills and confidence to take on additional responsibilities quickly, such as administering insulin using appropriate policies and procedures, taking blood samples and preparing equipment for theatre.

- Apprentices are prepared exceptionally well to make sustained progress in their careers and into learning at a higher level. All apprentices progress to employment at a higher and more responsible level with their employers when they complete their apprenticeship. A high proportion of apprentices use the academic credits that they gain through their apprenticeship to take qualifications at a higher level with the goal of progressing further in their careers.

Provider details

Unique reference number	133894
Type of provider	Higher education institution
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	282
Pro Vice-Chancellor	Professor Jane Turner
Telephone number	01642 218121
Website	http://www.tees.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-	287	
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the associate dean for the academic school of health and social care, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-evaluations and development plans. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

Malcolm Fraser, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rebecca Clare	Her Majesty's Inspector
Dan Grant	Ofsted Inspector
Lynne Paxton	Ofsted Inspector

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