

ICON Vocational Training

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 52434

Name of lead inspector: Martin Hughes HMI

Last day of inspection: 24 February 2012

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: 61 Newport Road
Caldicot
Newport
Gwent
NP26 4BR

Telephone number: 01291 423655

Information about the provider

1. ICON Vocational Training (ICON TRAINING) is an independent, privately owned vocational training provider established in 1995. Based in Wales, ICON TRAINING developed its programmes initially with funding from Wales and now from the Skills Funding Agency. ICON TRAINING also offers a range of commercial full-cost courses.
2. ICON TRAINING's head office and administrative function are based in Caldicot, Gwent. The chief executives have a managing director who is responsible for the provision and is supported by a quality manager and two business managers who in turn manage the regional managers and the teams of skills tutors.
3. This was the first Ofsted inspection of ICON TRAINING's provision; however, it was previously inspected by ESTYN in 2007 who found it to be good. The company specialises in providing leisure operations and customer service in over 180 sites in England and Wales.
4. All learners are employed in the leisure sector. Learner recruitment is generally managed by their employer but increasingly ICON TRAINING uses the national apprenticeship service to provide applicants for specific posts. Learners complete intermediate and advanced apprenticeships and National Vocational Qualifications in sport, leisure operations and customer services.
5. At the time of the inspection there were 155 sport and leisure operations apprentices and a further 213 advanced leisure management apprentices. Customer service has 190 learners on apprenticeships and a further nine advanced apprentices. Five learners were following business administration programmes which were not included in this inspection. Approximately 40% of learners are women and 9% are from minority ethnic groups. In 2010/11 government funding accounted for around 90% of ICON TRAINING's budget.
6. The ICON TRAINING provides training on behalf of the following providers:
 - Parkwood Leisure (national)
 - Sporta Leisure Trusts (35 centres)
 - Serco Leisure and Environmental Services (national)
 - Virgin Active (national)
 - 30 Local Authority Leisure Facilities across the UK

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	69 learners 172 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 1
Capacity to improve	Grade 1
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	1
Quality of provision	1
Leadership and management	1
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	2
Subject Areas	
Sport, leisure and recreation	1
Customer service	1

Overall effectiveness

7. ICON TRAINING is very well managed and has a strong impact on the leisure industry it serves. It is highly effective at raising learners' aspirations, celebrating their achievements and supporting them to succeed. ICON TRAINING has a strong focus on improving achievement and skills for learners working in a career that is a lifestyle choice in addition to being a job. Learners enjoy their time with ICON TRAINING. Many make excellent progress gaining qualifications and promotion into management roles. The vast majority of learners complete qualifications ahead of planned schedules. Sports learners develop critical skills in analysing performance and as a result are able to provide comprehensive, detailed feedback to their clients to improve their enjoyment of sport. In customer service, learners very effectively manage difficult and angry customers in busy reception areas
8. ICON TRAINING promotes health and well-being exceptionally well. Teaching, learning and assessment are consistently good and practical sessions are outstanding, providing invigorating learning. Tutors plan and manage training and assessment very well to meet learners' work commitments. Skills tutors are highly regarded by employers and learners who recognise and appreciate the

contribution made to the leisure industry by the highly skilled tutors and the comprehensive training provided by ICON TRAINING.

9. ICON TRAINING is extremely well led. It has been particularly successful in increasing progression into apprenticeships of 14 to 16 year olds and young people who are not in employment, education or training and in the numbers of adult learners who have completed a Train to Gain qualification with them. ICON TRAINING has high expectations of staff and learners. The approaches to planning, quality improvement and value for money are exceptionally good. ICON TRAINING provides an inspirational resource for the leisure industry and has transformed many learners' lives. Arrangements for safeguarding are highly effective. Learners and employers have good opportunities to have their say and ICON TRAINING listens and acts upon these views well to improve the provision. The promotion of equality and diversity is good.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are outstanding. Success rates have continued to improve much faster than they have nationally and no significant differences in performance between genders, age groups or ethnic groups occur. ICON TRAINING has been extremely effective in raising the aspirations of its learners, many of whom complete their school education with low levels of attainment.
- Learners thoroughly enjoy their training. Almost all make excellent progress and for many the experience is life changing. Progression from schools programmes run by ICON TRAINING to the advanced apprenticeship is very good, with some learners moving on to higher education.
- Sports learners develop very good coaching, training and performance analysis skills, demonstrating good understanding of the complex aspects of anatomy and physiology. Customer care learners manage difficult and confrontational situations with skill and empathy. Many use ideas generated during training to improve systems and processes in the workplace. All learners increase their self-esteem, and develop more effective communication skills.
- Training, learning and coaching are outstanding. Training sessions are very well planned by highly experienced skills tutors who dynamically lead interesting, invigorating and challenging sessions. Learners benefit from a wide range of learning methods and participate enthusiastically during sessions. Practical sessions are used particularly well to test and extend learners' knowledge and capability.
- ICON TRAINING plays a leading role in developing and establishing training strategies with the UK leisure industry providing apprenticeships and training to some of the largest national employers. Employers highly value the commitment of ICON TRAINING's staff to developing the skills of their employees and work closely with them
- The support provided for learners and employers is outstanding. Welfare, personal and additional learning support, ensures barriers to learning are removed and all learners achieve or exceed their potential. The company offers

effective information, advice and guidance throughout the learners' programmes.

- Learners' reviews are particularly effective in monitoring progress and setting challenging targets. Reviews regularly take place every four weeks and are instrumental in encouraging learners to keep work up-to-date and progress quickly. Skills tutors use reviews very well to reinforce learners' understanding of equality, diversity and safeguarding through comprehensive discussions about current media topics.
- Training takes place in high quality modern leisure facilities, many equipped to train Olympic athletes. Whilst ICON TRAINING has a wide range of teaching resources in the skills library the supporting notes for tutors accompanying presentations often contain insufficient detail to help guide tutors to provide the correct level of theoretical knowledge. As a result some learners are unclear of key learning points
- ICON TRAINING has a particularly clear strategic vision of how it can improve training in the leisure industry. Its business planning is linked closely to the needs of employers. Leaders and operational managers provide excellent direction and support for staff and communicate well.
- Arrangements for safeguarding learners are highly effective. The company maintains a strong culture of safety awareness. Learners feel safe and behave in a safety-conscious manner; they know how to report concerns and arrangements for safeguarding are clear. Well-planned and facilitated online training ensures all staff are kept up-to-date with developments and changes to safeguarding.
- ICON TRAINING promotes equality and diversity well. A culture of mutual respect is evident between employers, skills tutors, learners and their customers. Regular group discussions in taught sessions and during reviews very effectively challenge learners' perceptions, beliefs and behaviours and inappropriate behaviour by learners is challenged rigorously.
- Quality improvement arrangements are outstanding. Self-assessment and action planning are rigorous and effective in improving learning and outcomes for learners. ICON TRAINING is very good at analysing their own performance and identifying areas to improve. Standardisation meetings are run effectively and ensure high standards are maintained. Observations of teaching and learning provide very good support for tutors; however, insufficient detail is recorded on the impact of the learners experience on their learning

What does ICON TRAINING need to do to improve further?

- Ensure supporting notes to tutors correctly identify the level of knowledge learners require to cover key learning points
- Ensure those recording the observations of teaching and learning makes full use of qualitative information and identify areas for improvement, in particular in learning.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the good standards of training
 - high quality training provided by well-qualified staff
 - the excellent support
 - the helpful and friendly approach of the training staff
 - progression to higher qualifications and promotion in employment
 - monthly reviews and target-setting which promote completion
 - gains in confidence and knowing how to handle difficult customers
 - gaining extra qualifications that enrich their curriculum vitae
 - working at their own pace.
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- **What learners would like to see improved:**
 - the piloted workbooks to make them less repetitive
 - the amount of practical activities in lessons.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- approachable assessors
- help from ICON TRAINING to recruit new staff through the national apprenticeship service
- excellent training and development for their staff
- the information learners bring back to help make their work better
- good relationships between the learners and their tutors
- good support for learners and employers
- helpful feedback
- regular meetings with staff and the effective communication
- responsive and flexible approach to meet employers' needs
- good results
- the very strong working relationship and partnership with ICON TRAINING.

What employers would like to see improved:

- the range of courses to give learners a wider choice of progression opportunities.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 1

10. ICON TRAINING's capacity to make and sustain improvement is outstanding. ICON TRAINING was graded good by Estyn in 2007. Since then it has taken determined, effective, and sometimes imaginative action to bring about sustained improvements in the quality of the provision and to enhance the learning experiences of everyone they train. Some areas in which Estyn made recommendations to improve have now become strengths. Success rates across all programmes are high and they are continuing to improve. Teaching and learning are now outstanding.
11. ICON TRAINING has a strong and relentless ambition to provide the very best training for its learners, employers and the leisure industry. When underperformance is identified, managers take quick, responsive actions to secure improvement. ICON TRAINING's self-assessment report is realistic, self-critical and accurate with a strong focus on continuous improvement. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge of the sector and are highly effective in meeting the needs of the leisure industry and the employers with whom they work. All staff are effectively involved in quality improvement. Close attention is paid to the regular feedback from employers and learners which is used to very good effect to monitor and bring about further improvement. This results in rapid and significant improvements for both learners and employers, which they value highly. Strategic business planning and performance review, which bring together self-assessment and business development are strong and innovative features of this provision. Leaders and managers set and achieve challenging and ambitious targets.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 1

12. Success rates are high and are well above the national averages. All learners achieve qualifications with no significant differences in achievement between groups. Apprenticeship success in 2010/11 was very good at 91%. Success rates in the final year of Train to Gain provision were also high at 93%. In 2011/12 success rates remain high. Those who receive extra support often achieve better than their peers
13. ICON TRAINING has been particularly effective in raising the aspirations of learners and supporting them in gaining skills in occupations where prior high academic standards have not always been achieved. All learners successfully complete their training, many well before the planned end date. All recognise the importance of the skills they develop and the value of the qualifications they achieve in enhancing their lives, employment prospects and promoting health and well-being for themselves and others.
14. Learners enjoy their experiences, including taught and practical sessions. They recognise the importance of the sport and customer care skills they develop. In

the gymnasium learners developed very good coaching skills. Many were able to break down complex skills into component sections and provide their customers with effective, accurate performance analysis. Their knowledge of anatomy and physiology was very good. Customer service learners understood the importance of empathising with customers and working with them to reach a solution when problems arose.

15. Learners feel safe. Their training focuses on ensuring the workplace provides a safe working environment. Learners adopt safe working practices. All learners are aware of the potential consequences of their actions, in customer service as the first point of contact with the public, and in sports to ensure all activity is managed safely.

The quality of provision

Grade 1

16. Teaching and learning is highly effective with lively and invigorating sessions. Some sessions are inspirational, developing an individual's personal competence whilst also enhancing their coaching and performance analysis skills to the highest of standards. Practical demonstrations and question and answer techniques are used to great effect to ensure all learners participate and to confirm learning. Practical sessions are safe and well managed with demanding exercises that challenge all learners. Training takes place in well-resourced employers' premises, specifically established to provide sport and recreation activities.
17. Learning is very well managed, exciting and challenging in both group and individual sessions. Skills tutors are dynamic, highly experienced and provide well-planned, motivating, enthusiastic yet demanding sessions. Learners' rights, responsibilities and behaviours are challenged frequently in both taught sessions and during performance reviews for example through demanding discussions stimulated by newspaper articles. The reinforcement and the manner in which subject knowledge is contextualised extend learners' understanding of equality and diversity very well. Tutors provide very good role models for learners and are highly vocationally qualified and experienced however; most only have basic qualifications in preparing to teach.
18. Assessments are frequent and purposeful in enabling learners to make rapid progress. Verbal feedback and performance analysis during practical sessions is immediate and focuses very effectively on individual improvement, improving knowledge and changing behaviours. Learners progress well and are fully involved in evaluating and reflecting on their development however; written feedback is less comprehensive and grammatical and spelling errors are regularly missed and left uncorrected.
19. Training takes place in well resourced and equipped employer facilities with all the features of modern health and leisure centres and include 50metre

swimming pools, cardiovascular and modular weight training equipment, rehabilitation suites and extensive sports halls. In many instances learners work and train alongside Olympic athletes' in facilities that will be used for the Olympic Games. Learning is supported by a wide range of teaching resources in the ICON TRAINING skills library and tutors use the library extensively. However; the supporting notes for tutors accompanying presentations often contain insufficient detail to help guide tutors to provide the correct level of theoretical knowledge. In these instances tutors provide too much detail often at too high a level for the learners they are instructing and as a result some learners become confused.

20. The provision and the style in which it is offered comprehensively meet the needs of both learners and their employers. The company works very closely with some of the largest leisure providers in the UK to offer apprenticeships and additional training and places a high value on engaging with employers, learners and its own staff to support and promote improvement. Comprehensive and detailed reports on learners' progress are provided monthly to employers who highly value the careful monitoring and feedback on their individual learners' progress. ICON TRAINING makes good use of regular reports from employers and feedback from learners to improve the provision.
21. Partnerships with employers are particularly strong. Employers praised eloquently the benefits of the partnership with ICON TRAINING especially the effective use of the national apprenticeship vacancy matching service to recruit and help employers select new staff. ICON TRAINING has very good links with schools and with regional and national sports providers which effectively develop and inform improvements to training and learning within the leisure industry.
22. Meticulous planning of actions for each individual learner and their progress is a key component of measures taken to ensure learners stay on-track with their qualification. Initial advice guidance and assessment is thorough and tutors use the findings well in conjunction with learners' achievements, experience and job-role to set appropriate targets. Early, rapid identification of learning or personal support needs ensures skills tutors know what is required and to act upon this. They understand how to support their learners and use information well to plan and tailor sessions to meet their needs.

Leadership and management

Grade 1

23. Leaders and managers provide very strong and highly effective leadership. They place improving learners' skills and learning in the leisure industry at the heart of their work. The drive to achieve excellence for all is relentless. Staff share this ambition and ensure their learners follow the good examples set. The

company purposefully communicates the strategic direction to all staff and supports them well to achieve its aims and objectives.

24. A thorough, robust and innovative strategic planning and performance review process supports ICON TRAINING's work. The clear strategic vision is closely linked to business planning and operational management. Leaders and managers set demanding targets and high expectations for staff who know they are accountable and what is expected of them. The company provides excellent personal development opportunities and regular high quality in-house training.
25. Arrangements for safeguarding learners are highly effective and an exceptionally strong culture of safety and ensuring learners are safe are evident through all of ICON TRAINING's work. Safeguarding has a high priority, is promoted very well and rigorously reinforced. The learning environments are safe and learners have a highly developed understanding of how to stay safe, including the principles of e-safety. Safe working practice is stringently followed during activities.
26. Equality of opportunity is promoted very well. ICON TRAINING is an inclusive learning community that works very well with employers to widen participation and to engage learners in areas of high deprivation and from under represented minority ethnic groups. Provision is carefully tailored to employers' and learners' needs and ensures fair access to courses. A very strong staff induction with high quality learning materials is also reflected in the detailed learner inductions. Learners have a good knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity which is reinforced particularly effectively in taught sessions and regular, excellent discussions during progress reviews.
27. Arrangements for quality improvement are excellent. The rigorous monitoring of the quality improvement plan is integral to reviewing performance, business planning and to the rapid improvement of underperformance. Use of data to measure learners' progress, identify slow progress and too effectively widen participation and success is good. No significant gaps in retention or achievement exist between different learner groups. Standardisation of performance across the wide geographic spread of the provision is very effective. Whilst observation of training and learning are regular the insufficient focus on qualitative detail to improve learning hinders improvement.
28. The self-assessment process is thorough, rigorous and inclusive. The report is realistic and self-critical with a strong focus on continuous improvement. Managers make excellent use of feedback from learners, employers and staff to identify areas for improvement and responses to concerns is rapid and effective.

Subject areas

Sport, leisure and recreation

Grade 1

Context

29. ICON TRAINING has 572 learners enrolled on sport and leisure operations programmes. All learners are employed and follow intermediate or advanced apprenticeship programmes in facilities around the country. A team of 15 full time skills tutors provide training, assessment and review at the learners' place of employment. The skills tutors also provide literacy, numeracy and key skills tuition.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are outstanding and significantly above national averages. Almost all learners complete qualifications within the planned time. Progress is outstanding. Many learners begin their apprenticeships with low levels of prior attainment and go on to achieve management qualifications, gain promotion at work or go on to higher education.
- Learners enjoy their learning, developing good technical and performance analysis skills related to setting up equipment and leading sport and recreation training sessions. The strong culture of improvement portrayed by ICON TRAINING's staff inspires learning and promotes ambition. Learners value the skills and qualifications they gain improving their self-esteem and developing self-confidence.
- The comprehensive promotion and understanding of occupational health, safety and well-being ensures that learners feel very safe. Skills tutors set a good example. Activities are conducted safely. Learners make informed choices, adopt healthy lifestyles and understand the importance of rehydrating and eating appropriate foods following exercise and training sessions. Learners use specialist equipment safely.
- Training, coaching and learning are outstanding especially in practical sessions. Dynamic, inspirational, highly experienced skills tutors lead well-planned sessions. Learners critically review and evaluate activities developing good coaching and performance analysis skills. Taught sessions engage and challenge learners, however, some tutors lack the skills and expertise they would gain from holding higher level teaching qualifications especially when working with learners at an advanced level.
- Assessment tasks are timely, well planned, thorough and flexible, capturing naturally occurring evidence in the workplace. This enables learners to develop their skills well and progress rapidly through the qualification.
- Initial advice and guidance engages learners in stimulating, challenging activities to help them understand the apprentice framework. Prospective and current learners receive very good information about the qualifications they

plan to study. ICON TRAINING makes particularly good of road-shows for new employers and learners. Recruitment events benefit from close collaboration with employers.

- Care, guidance and support for learners are excellent. Skills tutors tailor training and reviews to meet individual learning or support needs. The results of initial assessments at induction are used well to plan learning and support for the individual needs of learners. Skills tutors work hard to provide high levels of well-planned support that promotes ambition.
- The high quality of resources has a beneficial impact on the development of learners' skills and knowledge enabling them to develop their training techniques on a wide range of high quality equipment. All training takes place on employers' premises and learners have access to high specification fitness suites, studios and swimming pools. Whilst ICON TRAINING has a wide range of teaching resources in the tutor's library the supporting notes for tutors accompanying presentations often contain insufficient detail to guide tutors in providing the correct level of theoretical knowledge. As a result, some learners are provided with too much detail that is considerably more than the course requirements.
- Partnerships with employers are good. Several employers use ICON TRAINING to recruit and select new employees for them through the national apprenticeship vacancy service. Employers recognise the expertise of ICON TRAININGs' staff and the importance of flexible learning and assessment programmes that benefit learners and their business. ICON TRAINING has very good links with schools and with regional and national sports providers which they develop effectively to inform improvements to training and learning.
- Outstanding leadership and management focus well on learners' success and set ambitious and realistic targets. Changes to regional structures have strengthened and improved the management of sport and roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are now more clearly defined. Communications are good at all levels. Staff appraisals promote continuous professional development and best practice is shared effectively.
- Procedures to safeguard learners are well established and work well. Skills tutors are effective role models in establishing good, safe working practices. They work productively with employers to promote safeguarding and to carry out comprehensive workplace risk assessments. Learners have a good understanding of safeguarding and are fully aware of their obligations and how to be safe when working with their clients.
- Equality and diversity are incorporated very well in training sessions and in individual performance reviews. Newspapers are used very effectively during training sessions. Learners identify interesting articles, summarise them and discuss equality, diversity or behavioural concerns each article raises. Learners understand equality and diversity and are particularly aware of ensuring the people who use their centres have equality of access to all appropriate resources.

- The self-assessment is accurate and effectively identifies strengths and improvement needed. The quality improvement plan is shared and used effectively to lead to improvements in outcomes for learners. Very productive engagement with learners and employers secures the impact of change on learners. Inspectors agree with the overall grades awarded and found the report to be informative and clear.

What does ICON TRAINING need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the supporting notes for tutors accompanying presentations contain sufficient detail and guidance to enable tutors to correctly identify the level of theoretical knowledge learners require to cover key learning points and apply them to their studies?
- Encourage more staff, especially those working with advanced students, to gain higher level teaching qualifications to further improve their understanding of how learners learn in less practical sessions

Customer service

Grade 1

Context

30. ICON TRAINING has 199 learners enrolled on customer service courses. All learners are employed in sport and leisure organisations and follow apprenticeship programmes at intermediate level offered at the employers' premises. A team of eight full-time skills tutors provide all aspects of training, assessment and review for learners at their place of employment. The team also provides literacy and numeracy support.

Key findings

- Success rates for apprenticeships are outstanding. Rates have been over 90% for the past three years and rose to 98% in 2010/11. Success rates for Train to Gain in 2010/11 were very high. Participation and retention are good. Learners' work is very good and portfolios contain a diverse range of well-presented evidence. Learners' written work is good, but errors in spelling and grammar are not always corrected.
- Learners enjoy their learning and make good progress. They think carefully about their work and the impact of their actions in the leisure industry. Most increase their self-esteem, developing stronger communication skills and gain new work-related skills. They deal with difficult customers and incidents particularly well and assume additional responsibilities as their confidence grows. Many progress to higher level sport or customer service qualifications and gain promotion at work.
- Learners display particularly mature and well-considered attitudes to safeguarding, equality and diversity, and health and safety. Leisure centres have stringent health and safety procedures, which learners follow meticulously when dealing with any workplace incidents. Female learners carry personal alarms, and all learners take appropriate measures to ensure personal, data and e-safety protection.
- Learners actively participate in a range of fundraising initiatives that include Children in Need, Fun runs, health walks, Pink Ribbon day, Macmillan coffee mornings, Marie Curie events, and swimathons. They often organise these events in the centres in which they work. Learners positively promote health and well-being amongst their customers and in the workplace.
- Teaching, training and learning are always very good and practical sessions are outstanding with excellent use of short scenarios to emphasis critical learning points. Dynamic, experienced skills tutors plan lessons very well, skilfully facilitating discussions and making good use of probing questions to check knowledge. Tutors challenge learners who participate enthusiastically, eagerly sharing their experiences and taking new ideas back to the workplace. Learning

resources are good and include well-designed workbooks, professionally produced presentations and online learning packages.

- Progress reviews are thorough and regular. Skills tutors negotiate realistic, viable yet challenging learning and assessment goals with learners. They monitor learners' progress well and quickly identify underperformance. Employers do not always attend learners' reviews but ICON TRAINING provides progress reports after each visit.
- Support and guidance are very good. Initial assessments are thorough and are used effectively to identify needs for welfare and learning support. Employers are fully involved and ensure support is continued when ICON TRAINING's tutors are not on site. Employers and skills tutors collaborate very well to provide extra support for learners at risk. Learners value the support they receive, particularly in individual coaching sessions.
- Partnership working with the leisure industry is very good. Skills tutors are highly regarded by employers who accept them as part of their team. Targeted training enhances learners' and employers' capabilities. Excellent coordination of training greatly increases and consolidates the learners' skills. Resources available on employers' sites are good and in some cases outstanding, with some training conducted in Olympic standard facilities.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. Staff focus strongly on learners' achievements, monitoring and evaluating performance carefully. Communications and the highly effective regional management structure are strong features of the provision. Staff development is very good, but staff qualifications in teaching, learning and support are not all at a sufficiently advanced level to fully support the theory learning at advanced level.
- Learners and staff have a good understanding of safeguarding. Employers carry out thorough and regular risk assessments of every workplace. Safeguarding is incorporated well into training and the company provides regular, effective updates and challenges for staff and learners. The appointment of a new, member of staff who has extensive experience in the leisure industry has further strengthened safeguarding.
- Equality and diversity are very well integrated into training sessions. Learners have detailed discussions with tutors about recent events identified in newspapers and the media. A strong culture of positive mutual respect established by tutors is shared by the learners when they are working with their customers around the centres and at the reception desk.
- Internal verification is robust. Risk banding of tutors determines the level of monitoring and support they receive. Skills tutors regularly share good practice at team and standardisation meetings. All staff contributed to the self-assessment process and the well-presented quality improvement plan
- The self-assessment report is accurate and identifies the strengths and areas for improvement. Learners and employers contribute to self-assessment and take part in reviewing quality improvement actions. Inspectors agree with the overall grades awarded and found the report to be informative and clear.

What does ICON TRAINING need to do to improve further?

- Encourage more customer service staff, especially those working with advanced level learners, to gain higher level teaching and training qualifications to further improve their understanding of learning and how learning takes place.

Information about the inspection

31. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's managing director as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding body, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement.
32. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of learners and employers. They also looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed for the provider. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
ICON TRAINING

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners				
Full-time learners	572	56	226	290
Part-time learners				
Overall effectiveness	1	1	1	1
Capacity to improve	1			
Outcomes for learners	1	1	1	1
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	1			
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	1			
How well do learners progress?	1			
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	1			
How safe do learners feel?	1			
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	1			
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2			
Quality of provision	1			
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	1			
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	1			
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2			
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	1			
Leadership and management	1			
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	1			
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	-			
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	1			
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2			
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2			
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	1			
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	1			

*where applicable to the type of provision

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