

Nuneaton Training Centre Ltd

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 53693

Name of lead inspector: Phil Romain HMI

Last day of inspection: 22 January 2010

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Information about the provider

1. Nuneaton Training Centre Ltd (NTC) is a not-for-profit limited company incorporated in October 1986. It has a board of directors, all of whom are volunteers. NTC employs 24 staff and provides training in health, public services and care; preparation for life and work; engineering and manufacturing technologies; retail and commercial enterprise; business, administration and law. The inspection did not cover the last three subjects.
2. NTC has a contract with Coventry and Warwickshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for apprenticeships. It is part of a consortium, led by North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, offering Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes and has contracts with Leicester College, Stratford-upon-Avon College and Ufi to provide Train to Gain programmes. It also has a contract with the NHS to train its staff and a small number of commercial contracts. Publically funded work accounts for 93% of NTC's income. Some 76% of learners are women, 11% are from minority ethnic groups and 18% have disclosed a disability.
3. The unemployment rate in Nuneaton and Bedworth is 7.4% compared to 9.5% in the West Midlands and 6.9% nationally. The proportion of the population from minority ethnic groups is 6.5% in Nuneaton and Bedworth compared to 8.6% for the West Midlands and 7.9% nationally.
4. NTC provides training on behalf of the following providers:
 - North Warwick and Hinckley College
 - Stratford-upon-Avon College
 - Leicester College
 - Ufi

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Provision for young learners: Foundation learning, including Entry to Employment	127 learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	196 learners 159 apprentices

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Grade 3
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	3
Subject Areas	
Health public services and care	2
Preparation for life and work	3

Overall effectiveness

5. Overall effectiveness is good. Apprentices and adult learners achieve good results and are very positive about their experiences. Young people on foundation learning achieve well and a satisfactory proportion progress into work or further training. All learners say they feel safe and they apply safe working practices. NTC uses well the views of learners and employers to improve provision.
6. Learners like the training they receive and find the staff very helpful and supportive. They attend and behave well. Learners' self-confidence and social skills are particularly well developed. The quality of training is good for most learners and satisfactory for others. Staff use their experience well to develop learners' skills and knowledge and provide very good advice, guidance and support.
7. Overall, the training is well organised and managed. NTC has recently made improvements to its overall management and these changes are beginning to have a positive impact. The satisfactory quality arrangements are improving.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Overall and timely success rates for apprentices are increasing and high. Success rates for Train to Gain learners have declined slightly but they remain high. Progression for E2E learners into employment or further training is satisfactory and their achievement of qualifications is good.
- Learners in health public services and care make good progress within their programmes and onto higher-level courses. Most learners progress from intermediate to advanced qualifications, including a high proportion progressing to higher education and nursing courses, and gaining promotion with their employer.
- The standard of most learners' work is good. Learners in health public services and care produce work to a high standard. E2E learners' social skills are particularly well developed. Other aspects of learners' work, including their written work, are satisfactory.
- Learners feel safe and apply safe working practices well. Checks on safety arrangements in the workplace are thorough, although procedures to safeguard some learners in work placements are insufficiently robust. Learners feel safe in the training centre and with their employers. They know how to raise concerns on safety.
- Teaching and learning are good. Health, public service and care learners receive exceptionally good individual training, building their confidence, skills and knowledge. Teaching and learning for E2E learners are satisfactory with a few good aspects. Classroom management is very effective. E2E staff provide good support that effectively helps learners to overcome complex barriers to work and further training.
- Programmes meet the needs of learners and employers well. Health, public service and care programmes are well organised to meet the needs of learners and employers. The content and design of the E2E programme provides an appropriate range of activities to develop social and employment skills. A small minority of E2E learners wait too long for a work placement and their employers are insufficiently involved in the programme.
- Targets for many learners are not sufficiently challenging or clear. Targets set for health, public service and care learners for their key skills and personal development are not sufficiently clear to help them to progress. Targets for E2E learners are in a minority of instances too demanding, resulting in missed milestones or inappropriate challenge.
- NTC has a very clear and well-considered strategic plan. Managers set clear strategic and business targets which reflect local and national priorities. The business plan has clear targets for improvement. The monitoring of team targets is close but a minority lack challenge. The use of data identifies priorities and monitor performance well.
- Staff in health, public service and care make very effective use of their extensive professional development to support learners. The corporate training

plan builds effectively on business and individual staff needs. Staff carry out a wide range of relevant training to support learners further.

- Arrangements for safeguarding learners are satisfactory. Safeguarding has recently received a high priority. Appropriate Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks for staff and policies for this area are in place. Safeguarding training for staff is appropriate. However, these arrangements do not sufficiently extend to learners on work placements.
- Promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity are satisfactory. Regular updating of policies and procedures occurs, although a minority are out of date. Staff, well trained in equality and diversity, use their knowledge effectively during teaching. The use of data identifies well the performance of different groups. The performance of these groups is similar.
- Quality improvement arrangements are satisfactory. A culture of improvement is developing within the organisation and many components of a quality system are in place. However, not all quality systems provide clear actions to further develop and improve the provision. A minority of aspects of quality improvement are underdeveloped.
- NTC provides satisfactory value for money. Staff and learners use an appropriate range of resources. Training rooms are well equipped and employers provide suitable learning opportunities. However, the use of the wide variety of resources for E2E is not sufficiently effective to provide varied and interesting activities. The use of technology is insufficient to support health, public service and care learners.

What does NTC need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of E2E learners progressing into employment or further training by setting them clearer and more appropriate targets and arranging work placements earlier.
- Further develop partnerships with employers so they can contribute to all aspects of the learners' programme by providing work placements for E2E learners and NTC staff keeping employers informed.
- Continue to improve quality improvement systems by better coordinating quality assurance activities and setting more developmental challenges for staff.
- Improve the procedure for safeguarding learners in work placements by providing employers with more information and implementing more rigorous monitoring of employers' practice and learners' understanding.
- Improve the experience of learners by making better use of electronic systems to record learners' progress and to communicate with learners and employers.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- being so well supported by staff

- that staff are easily accessible, even out of normal working hours
- good teaching and training
- support and help for those with dyslexia.

What learners would like to see improved:

- less writing and classroom based activities on the E2E programme
- the opportunity to work with others who have already completed an NVQ.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the highly professional service provided by NTC
- the good results achieved
- a single contact point and a strong partnership with NTC
- the highly flexible approach to training and assessment which meets the needs of the business.

What employers would like to see improved:

- to push a minority of learners harder as staff are sometime too sympathetic with them
- information provided about learning programmes and learners' individual needs.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

8. NTC has satisfactory capacity to make and sustain improvements. Much has improved since the previous inspection. However, the implementation of a few areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection has not fully taken place. In particular, NTC has been slow to improve target setting for a minority of learners and to develop further its quality improvement systems.
9. Provision in health, public services and care has improved in all aspects and it is now good. NTC has maintained standards in business, administration and law, judged good at the previous inspection, with continued high outcomes for learners and improvements in resources. Provision for E2E learners remains satisfactory.
10. Managers use data well to measure performance and identify priorities. They are making appropriate progress in implementing the clear and well considered action plan for improvement.
11. Managers use self-assessment effectively as a quality improvement tool. The most recent report is broadly accurate although it overstates the progress made in some areas. Quality improvement systems remain underdeveloped.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

12. Outcomes for learners are good. Attainment of learning goals is good and learners enjoy taking part in their training. No significant differences exist in the attainment levels of different groups of learners on similar programmes. Most learners' work is of a good standard. Learners in health, public services and care produce work to a high standard. E2E learners' social skills are particularly well developed. Other aspects of learners' work, including their written work, are satisfactory. Attendance for training sessions at the training centre is good.
13. Learners' social skills are particularly well developed. Their self-confidence and personal responsibility are well developed and they demonstrate good knowledge of topics such as the problems from crime, nutrition and budgeting. Tutor support is effective in helping learners overcome their often complex barriers to work and further training. Most learners progress well.
14. The overall success rate for 2008/09 for apprentices was high at 86%, and has increased since the last inspection. A good 68% of learners completed their programmes within the planned time. Overall, the success rate for Train to Gain for 2008/09 is high at 87% and most learners achieve within the planned time.
15. The proportion of E2E learners progressing to employment or further training in 2008/09 was satisfactory but slightly lower than in 2007/08. Their qualification

success rate was high. Progression to further training is good in health, public service and care.

16. Learners feel safe and apply safe working practices well. Checks are thorough on safety arrangements in the workplace, although procedures to safeguard a minority of learners in work placements are insufficiently robust. Learners feel safe in the training centre and at work and know how to raise concerns.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

17. The quality of training is good and supports learning well. Training is well planned and highly responsive to the needs of learners and employers. Health, public service and care learners receive exceptionally good individual training, building very effectively their confidence, skills and knowledge. Teaching and learning for E2E learners is satisfactory overall with some good aspects. Tutors manage their classes very well promoting high standards of behaviour and attendance. Learners respond positively to this and demonstrate high levels of confidence and high aspirations. E2E staff provide good support that effectively helps learners to overcome complex barriers to work and further training.
18. Targets for a minority of learners are not sufficiently challenging or clear. Targets set for health, public service and care learners for their key skills and personal development are not sufficiently clear to help them to progress. Targets for E2E learners are, in a minority of instances too demanding, resulting in missed milestones or inappropriate challenge. Some staff however set appropriately challenging and clear targets and their learners find these helpful to plan their work and progress with their qualification.
19. Assessment of learners is effective and well managed. The assessment of all learners' suitability at the beginning of their programmes is appropriate. Frequent and timely assessments for qualifications ensure staff are fully aware of learners' progress. Staff have implemented successfully an electronic portfolio for learners on business administration and law courses. All learners have the opportunity to develop their literacy, numeracy and wider key skills, which they do effectively. Success in literacy tests is particularly high.
20. Overall, programmes meet the needs of learners and employers well. Health, public service and care programmes are well organised to meet the needs of learners and employers. Learners follow well-planned and coherent progression routes. Flexible training and assessment meets employers' needs well. Foundation learning programmes provide good opportunities for disadvantaged young people to engage in training and to progress to employment or further training. NTC provides appropriate opportunities for E2E learners to experience work but some wait too long for a work placement and their employers are insufficiently involved in the programme.
21. NTC's partnership working is good. It works well with other local providers to meet local and national training priorities. NTC actively supports local strategic

partnerships for the implementation of 14 to 19 reforms and for supporting those young people not in education, employment or training. It is part of the local E2E consortium, and provides local Train to Gain programmes on behalf of two other colleges. NTC operates an effective forum for health, public service and care employers, which is highly valued. It has links with an appropriate range of local employers willing to provide work placements for E2E learners, which NTC has maintained through the difficult economic climate.

22. Care, guidance and support for learners are good. Learners receive very effective advice and guidance from well-qualified staff helping them to make well-informed choices about their careers and qualifications. Learners receive good information about training opportunities before they start and throughout their programmes. Induction is satisfactory and effectively prepares learners for their programmes. Learners with additional support needs receive appropriate support, which they value highly.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

23. The new chief executive provides good leadership and has introduced a much stronger focus on achieving outcomes for learners. She sets clear strategic and business targets which reflect local and national priorities well. The latest business plan has clear targets for improvement. Staff are well aware of their targets and those for their team but a minority lack challenge. Managers closely monitor team targets through regular and detailed meetings with staff. Managers have updated most policies and procedures but it is too early to judge their impact. Managers use data well to identify priorities and monitor performance. Board members provide appropriate direction and oversight of NTC's performance.
24. Staff in health, public service and care make very effective use of their extensive professional development to support learners. The corporate training plan builds effectively on business and individual staff needs and all staff are taking a wide range of relevant training to help further assist learners. Staff are qualified teachers or taking appropriate training and qualifications. NTC is effectively implementing the workforce reforms for teachers in the lifelong learning sector.
25. The protection and the safeguarding of learners are adequate. Managers have recently given safeguarding and protecting learners a high priority and have introduced new policies supported by appropriate procedures. All staff are subject to CRB checks and they have received training on the protection of children and vulnerable adults. The application of health and safety policies and procedures is rigorous. Learners are aware that they can contact staff if they feel unsafe in any way, although the follow up to reinforce this for a minority of learners on work placements does not always have sufficient rigor. Information on cyber bullying is available on NTC's web site but coverage in the curriculum for all learners is insufficient.

26. Promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity are satisfactory. Managers are currently updating policies and procedures for dealing with discrimination or harassment; a few of these are out of date. Staff are well trained in equality and diversity. They use their knowledge effectively to promote equality and diversity in their teaching. Staff make good use of opportunities during lessons to reinforce equality and diversity and to develop further learners' understanding. However, staff have not incorporated equality and diversity across the whole curriculum. Training rooms and facilities are readily accessible for learners with restricted mobility. Those with additional learning needs receive satisfactory support. Managers use data well to measure the performance of different groups of learners. Performance is similar between the different groups. Participation in learning by groups from minority ethnic heritages reflects numbers in the wider community. Staff provide particularly good support for male learners in the predominantly female environment of care homes. External promotion and publicity materials cover diversity well. The application of arrangements to monitor and reinforce equality and diversity in work placements are not always rigorous and the records of discussions with learners and employers on this area are too sparse.
27. NTC has satisfactory arrangements to seek the views of learners and employers. Arrangements are systematic and use a variety of methods including newly introduced learner forums. Managers use the feedback appropriately to inform improvements to provision.
28. Quality improvement arrangements are satisfactory. A culture of improvement is developing within the organisation and most components of a quality system are in place. The verification of assessment is robust and standardisation meetings share good practice well. Managers routinely observe teaching, learning and assessment. These processes have eradicated poor performance but do not provide sufficient direction to staff to make further improvements. A minority of quality improvement arrangements is underdeveloped.
29. Improvement plans have clear and measurable targets. The self-assessment process is fully inclusive of staff, learners' and employers' views. The self-assessment report is a broadly accurate reflection of the standard of provision but over emphasises a minority of the improvements. The board are appropriately involved in assessing the organisation's performance but do not self-assess their own performance.
30. NTC provides satisfactory value for money. Staff and learners use an appropriate range of resources to support learning. Training rooms are well equipped and employers provide suitable learning opportunities. High overall and timely success rates and the good progression of some learners provide good value. However, use of the wide variety of resources for E2E is insufficient to provide varied and interesting activities and staff do not use technology sufficiently to support health, public service and care learners.

Subject areas

Health public service and care

Grade 2

Context

31. Currently 114 learners are working towards level 2 and level 3 qualifications in health, public service and care. Sixty-six are on apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships and 48 are on Train to Gain programmes. All learners are employed, mostly in small residential care and nursing homes. Training takes place primarily in the workplace. Assessors regularly visit learners at work to provide training and assessment and to review their progress.

Key findings

- Success rates are good. In 2008/09, the overall success rate for apprentices was high and increasing at 86%. A high 71% of learners completed their programme within the agreed time. The overall success rate in 2008/09 for Train to Gain was 87%, a decline from 93% in 2007/08.
- Progression to further training is good. Many learners who previously had no formal qualifications have significantly improved their employability skills. Learners progress well within their programmes and to higher level qualifications. Most gain promotion with their employer and take on significant responsibility. Learners understand well the clear progression pathways.
- Learners demonstrate high standards of work. They are proud of the skills they acquire and work hard to produce a good standard of work. Their portfolios are well organised and to a high standard.
- Learners feel safe and apply safe working practices well. They understand the risks in the environments they work in and make good use of workplace policies and procedures.
- Teaching and learning are good. Exceptionally good individual training effectively builds the confidence of those learners with a previously poor experience of education. Staff effectively monitor and manage individual learners' progress to ensure they achieve on time. However, learners' individual targets for key skills and personal development are insufficiently specific and lack challenge. Assessment is accurate, fair and frequent.
- Programmes meet the needs of learners and employers well. Employers highly value the well-organised and very responsive training. NTC staff work closely with employers and learners to match training and qualifications to their needs. Training and assessment take place at times and places that best suit the needs of learners and employers.
- Staff use resources appropriately to support learning. Training rooms are of a good standard and staff are well qualified. Professional updating for staff is excellent. Learning resources to support a minority of the qualifications is insufficient. Staff do not make adequate use of technology to support learners.

- Care, guidance, and support are outstanding. Learners receive very effective advice and guidance from well-qualified staff helping them to make well-informed choices about their careers and qualifications. Learners receive good information about training opportunities before they start and throughout their programmes. Induction effectively prepares learners for their training. Learners with additional support needs receive appropriate support.
- Management of the programmes is good. Teamwork is effective and staff are highly responsive to learners and employers. Staff have a clear understanding of the organisation's aims and their team targets. Staff effectively share good practice and take part in extensive professional development activities to enhance further their own knowledge and skills.
- Arrangements for the safeguarding of learners are satisfactory. Staff have received appropriate training and are CRB checked. A thorough check of employers' health and safety arrangements takes place. Learners working with children and vulnerable adults have been CRB checked and understand the reason for its importance. The monitoring of employers' safeguarding arrangements is satisfactory.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The monitoring of employers' practices is effective and learners receive appropriate training. Support for learners with additional learning needs is good. Support for male learners in this sector, which has a high proportion of female employees, is good. However, staff have not sufficiently incorporated the promotion of equality and understanding of diversity across the whole curriculum.

What does NTC need to do to improve further?

- Improve learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity by building this into the whole curriculum.
- Raise further standards of training and assessment by making better use of electronic systems to improve the recording of progress and communications with learners and employers, and by the use of a greater variety of assessment methods.
- Continue to increase timely and overall success rates by setting clear, challenging and measurable targets for key skills and learners' personal development at progress reviews.

Preparation for life and work

Grade 3

Context

32. Currently 17 learners are following the E2E programme and nine are following the OnTrack programme, a pre E2E course for young people facing the highest levels of disadvantage. Learners attend for 16 hours each week and longer when they have a work placement. Currently six learners have work placements and they are working towards an appropriate NVQ at level 1. Work placements are available in a range of occupations including retail outlets and manufacturing.

Key findings

- Progression rates are satisfactory. Qualification achievement rates are high. In 2008/09, 54% of learners progressed into employment or further training, slightly lower than the 56% in 2007/08. Success rates on Skills for Life programmes are very high for literacy, at 91%, and at a satisfactory level for numeracy, at 75%. Achievement rates for NVQs at level 1 and short courses are high.
- Learners' social skills are particularly well developed. Learners develop a good knowledge on topics such as concerns around crime, nutrition and budgeting. They increase their confidence and personal responsibility. Tutors support learners well to overcome their often complex barriers to work and further training.
- Learners feel safe in the training centre and know how to raise issues that concern them. NTC thoroughly checks the health and safety arrangements in workplaces but reinforcement of learners' knowledge during routine visits is insufficient. The application of procedures to assess and monitor safeguarding arrangements in work placements does not always have sufficient rigour.
- The standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Learners contribute well to discussions during personal and social development sessions and are enthusiastic about expressing their own ideas through practical activity. However, a minority of learners' written work relies too heavily on information copied from the Internet.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory with a few good aspects. Tutors promote and maintain positive learning environments in which learners achieve. Learners respond positively to the high standards for behaviour and attendance set by tutors and show significant improvement in their aspiration and self-belief. However, teachers do not use a sufficient range of teaching strategies to interest all learners and do not sufficiently link learning to the work environment.
- Individual targets for most learners do not contain enough detail. A minority are too ambitious resulting in missed achievement dates and others are not challenging enough. However, in the better plans, targets are very clear and

help learners to progress. When tutors agree good short term targets, for example in group sessions, learners progress well.

- NTC has a wide variety of resources including an interactive white board, computers and laptops, internet, books, handouts and specialist equipment such as a game consoles. However, tutors do not always use these resources effectively to maintain learners' interest and add variety to lessons.
- The content and design of programmes are appropriate to meet learners' needs. The use of voluntary and community work, sports, crafts and information technology are effective. Staff carefully match work placements to learners' needs and these provide good opportunities to develop vocational skills. However, a minority of learners wait too long for a work placement. Tutors do not sufficiently link the content of personal and social development sessions to work and real life.
- Employers are not sufficiently involved in learners' programmes. NTC staff provide too little information for employers to enable them to contribute fully, or plan meaningful activity to help learners progress. When employers are involved this is largely limited to vocational training.

What does NTC need to do to improve further?

- Improve the procedure for safeguarding learners in work placements by better monitoring of arrangements with employers and more rigorously reinforcing learners' understanding.
- Raise progression rates and help all learners achieve their full potential by setting them clear and challenging targets.
- Increase the variety of learning activities by using resources better and arranging work placements earlier.
- Further improve employers' contribution to all aspects of learners' progress by NTC staff developing wider partnership arrangement with employers and keeping them informed.

Information about the inspection

33. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's chief executive officer 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 local LSC, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
34. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the provider. They also 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)

name of provider/college

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	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners	200	32	168
Full-time learners	0	0	0
Part-time learners			
Overall effectiveness	2	3	2
Capacity to improve	3		
Outcomes for learners	2	3	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2		
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2		
How well do learners progress?	2		
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2		
How safe do learners feel?	3		
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	3		
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2		
Quality of provision	2	3	2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2		
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2		
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?	2		
Leadership and management	3	3	3
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2		
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	3		
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3		
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3		
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3		
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3		
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3		

*where applicable to the type of provision

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