

# Yorkshire Training Partnership Limited

## Focused monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 58132

**Name of lead inspector:** Jean Holden-Smith HMI

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**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** Manvers House  
Pioneer Close  
Wath-upon-Deerne  
South Yorkshire  
S63 7JZ

**Telephone number:** 01709 763202

## **FOCUSED MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS**

### **Context and focus of visit**

Yorkshire Training Partnership Ltd (YTP) was established in September 2000 to support and lead a consortium of work-based learning providers in providing Train to Gain programmes across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

YTP is represented by a Board of Directors elected from the membership of the four local area training associations: Doncaster, Sheffield, Barnsley and Rotherham. A further two independent seats are allocated to the wider YTP membership. Since the previous inspection, YTP has seen significant change both internally and of its consortium partners. The current staff team consists of an operations manager, office manager, part-time finance officer, contract co-ordinator and administrator. Although the training programmes remain the same as when inspected in 2008, the number of partners has reduced by nearly 40% to eleven.

YTP was inspected in December 2008. The overall effectiveness of the provision was satisfactory. Achievement and standards and the quality of provision were graded as good. Capacity to improve, leadership and management, and equality of opportunity were satisfactory. Engineering and manufacturing technologies, retail and commercial enterprise, and business, administration and law were all graded good. Health, public services and care were satisfactory.

This report focuses on the themes explored during the visit, which include the two mandatory themes of outcomes for learners, and self-assessment and improvement planning.

### **Themes**

#### **Self-assessment and improvement planning**

<b>What progress has been made in integrating the quality improvement arrangements into all aspects of the provision?</b>	<b>Reasonable progress</b>
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Following the inspection in 2008, YTP reviewed its self-assessment and quality improvement arrangements. Reasonable progress has been made in integrating quality systems to improve all aspects of the provision. The 2009 self-assessment report (SAR) produced after inspection remains inclusive but the method of collecting employers' and learners' views has improved. Previously YTP collected views centrally using a questionnaire but now providers collect and analyse their own learners' and employers' views. This information contributes to each provider's own SAR. These individual reports are then used to produce the overall YTP SAR. This method of collecting views has resulted in significant cost savings and more thorough analysis of the information collected. YTP uses peer network support to improve the SAR. Providers new to self-assessment are supported by other experienced providers to produce their own SAR. The overall SAR now gives clear

key strengths and areas for improvement but it is still too descriptive. The quality improvement plan (QIP) is produced immediately after the SAR. Monitoring of the QIP is now an integral part of the quality improvement cycle. The effective arrangements to support the reduced number of staff have clearly maintained the pace of implementation of quality improvement activities.

### **Outcomes for learners**

<b>What progress has the provider made in improving success rates, particularly completion within planned timescales?</b>	<b>Reasonable progress</b>
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Success rates in the two years prior to the previous inspection had improved and, overall, were around the national average. Although success rates overall have continued to improve to 81% for 2008/09, this is slightly below the national rate. Current data for 2009/10 indicate that success rates have continued to improve overall and are now above the national average. All subject areas indicate improved success rates, with the exception of retail and commercial enterprise with current data indicating success rates have fallen slightly. Since the previous inspection, the rate for completion within planned timescales has improved to 76% in 2008/09 which is above the national average. The current year indicates that the improving trend continues.

The 2008/09 success rate for Skills for Life provision is 68%. Current data for 2009/10 indicate that this has significantly improved. Completions within planned timescales for 2008/09 show an improvement since the previous inspection and are above the national average. Current data indicates that this improving trend continues.

The provider has been successful at narrowing the gap in the difference between success rates and completion within planned timescales for men and women. Women are still not as successful as men. However, in the current period indications are that the gap is significantly less. Improvements in success rates and completion within planned timescales for learners requiring additional support have been made. The quality of learners' portfolio work is broadly satisfactory.

### **Quality of provision**

<b>What improvements have been made to the use of progress reviews and targets to monitor learner progress and better promote equality of opportunity?</b>	<b>Reasonable progress</b>
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Since the previous inspection, YTP has focused on improving progress reviews for learners. This has provided a more structured, frequent and regular approach to progress monitoring and target setting. Greater emphasis is now placed on ensuring equality of opportunity for learners in the workplace. Some progress has been made at using the progress review to reinforce learners' understanding of equality and

diversity. However, in some cases only cursory comments are recorded on the review record. Work has taken place to improve the individual learning plan which is now being used well by tutors to record and monitor learners' progress. Target setting for learners has improved with some good examples of clear and concise targets to help learners to progress. However, some targets still remain too general and are insufficiently focused on what learners need to do to achieve. In the best cases learners' targets were well linked to assessment plans. The review process is now externally audited to ensure that the newly-introduced standards for this procedure are consistently met by all providers.

**What progress has YTP made in making Skills for Life provision available to all learners?**

**Reasonable progress**

Skills for Life provision is now available to all learners. Learners are encouraged to improve their literacy and numeracy and are provided with good advice and guidance on how this may help them to progress to higher level qualifications. Initial assessment at induction effectively identifies learners who require help with their literacy and numeracy. The test results are entered onto the individual learning plan and a programme of support is developed. The support available to learners since the last inspection has improved, with more structured provision in place. Tutors have good links with Skills for Life tutors and they work well together to support learners. Some development work has taken place to integrate Skills for Life more effectively into the vocational courses, and tutors identify and link wider skills to vocational tasks. Subject tutors also provide additional individual support for learners requiring help with their literacy and numeracy.

**Leadership and management**

**What progress has YTP made in the use of data to plan, evaluate and monitor the provision?**

**Reasonable progress**

YTP has made reasonable progress to improve the insufficient use of data identified as a key area for improvement at the previous inspection. YTP was using its own database to produce reports on the performance of providers. There was no analysis of the performance of different groups of learners to plan improvements to the provision. Experienced staff, through the use of a national computerised recording system, now provide more effective planning, evaluation and monitoring of the provision. Operations staff now have access to individual provider performance reports and are able to monitor and compare the performance of individual providers and different training programmes. Contract reviews, using the new reports, are now held more frequently so that underperformance is identified and dealt with quickly before learners' progress is significantly affected.

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester, M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
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