

# Achieve Through Learning Limited

## Inspection report

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**Unique reference number:** 58581

**Name of lead inspector:** John Grimmer HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 11 February 2011

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** Office suite one  
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17 Moorgate Street  
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## Information about the provider

1. Achieve Through Learning (ATL) is a private limited training company delivering National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in plant operations. The Skills Funding Agency funds ATL to provide training on employers' premises through a Train to Gain contract. ATL has held this contract for two years. ATL deliver training predominantly in three areas: East Midlands, the North East and Yorkshire and Humberside. The prime contact is with the East Midlands.
  
2. ATL employs 22 staff; five of these are part-time and a further five people work as associates for the company. The overall strategy and direction of the company is the responsibility of two owner-directors. ATL operates from a single location in Rotherham, South Yorkshire from which all key functions, including quality and compliance, are managed and co-coordinated.

<b>Type of provision</b>	<b>Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11</b>
<b>Employer provision Train to Gain</b>	945

## Summary report

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>
	<b>Grade</b>
Outcomes for learners	1
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	2
<b>Subject areas</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	2

## Overall effectiveness

3. Learners achieve outstanding rates in their qualifications; most complete them within the planned timescales. Learners enjoy the training and their knowledge and awareness of health and safety are greatly enhanced. Employers report that learners gain good skills and confirm that learners demonstrate excellent improvements in health and safety awareness as a result of completing the programme.
4. Training is well planned and very well managed. ATL has good links with employers to train and assess their employees in the work place using employers' fork lift equipment and resources. The training is good and meets the needs of employers and learners very well. Trainers and assessors are experienced and well qualified. They have a flexible approach to planning visits to fit in with learners' work patterns and with employers' operational priorities. Learners receive outstanding support from ATL staff and progress very well at work.
5. The two directors have a clear vision that is well communicated and understood by staff. Arrangements for safeguarding learners are satisfactory. Equality and diversity are good. Quality assurance is well managed and good systems are in place to monitor and improve the quality of programmes. ATL staff are very well supported by managers. Communications are effective between ATL

managers and staff and with employers and learners. ATL provides outstanding value for money.

## Main findings

- Overall success rates are outstanding at over 95% in 2008/9 and 2009/10; success rates within the planned time were similarly high in both years. Learners develop good knowledge and skills, leading to better and safer working practices that are highly valued by their employers. Learners make good progress.
- Staff promote health and safety highly effectively during induction and throughout the programme. Learners develop good health and safety awareness and improved safety practices. Health and safety is embedded and reinforced at all stages of the programme.
- Training and assessment are good. The NVQ assessment process is very thorough. Portfolios are well structured and of a good standard. The quality of evidence is good. Assessment arrangements are very flexible in meeting the needs of learners and employers. Some learning and assessment materials are written using language that some learners find difficult to understand.
- Induction is very good, providing learners with comprehensive information. The follow-up one-to-one session focuses effectively on the needs of individuals and determines their specific programme. However, some learners experience a lack of continuity with too long a gap at the start of, and between, the various stages of the programme.
- The provision is excellent at meeting the needs of learners and employers. It is highly flexible, individually tailored to the learner's and the company's short and long term needs. Partnerships with employers are good. ATL works productively with employers to determine their needs and to construct a highly relevant programme.
- Support throughout the programme is outstanding. Trainers and assessors provide excellent support and learners can contact staff at any time. At all stages learners receive excellent levels of assistance. Learners highly value this support which enables them to make good progress. Learners receive very good information advice and guidance at the start and end of their programme.
- Leadership is good with managers setting high expectations and standards. Staff are supported through regular meetings to ensure effective communications and to reinforce company aspirations. Data collection is rigorous and used as an effective management tool. Assessor targets are manageable and achievable.
- Equality and diversity is good and well promoted throughout the programme especially during the comprehensive induction. Learners complete assignment workbooks at work to improve their knowledge and to monitor the application of equality in the workplace. Some reviews, however, lack depth to develop learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity sufficiently.

- Evaluative feedback from users is good and contributes to the quality assurance procedures for improving performance. This feedback is quickly and effectively followed up and actioned where needed.
- Excellent value for money results from effective deployment of experienced trainers and assessors. ATL utilise employers' equipment and accommodation for training and assessment purposes. Additional qualifications include a nationally accredited fork lift driving certificate and registration with the National Operator Registration Scheme.

### **What does ATL need to do to improve further?**

- Develop the NVQ resource packs further to ensure that they contain more appropriate technical language to support clearer understanding.
- Plan the length of the programme to suit individual learners. When possible plan for achievement in a shorter timescale with less time between induction, the start of the programme and between assessment visits.
- Introduce observation of learners' progress reviews to improve consistency and quality, particularly to improve the depth of understanding about equality and diversity.

### **Summary of the views of learners as confirmed by inspectors**

#### **What learners like:**

- the knowledgeable and helpful trainers and assessors
- being able to complete the qualification at work using familiar lift trucks and equipment
- the high standard of training provided by ATL
- the very good support and individual attention provided
- being able to achieve qualifications and better themselves
- the flexible approach ATL has to training
- gaining more knowledge and information especially about health and safety
- the extra confidence gained at work.

#### **What learners would like to see improved:**

- update the trainer/assessors' laptop computer to allow better viewing of the training DVDs
- more frequent visits by assessors to complete the programme more quickly
- reduced paperwork and the amount of signatures required at the start
- starting the assessment process sooner.

## **Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors**

### **What employers like:**

- that it provides staff with recognition of their skills and a qualification
- the thoroughness of the programme and the way it helps raise health and safety awareness
- the flexible approach ATL staff have to work around busy periods and shift patterns
- the way the training has improved the level of fork lift truck driving within the company
- the proactive approach of ATL.

### **What employers would like to see improved:**

- reduction to the amount of paperwork
- reduction in the time it takes to complete the training.

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

**Grade 2**

6. Success rates are outstanding and challenging targets are set and met for both staff and learners. Staff work closely with learners to achieve their targets and a very high proportion are completing within agreed timescales. Strategic management and direction are outstanding. Strategic direction is clear and establishes strong foundations for ATL's future. Staff are knowledgeable and experienced. ATL has good processes for self-assessment and quality improvement that are under review following the appointment of a new quality manager. Internal verification is good. The self-assessment report is accurate and the development plan is highly effective. Learners' and employers' views are used effectively to improve the provision. ATL has an appropriate management structure and sufficient staff to carry through its plans for improvement.

### Outcomes for learners

**Grade 1**

7. ATL's published data show outstanding success rates. In 2008/09, 97.3% of learners achieved their level 2 NVQ; 94.4% were achieved within the planned time. In 2009/10 95.7% of learners achieved their level 2 NVQ; 94.5% were achieved within the planned time. The company has maintained its outstanding success rates during significant growth; the number of learners has more than doubled in the past year and the company operates across three different regions of the country.
8. Learners develop excellent work skills and a much greater awareness of health and safety issues and requirements through the training process. They are able to make informed choices about their health and well being. Learners enjoy their learning and their progress in the workplace is good. Many learners have gone on to be promoted within their company following the personal and work skills development that the training has helped them to achieve.
9. Performance trends of different groups of learners are good. ATL has investigated minor differences in the performance in one region and for female learners. However, as the numbers involved were so small it was not considered to be a significant issue. Managers are continuing to monitor trends for improvement purposes.

### The quality of provision

**Grade 2**

10. Teaching, training and NVQ assessment are good. The well-planned training is effectively delivered at employers' premises, with a balanced mix of theory and practical training. Teaching resources are good but some language used in the training and assessment packs is too technical for some learners at the early

stage of their programme. Trainers are well qualified and experienced. Training and coaching places a strong emphasis on safety. Learners enjoy the training and speak highly about its quality and the content. Assessment practice is good using an appropriate range of methods, but sometimes the time between visits from ATL staff is too long; some learners are keen to progress quicker. Assessors provide very good feedback to learners following assessment. The good portfolios are well structured and make effective use of photographic evidence. Assessors provide very good support for learners throughout their programme. Assessment arrangements are very flexible to meet the needs both of learners and employers. Most candidates are making good progress with their NVQ and are on target to achieve within their identified timescale. Individual learning plans are detailed and are regularly updated. The company assessors maintain good up-to-date records that show learners' progress. Learners are aware of their progress and what they need to do to achieve. Internal verification is good.

11. ATL are very flexible in meeting the needs of learners and employers. Programmes are individually tailored to the learner's and the company's short and long term needs. This includes a choice of NVQ units and a variety of learning routes based on individual prior learning and experience. A significant business benefit is that learners meet and exceed the training requirements for fork lift truck drivers. In addition to gaining the NVQ all learners achieve a relevant fork lift truck driving certificate and are registered with the National Operators Registration Scheme. Learners' employability and career prospects are significantly improved. Employers operational priorities are taken into account and assessors often arrange visits at the weekend or during shift working times. Employers are kept fully involved at all stages and are well informed about all aspects of the programme and the progress of their learners.
12. Partnerships with employers are good. ATL works productively with employers to determine their needs and to construct a relevant programme. ATL keeps in constant contact with employers and meets with them regularly. From this contact ATL is able to construct an effective programme which provides significant business benefits, which learners and employers greatly appreciate. Employers speak highly of their relationship with ATL, especially the response by ATL in devising training to meet their business needs and in providing a delivery model that fits in with their operations. Employers also state the programme exceeds their expectations; learners gain very good knowledge and skills, which benefits their business.
13. All learners receive a detailed and comprehensive induction before starting their training programme. This includes a rigorous diagnostic assessment. The results of this assessment inform the detailed individual learning plan and identify any support needs. Challenging and achievable targets are monitored at regular progress reviews with excellent feedback reports to inform both the learner and employer of actual progress to date. Trainers and assessors are flexible and may be contacted at any time by mobile phone for advice and assistance with assignments. Additional literacy or numeracy support is



provided informally by trainers during theory sessions for identified individual learners to enhance their potential for a successful outcome.

## Leadership and management

## Grade 2

14. Managers set high expectations and standards for staff. Challenging staff performance targets are set and monitored by managers to grow the business and to promote ambition throughout the organisation. ATL staff say that they enjoy working in the positive and supportive culture promoted by managers. Managers make good use of data to monitor performance and to meet learners' and employers' expectations and needs. Regular staff meetings are used effectively to communicate business priorities with staff. Staff meetings also provide a positive forum for staff to share views and opinions to help improve current practice.
15. ATL has satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding. It keeps a single central record of Criminal Record Bureau checks, and ensures that this is up-to-date. It has satisfactory policies and procedures for safeguarding that are monitored by the director of operations. A designated member of staff has received relevant safeguarding training. Learners have satisfactory understanding of what they need to do if they have a problem and report that they feel safe. All staff have had at least satisfactory training in safeguarding. The health and safety of staff and learners is given a high priority within ATL and this is communicated well to employers at initial contact, during training programmes and at learner reviews.
16. ATL's approach to equality of opportunity is good. ATL actively promotes a positive culture of mutual respect and has been successful in recruiting a high proportion of female tutors and assessors in an occupational area that is traditionally a male dominated training environment. Learners have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Equality of opportunity is covered particularly well at induction through effective training materials written in user friendly language. Equality and diversity are promoted well throughout the programme. However, equality and diversity are not promoted systematically at reviews. All staff have had relevant training in equality and diversity. Initial assessment of numeracy, literacy and language skills is appropriate. ATL monitors the outcomes of different groups of learners appropriately. It has identified no significant gaps in the performance of different groups of learners. The process for checking employers' equal opportunities policies is not sufficiently robust.
17. Evaluative feedback is systematically collected from learners and employers and used to monitor and improve the quality of the provision. The views of staff, learners and employers are fed into the self-assessment process to inform the overall judgements of the self assessment report. The self-assessment report is very accurate with all of the grades matching those judged by inspectors. It is well written and evaluative and identified very similar strengths and areas for improvement found at the inspection. An effective quality improvement plan is

used to build on identified areas of strength and to improve areas identified as needing further improvement.

18. ATL provides outstanding value for money. All training and assessment is carried out on employers' premises using the employers' equipment and facilities. Success rates are outstanding and completed in the planned time. Additional qualifications are provided above and beyond those publicly funded. The additionality is much valued by employers and learners.

## **Information about the inspection**

19. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's quality manager, 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 previous local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and data on learners and their achievement.
20. Inspectors used 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 the subject area the provider offers.

**Record of Main Findings (RMF)**  
**Achieve Through Learning Limited**  
**Learning types: 14 – 16:** Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Leamer 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 <b>using the 4 point scale</b> 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	Employer responsive	
<b>Approximate number of enrolled learners</b>			
Full-time learners	0	0	
Part-time learners	945	945	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	2		
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	1		
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	1		
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?	2		
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	n/a		
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	n/a		
<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2		
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		
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>
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>	n/a		
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?	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?	2		
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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