

Doncaster, Rotherham and District Motor Trades Group Training Association Limited

Inspection report

Unique reference number:	51579	
Name of lead inspector:	John Grimmer HMI	
Last day of inspection:	13 May 2011	
Type of provider:	Independent learning provider	
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Information about the provider

- Doncaster, Rotherham and District Motor Trades Group Training Association Limited (Doncaster GTA) is a private training provider and a registered charity. Founded in 1972, it became a company limited by guarantee in 1985. It specialises in training for the motor trade and road haulage industries and has contracts with major international motor manufacturers. It contracts with Yorkshire and the Humber Skills Funding Agency for the provision of workbased learning in motor vehicle engineering and business administration. Doncaster GTA also offers commercial training for other international, national and local companies, including lift truck training, goods vehicle driving, dangerous goods and health and safety consultation. The commercial training accounts for approximately 35% of its income.
- 2. The company has two training centres, one at Armthorpe on the outskirts of Doncaster and the other in Sheffield. Both sites have a comprehensive range of specialist training workshops and classrooms for motor vehicle, business administration, and warehouse training.
- 3. Doncaster GTA has a board of directors from the local retail vehicle repair sector which oversees strategic planning and monitors the company's performance. Doncaster GTA has 20 member companies, but deals with approximately 150 employers throughout the Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield area. The company recently took over the Renault apprenticeship training contract and is currently working with approximately 60 Renault dealerships nationwide.
- 4. The provider provides training on behalf of the following organisations:
 - Springboard
 - Land Rover/Jaguar
 - Babcock
 - DMDC

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
Provision for young learners: 14 to 16 Entry to Employment	232 part-time learners 22 learners
Employer provision: Apprenticeships	243 apprentices

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision

Grade 2

3

Capacity to improve Grade 2

Aspect	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
	E .
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	2
Subject Areas	
Engineering and manufacturing technologies (motor	2

Business, administration and law

Overall effectiveness

vehicle)

- 5. Doncaster GTA is a good training provider where learners enjoy learning. Most learners achieve their apprenticeships within the time allowed. They make good progress onto advanced qualifications and develop skills that help them at work. Doncaster GTA places a high priority on health and safety and learners say they feel safe.
- 6. The good teaching, training, assessment and learning are generally well planned. Motor vehicle tutors use a varied range of activities and industry-standard resources. These effectively develop learners' knowledge and understanding in practical skills and theoretical concepts. However, the few learners in business administration find their training and assessment lack structure and variety and do not support their individual learning needs enough. Useful progress reviews and clear targets help learners to make good progress and to understand what they need to do next. Doncaster GTA's good partnerships benefit learners and help recruit apprentices from different backgrounds.
- 7. Doncaster GTA has a good approach to promoting equality of opportunity. Effective work takes place during learning programmes to help learners understand how equality and diversity affect them. In particular, the company

Main findings

- Recent success rates are high and progression from intermediate to advanced apprenticeships is good. Learners gain good relevant skills that increase their employability and they complete relevant additional qualifications to supplement those required for their apprenticeship.
- Learners feel safe and enjoy their training both at work and at the training centres. Health and safety are given high priority at initial induction and reinforcement throughout the training programme is good.
- Teaching, training and learning are good. The good range of teaching activities is very effective in developing learners' knowledge and understanding. Good industry-standard resources are used well to reinforce theoretical engineering concepts. However, some business administration learners find the training lacks sufficient structure and some session plans do not sufficiently support individualised learning.
- Assessment is thorough, well managed and, if required, available on demand for all programmes. However, assessment in business administration lacks sufficient variety to meet the needs of all learners.
- Learners find progress reviews useful and informative. Clear short-term targets are set at each review for the next phase of training. Health and safety, safeguarding, and equality and diversity are well monitored and discussed in detail. Learners have a good understanding of all of these areas.
- The monitoring and recording of learners' progress is satisfactory and learner success rates have improved. However, the process of collating the information is excessively labour intensive and not readily available for managers to use at any given time.
- Learners benefit from the good partnership links with schools, employers and other training providers or colleges. School links provide pre-apprenticeship programmes that help in the diverse recruitment for full-time apprentices. Employers on the Doncaster GTA board provide up-to-date industrial knowledge, expertise, jobs and other training-provider links to help improve the quality of the provision through sharing best practice.
- Information advice and guidance are satisfactory. Recruitment and induction provide learners with good advice, guidance and support about job search, interview techniques and curriculum vitae presentation. Literacy and numeracy levels are assessed when the programmes start. Those requiring additional support receive appropriate interventions. However, the support from assessors is not always planned. Assessors have not always completed relevant training or qualifications to provide additional support.

- Safeguarding is effectively promoted to learners and to staff. Doncaster GTA staff receive relevant information and training to help them prioritise the safeguarding of learners. Clear safeguarding polices and procedures promote the importance of safeguarding to staff, learners and employers.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. A recently produced national training resource highlights how Doncaster GTA has helped learners with disabilities to make good progress with their programmes. Equality and diversity information is regularly incorporated into learning programmes and the company sponsors and judges regional equality and diversity awards.
- A good succession planning strategy has been developed to replace key managers about to retire or to leave the company. Before they leave, existing key managers train the staff identified to take over their roles. Staff benefit from the skills and knowledge passed on and the company benefits from a reduction in the disruption often caused through the loss of key staff members.

What does Doncaster GTA need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the structure of session plans clearly defines the individualised learning required for all learners at all levels in order to improve their performance.
- Provide more structured activities for business administration learners during off-the-job training.
- Broaden the range of assessment methods in business administration to meet the needs of more learners.
- Further develop tutors' and assessors' skills in providing additional learning support for those learners that require it.
- Enhance the targeting of promotional activities to increase further the number of women and minority ethnic learners on engineering programmes.
- Further develop management information systems to provide quick and easy access to up-to-date data about learners' apprenticeship framework progress.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the supportive and helpful staff at the training centre
- the opportunity to take additional qualifications
- the regular visits to the workplace by assessors to aid progress
- being treated like adults
- the good teaching and training
- the group learning sessions and learning new topics together
- the good facilities available to the advanced apprentices.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the amount of equipment and the quality of the vehicles to work on for level 2 learners
- the amount of help with understanding the terminology
- the toilet facilities
- the number of visits for assessments.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors What employers like:

- the good communication channels that are in place
- the good flexible training to meet the commercial need of the business
- the fact that learners are kept motivated to get their qualifications
- the superb training courses
- the training and support received leading to excellent progress of apprentices
- the mature, experienced and knowledgeable staff
- the involvement with the regular progress reviews.

What employers would like to see improved:

- the speed that Doncaster GTA sends out reports about training and progress
- the amount of information about progress and work needed.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

- 8. Doncaster GTA has maintained a similar grade profile to its previous inspection, carried out in November 2007. Overall success rates for learners are high and the company sets and achieves ambitious targets for learner achievements. Most learners complete their programmes within the planned time. The company has a clear vision and sets appropriate priorities to sustain improvement and raise the expectations of users.
- 9. Self-assessment is embedded well into the company's quality processes and good account is taken of the views of staff, learners and employers to help improve programmes. Managers provide good leadership in a friendly but business-focused environment. Staff development has a high priority within the organisation and staff are encouraged to progress within the business. The board of directors provides challenge and good expertise where necessary. The board meets monthly to monitor performance and outcomes systematically.

Outcomes for learners

- 10. Overall success rates are high and most apprentices achieve their framework qualifications within the planned time. Learners make good progress. Assessors and tutors monitor their progress regularly to ensure agreed measures are being achieved at key stages of the training. This regular monitoring against planned targets, together with corrective interventions when needed, helps to ensure that learners attain their learning goals within the expected programme duration.
- 11. All groups of learners achieve their qualifications well and there are no significant variations in the attainment of different groups of learners. Attendance is good. Learners say they feel safe and enjoy their learning programmes.
- 12. Learners develop good skills and knowledge that help them to progress at work and increase their employability prospects. All learners have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities and these are reinforced throughout the training programmes.

The quality of provision

- 13. Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teaching staff are well gualified and experienced and maintain learners' interest successfully. An effective process for observing teaching and learning operates and it is helping to develop staff further and improve learners' experiences.
- 14. Learners receive help to develop their literacy and numeracy skills throughout their training. If initial assessment identifies a need for additional support then an essential skills tutor provides relevant specialist support. However, session

Grade 2

Grade 2

Grade 2

plans do not sufficiently support individualised learning to help improve the performance of lower-ability learners.

- 15. Assessment is thorough and meets the requirements of awarding bodies very effectively. Record keeping is good and assessors are fully supported by experienced internal verifiers. Assessment of learners' practical work in the workplace is frequent. Learners are encouraged to contact their assessors if an unplanned assessment opportunity arises at work. Assessors usually respond promptly to these requests and help to capture any opportunistic assessment of learners' competences to help them progress. Recent improvements in the monitoring and recording of learners' progress are providing good feedback for learners and employers about overall progression and what tasks need to be mastered next to improve further. However, the data management system is insufficiently developed to monitor learners' progression. The current system, although effective, does not provide quick and easy access to learners' progress for managers to monitor against.
- 16. The range of the provision provides learners with a good choice of subjects, levels and qualifications that are relevant to their career goals. Qualifications additional to those funded through the apprenticeship frameworks are provided by Doncaster GTA at no cost to learners or their employers. These additional qualifications provide enhanced skills and accreditation for learners to improve their employability prospects.
- 17. Doncaster GTA provides flexible programmes that benefit learners and employers. Assessment and learning schedules are often adapted to meet the specific requirements of employers' commercial demands while enabling learners to continue their studies without any overall disruption to their progress.
- 18. During the inspection, Doncaster GTA had arranged for the police, fire-brigade and road safety specialists to present drivers' awareness workshops to their learners. This followed the deaths of two learners in separate road accidents earlier in the year. A prisoner who is serving a five-year sentence for causing death by dangerous driving spoke movingly to the learners. He talked about his regret and about the devastating impact on the families of those he killed, on his own family and his future. The prisoner was completing an apprenticeship at the time of the accident and lost his job when sentenced. This enrichment activity made a good contribution to the learners' spiritual, moral and cultural development and made them all think very carefully about their future driving habits.
- 19. Doncaster GTA uses partnerships very effectively to develop its provision and meet learners' needs. Partnerships with schools, employers and other learning providers have helped to improve training and benefit learners. Pre-apprenticeship courses organised with schools are helping the recruitment of future apprentices who will have good prior knowledge and skills to offer employers. Excellent employer links, through the original group training association relationships, help Doncaster GTA to remain up-to-date with the industry's needs and requirements. Links with other learning providers have

helped to improve courses and documentation through the sharing of best practice.

20. Learners receive appropriate and timely information, advice and guidance to help them make satisfactory progress. Staff at Doncaster GTA provide individual care and support to promote learning and development of each learner and to help them achieve their potential. However, some staff would benefit from specific training and qualifications to help them provide effective support to learners with additional learning needs.

Grade 2

Leadership and management

- 21. Managers and directors at Doncaster GTA promote high standards in a positive and supportive culture. A clear strategic plan sets out aspirations for developing and improving the business over the next three years. In order to meet the objectives of the strategic plan, demanding targets have been set throughout the organisation and are regularly monitored at staff and board meetings. Board members are representatives of local motor trade employers who ensure that local and national priorities that are relevant to learners, employers and local communities are promoted. Resources, including staff, accommodation and facilities, are good; their effective development and use support learning well.
- 22. The board of directors meets monthly to monitor all aspects of business performance. One board member is a member of the local police authority and advises on such issues as legislation and legal requirements. Staff development is good. A good succession planning strategy has been developed to replace key managers due to retire or leave the company. Potential replacement staff are identified and interviewed for the future vacated roles. Selected staff are trained by the existing post-holders to take over their roles before they leave, thereby passing on important skills and working knowledge.
- 23. The safeguarding of learners is satisfactory. It is promoted very effectively at the two training centres and in workplaces. Staff complete online and face-to-face training about their safeguarding duties and responsibilities. Learners are provided with good information about safeguarding and what actions to take. Safeguarding policies, procedures and records are thorough and appropriate.
- 24. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Doncaster GTA uses national and regional data to set benchmarks for recruitment and has been successful in meeting these. The provider's delivery of courses for local schools has a positive effect on increasing recruitment from under-represented groups. Data are used to monitor achievement between different groups. Equality and diversity policies are comprehensive and prominently displayed. The company has carried out audits of its performance as part of its single equality scheme. It has identified key areas of underperformance and set relevant objectives. The company promotes a zero-tolerance approach to discriminatory behaviour. Equality and diversity are promoted very effectively in regular taught sessions throughout the training programmes. Doncaster GTA also sponsors and judges a local equality and diversity award event. The company was recently featured in a nationally

available training resource showing how it has helped learners with disabilities to make good progress with their learning programmes.

- 25. The provider has set up a 'learners' voice' group to seek the views of different groups and involve learners in decision making and improvements for the organisation. During regular learner progress reviews carried out in the workplace, employers provide their views about the quality of training. They also complete formal improvement questionnaires each year to give their feedback about possible improvements.
- 26. Self-assessment is satisfactory. It is integral to the company's quality improvement processes. Improvement action plans are drawn up following self-assessment and are regularly monitored and updated at staff meetings. Self-assessment includes the views of staff, learners and employers.
- 27. The provider makes good use of its available resources to secure value for money. Resources include dedicated modern and well-equipped workshop facilities for national motor manufacturer apprenticeship and skilled technician training. Other learners benefit from the up-to-date technology and skills required for manufacturer training courses. Staff are able to receive technical update training through the manufacturer's skilled technician facilities.

Subject areas

Engineering and manufacturing technologies (motor vehicle)

Grade 2

Context

28. Engineering work-based qualifications are available in light vehicle and heavy goods vehicle maintenance, automotive electrical engineering, vehicle parts, and body and paint programmes. Of the 229 learners, 67% are 16 to 18 years old. Around 97% of learners are male and approximately 4% of learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Sixty-nine per cent of learners are on intermediate apprenticeship programmes. Thirty-four assessors and 10 internal verifiers provide assessment, verification and training.

Key findings

- Intermediate and advanced apprentices achieve high success rates. Completion by the planned end date has increased significantly by 23 percentage points. Both rates are well above the national average. There is no significant difference in the performance of different groups of learners. Learners enjoy their learning and make good progress. Many are progressing ahead of their planned targets.
- Learners gain good and relevant skills that increase their employability. They progress from intermediate to advanced apprenticeships and many gain additional qualifications. The training improves their technical knowledge, understanding and employability prospects. Some unemployed learners study for qualifications at the training centres. They receive active support and many progress to employment and work-based apprenticeship programmes.
- All learners feel safe in the centres and during training on employers' premises. Safe working arrangements and raising awareness about being safe play a large part in induction. Learners have a good recall of the induction process. Doncaster GTA staff place a high priority on the well-being of the learners in their centres. Learners value this and feel well protected by staff.
- The effective reinforcement of health and safety in learning sessions provides learners with a very good understanding of safe working practices. Where safety forms part of legislation, for example tyre-wear laws, much time is spent in discussion with the learners to encourage them to be aware and make accurate decisions concerning the safety of motor vehicles and their occupants.
- Teaching, training and learning are good. Well-managed teaching and training sessions encourage learners to take an active part. The good range of teaching activities effectively develops learners' knowledge and understanding using a wide range of high-quality industry-standard resources. However, learning plans lack clear strategies to support all learners at different levels.
- The provider's observations of teaching and learning assess, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching, training and learning effectively. Accurate and evaluative evidence statements support the grades awarded. Work-based reviews are now observed and assessed. Assessors receive constructive

feedback and grades for their performance. For example, advice is given to assessors on how to improve target setting for learners.

- Assessment is thorough and on demand. Learners have good access to their assessors and can advise when appropriate assessment opportunities arise in the workplace. Learners assessed on entry for their literacy and numeracy levels also complete a mechanical aptitude test. Those that require support receive appropriate interventions.
- Apprentices find progress reviews useful and informative. Employers take an active interest in their learners' training activities. A clear summary of progress is made and short-term targets are set for the next phase of training. Health and safety, safeguarding, and equality and diversity are discussed in detail. Apprentices have a good knowledge and understanding of harassment and bullying.
- Monitoring and recording of learners' progress is satisfactory. Internal verification is systematic and thoroughly planned. The standard of portfolios is satisfactory and work evidence is appropriately referenced. Trainers have good technical knowledge and experience and make good use of this to the benefit of learners. However, portfolios lack a sufficiently diverse range of evidence such as the inclusion of photographic images.
- Doncaster GTA provides an extensive range of programmes and activities to meet the needs of learners and their employers, although women and minority ethnic groups are under-represented. Employers speak highly of the training and are knowledgeable and well informed about the apprenticeship framework requirements. A flexible approach to training meets the commercial needs of the employers and the training requirements of the learners.
- Learners benefit from Doncaster GTA's diverse range of partnerships with a large number of organisations. Doncaster GTA has close relationships with employers and with schools where the promotion of motor engineering is good. Organisations such as Renault collaborate closely with the company to provide excellent resources. Further work with colleges, training providers and other organisations helps to improve training and benefit the experience of learners.
- Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Learners receive a wide range of information on progression opportunities and relevant additional qualifications. Recruitment arrangements assess learners' aptitude and employability prior to commencing training. Assessors provide good vocational support. However, it is not always planned to meet the needs of individuals. Not all assessors are appropriately trained to give learners the additional support they need.

What does Doncaster GTA need to do to improve further?

- Improve the structure of session plans to define clearly the individualised learning required for all learners in order to guide, support and improve their performance.
- Provide guidance to learners to improve the quality and presentation of the contents of their portfolios and to demonstrate their development better, for

example by using photographic images and other sources to enhance and record evidence of their skills and achievements.

- Provide training for assessors to improve the effectiveness of additional support arrangements for learners.
- Enhance the targeting of promotional activities to increase further the number of women and minority ethnic learners in motor vehicle programmes.

Business, administration and law

Grade 3

Context

29. Fourteen learners are working towards qualifications in business administration and customer service, mostly at level 2. Most learners are employed in local businesses with a very small number seeking a work-placement. About half of the learners are on a day-release training arrangement at the Doncaster centre. One tutor is responsible for teaching and assessment, with support from an internal verifier.

Key findings

- Success rates are satisfactory. All learners in the current cohort have completed successfully. This is an improvement compared with 2009/10 when success rates were below national averages. Learners due to complete in 2011/12 are making good progress.
- Most learners enjoy their programmes, particularly the achievement of qualifications. Learning satisfactorily enhances their skills and knowledge at work and some learners take on new responsibilities more rapidly. Doncaster GTA has a good record of helping young learners move into their first full-time employment and it provides sufficient support to help them adjust to the world of work.
- Learners feel safe and have a sound understanding of hazards and risks at work. They have an adequate grasp of the processes available to them to raise concerns about safety. Through a learner focus group, learners are organising community fund-raising activities to support local charities. This is enriching their skills and knowledge in business-related areas such as leading meetings and organising events.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory. Learners receive an adequate induction through the use of a comprehensive booklet. There is a good emphasis on health and safety, and safeguarding. Initial assessment of learners' training needs is satisfactory and includes functional skills tests, an interview and questions about administration. Employers are involved in discussions about qualification optional units to match learners' job roles.
- Off-the-job training meets learners' needs. They maintain good progress with their NVQ work with the support of the tutor. Learners particularly enjoy structured teaching sessions when they learn new topics such as body language, communication skills, and health and safety. However, functional skills sessions rely too much on the use of test papers at the expense of stimulating teaching. The day-release programme lacks structure for some learners.
- Assessment is well managed and plays a key part in improving success rates. Learners receive very detailed and regularly updated action plans to guide their work. However, assessment lacks sufficient variety. For example, it includes little use of discussion evidence and places an over-reliance on written work. Learners and employers are not always clear about the precise progress made.

Internal verification activities are not used effectively to improve assessment strategies.

- The provision satisfactorily meets the needs of most learners and employers. Learners can opt for day release or distance learning in negotiation with their employer. A limited range of qualifications is on offer and the provider has identified the programme area as requiring further development. The learning resources for those not attending day-release sessions are limited.
- Doncaster GTA staff promote programmes well by attending local school events and giving talks to local careers advisers. Learners are developing new projects to reach out to local community groups. The provider has a good range of partnerships through which it promotes programmes and gains current knowledge to enhance its programmes. An example is a link with an organisation to provide workshops on relationships and health matters.
- Support for learners is satisfactory. It very effectively focuses on reversing slow progress and helping learners find work-placements. Suitable information, advice and guidance are given on entry to the programme and day-release learners gain a further awareness of career options. However, insufficient focus is given to progression paths during reviews.
- Self-assessment is broadly accurate although grades are over-estimated. The quality improvement plan appropriately focuses on developing the provision although implementation of the actions is slow.

What does Doncaster GTA need to do to improve further?

- Provide more structured activities during off-the-job learning.
- Engage employers more in the learning and assessment process at learner progress reviews to keep them informed about progress and encourage them to support learners more.
- Broaden the range of assessment methods to meet the needs of individual learners.
- Implement the quality improvement plan more proactively to develop the subject area.

Information about the inspection

- 30. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's quality assurance and liaison 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 funding body, the previous inspection report, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
- 31. 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)

Doncaster, Rotherham and District Motor Trades GTA Limited

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	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners		
Full-time learners	0	0
Part-time learners	243	243
Overall effectiveness	2	2
Capacity to improve	2	
Outcomes for learners	2	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	
Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*	3	
How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*	3	
Quality of provision	2	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?	3	
Leadership and management	2	2
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	3	
How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*	2	
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?	3	
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2	

*where applicable to the type of provision

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