

Interserve (Facilities Management) Limited

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 58926

Name of lead inspector: Deavon Baker-Oxley HMI

Last day of inspection: 13 May 2011

Type of provider: Employer

Address: Interserve (Facilities Management) Limited
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Information about the provider

1. Interserve (Facilities Management Ltd), (Interserve), is a large support services and construction company, operating in the public and private sectors in the United Kingdom (UK) and internationally. Interserve offers advice, design, construction, and facilities management services for the infrastructure of communities, and provides a range of plant and equipment in specialist fields. Interserve is based in the UK. It has revenue of £1.9 billion and a workforce of 50,000 people worldwide.
2. Interserve Support Services (a division of Interserve PLC) signed its first training contract with the National Employer Services in 2009 to offer a range of qualifications to its employees, including apprenticeship and Train to Gain National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) programmes in cleaning and support services, security services, facilities management, business administration, customer service, team leading, management, and adult certificates in numeracy and literacy (Skills for Life).
3. Interserve currently has around 90 learners. The company signed a skills pledge in 2007 giving all Interserve employees the opportunity to gain a level 2 qualification. All learners are employed by Interserve.
4. Interserve has a dedicated training skills team which is responsible for the operational and day-to-day management of the training programmes.
5. The following organisations provide training on behalf of Interserve:
 - CAATS (public services)
 - A4e Skills (preparation for life and work).

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Employer provision:	
Train to Gain	300 learners
Apprenticeships	19 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 2
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	1
Equality and diversity	2
Subject Areas	Grade
Public Services	2
Preparation for life and work	2

Overall effectiveness

6. Interserve's overall provision is good. Outcomes for learners on the providing security services programme in 2009/10 are outstanding. The proportion of learners who successfully achieve their qualification on the Skills for Life programme has improved significantly. Current learners on all programmes are on target to achieve their qualifications by their planned end dates. Many learners have significantly improved their economic well-being through increased work-related skills, broader thinking about their roles and through enhanced written and verbal communication skills. Learners' awareness and understanding of health and safety are very good and all learners feel safe.
7. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Tutors provide sensitive feedback on assignments and offer well-paced explanations of aspects learners find difficult. Learners' work demonstrates a wide range of activity relevant to their day-to-day work. Learners on the providing security services programme benefit from good individual discussions between assessors and learners.
8. Interserve promotes the safeguarding of learners outstandingly well. The company also promotes equality and diversity effectively and learners understand how equality and diversity matters affect them.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are good, with a consistently high proportion of learners achieving their qualifications in providing security services programmes and an improving trend in Skills for Life courses. Learners develop very useful skills which they apply in their daily employment and which lead to increased responsibilities and to promotion in some cases.
- Subcontracted tutors carefully record learners' progress using information and communication technology (ICT), and keep their managers and the provider well informed, ensuring very effective monitoring of achievement rates. However, a minority of tutors are not using this facility sufficiently well to ensure comprehensive coverage.
- Teaching and learning are good. Tutors are exceptionally skilled in giving feedback on assignments to maintain learners' motivation. They generally plan assessments well, although they sometimes miss opportunities for formative assessment in the providing security services programme. In some instances, tutors do not encourage learners to articulate fully their understanding of concepts. Some learners use information and learning technology (ILT) well, but many have insufficient confidence with this mode of learning.
- Interserve provides a range of programmes which meets learners' needs very well. Staff providing the programmes are flexible in offering guidance and assessment to meet learners' shift patterns. However, they do not identify sufficiently well at the start of the programme any personal and social problems which make it difficult for individuals to learn, for example the language support needs of those for whom English is not a first language.
- Partnerships with clients are especially successful in engaging employees who have not previously participated in learning, while partnerships with awarding bodies and sector councils ensure that available qualifications meet learners' needs particularly well.
- Staff offer very good support for learners in the workplace, which enables increasing numbers of learners to achieve success and motivates them to progress to higher level qualifications.
- Interserve has a very clear and well-articulated strategic vision supported by clear priorities, targets and timescales. In meetings, managers focus strongly on the achievement of key performance indicators relating to learners and on progress with strategic developments. Managers make very good use of internal and external data to make key strategic and operational decisions.
- Managers communicate company values very effectively to staff, learners and subcontractors. Through their training, they seek to support national priorities relating to increasing sustainable employment.
- Managers and staff implement exceptionally effective procedures for maintaining the safety and welfare of learners. They provide memorable induction training for all learners, which they routinely reinforce through a range of methods. Learners are particularly sensitive to their responsibilities in maintaining a safe working environment for themselves and others.

- Interserve clearly demonstrates its commitment to equality and diversity through its recruitment of learners from a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Managers carefully monitor learners' outcomes and other indicators by ethnicity, gender and disability, and have not identified any underperformance by any specific group of learners. They have not yet made all documents relating to equality and diversity available in a simplified format suitable for all learners.
- Interserve provides good value for money. Staff give learners very effective, high-quality training using well-produced resources. They use ICT to good effect.

What does Interserve need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that staff fully exploit the potential of the ICT reporting facilities so that clients, subcontractors and the provider have a comprehensive picture of the progress of all learners.
- Develop learners' confidence with ILT, in order to encourage more personal responsibility for learning.
- Review current initial assessment practice to improve the identification of personal and social problems which are barriers to learning.
- Develop simplified and more accessible documentation for learners to increase their understanding of equality-related issues.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the very supportive tutors and workplace managers
- gaining skills to help them to work better.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the availability of level 3 qualifications.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the professional responsiveness of the provider
- the flexibility to meet the needs of learners
- the trust and close partnership working
- the very good communications.

What employers would like to see improved:

- nothing identified.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

9. This is Interserve's first inspection. The provider shows a good capacity to improve. Outcomes for learners are outstanding on providing security services programmes. In Skills for Life, success rates have risen significantly over the year to a satisfactory level. Interserve's management of subcontracted learning is good and supported with very effective service level agreements. Interserve sets challenging targets, has good strategic vision and a keen focus on training and developing its workforce.
10. Interserve's quality improvement processes are thorough, and have led to an improvement in learners' outcomes in Skills for Life and the maintenance of high success rates elsewhere. The findings and grades in the self-assessment report are generally accurate.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

11. Outcomes for learners on the providing security services programme in 2009/10 are outstanding, with success rates within the planned time frame significantly above national rates. Success rates on the Skills for Life programme have improved significantly but remain below the national average. Initially success rates were very low as a result of Interserve's underestimation, at the start of the contract, of the time learners would require to complete their programme. Managers have taken effective action, in partnership with the subcontractor, resulting in staff changes and more realistic and individualised planning.
12. Learners significantly improve their economic well-being through increased work-related skills, broader thinking about their roles and enhanced written and oral communication skills. Absence and staff turnover rates are low. Some learners have been given additional responsibilities or promotion because of their improved skills. Employers report better team-working skills.
13. All learners feel safe and are clearly aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding health and safety. Assessors and tutors continually reinforce the identification of risks and learner protection of themselves and others. Some learners have roles supporting the public and emergency services in the event of a national disaster and are very effectively prepared for this.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

14. Teaching, learning and assessment are good overall. Learners appreciate the supportive individual training sessions. Tutors plan assessment well, providing sensitive feedback which motivates learners to achieve challenging objectives. Learners have assembled an extensive range of diverse evidence in their individual portfolios. Tutors make good use of learners' daily work experiences to make topics relevant. Skills for Life learners use ICT particularly effectively to record progress. Some learners have started to use it both as a learning

resource and to record completion of their learning topics. On providing security services programmes, assessors sometimes miss opportunities for formative assessment.

15. Through its human resources procedures, Interserve provides learners with very detailed information about the programme at memorable induction sessions. Comprehensive and stimulating DVDs supplement and reinforce information. Learners demonstrate a good understanding of their programme and the benefits it brings to them and to their managers.
16. Programmes meets the learners' needs exceptionally well. Many of the learners have little prior academic achievement and find the ongoing choice of qualifications and levels, as well as the achievement of units, both challenging and motivating. Programme content helps learners enormously in their day-to-day work, enabling them to work confidently with topics such as ratios and averages, to interpret data and to present them both orally and visually. Assessors work around learners' shift patterns including night shifts. Tutors' and assessors' strong emphasis on health, safety and welfare keeps learners very safe, minimises accidents and maintains learners' confidence in arrangements for their welfare.
17. Partnerships with employers and subcontractors are excellent. Employers view the programme as an important way of improving their business through developing the professional skills of their workforce. They are extremely supportive and attend awards ceremonies when learners' successes are celebrated. In one major company, all learners have enthusiastically adopted a new philosophy encouraging supportive teamwork. Interserve has consulted productively with subcontractors, ensuring the use of a highly effective management system which focuses on learners' progress. The provider has contributed to national occupational standards and new qualifications.
18. Working relationships between subcontracted tutors, assessors and learners are very close, allowing tutors and assessors to be aware of, and to respond to, any problems arising during the course of a learner's programme. Learners and their line managers undertake well-structured discussions to support and underpin learning. Tutors provide effective initial assessment of literacy and numeracy in the Skills for Life programme and ensure an individualised learning plan. However, they do not identify potential personal and social barriers to progress sufficiently well and, in the providing security services programme, they do not identify language support needs.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

19. Interserve's senior staff provide good leadership, and effective planning and management. They have ensured that employees' training and development strongly support the company's goals and business priorities, both for itself and the communities it serves. Its training packages for the cleaning industry set a high standard. The company is responsive to national priorities relating to increasing employment, and works well with subcontractors to realise these

priorities. It makes very effective use of research and data to plan training and to ensure that Interserve has enough trained staff to meet its future business needs.

20. The organisation operates within a very open and supportive culture. Senior and operational managers are mutually supportive. Managers ensure that contractors fully understand Interserve's expectations and comply with clear management arrangements. Interserve uses technology very effectively to support its management of the learning programmes, and for tracking and monitoring learners' progress and subcontractors' achievement of targets. The quality manager has developed a very professional working relationship with each subcontractor. Service level agreements for each are clear and comprehensive, effectively covering all aspects of the learning programme with key performance indicators. Managers set clear targets for learners' achievement, the quality of teaching and learning, and the management of the programme. Communication is good, with tutors, assessors and workplace staff meeting frequently to discuss comprehensive agendas and plan follow-up action.
21. Safeguarding arrangements are excellent. Interserve meets the government's current requirements for safeguarding and has ensured that its subcontractors comply with them. Interserve has very effective and comprehensive policies for the organisation as a whole, which ensure the safety of its workforce. Safeguarding has a high priority. All of Interserve's own staff, who work with its learners, and its subcontractors have undergone Criminal Records Bureau checks. Managers strongly emphasise health, safety and welfare during learners' induction, and reinforce these themes regularly. The quality manager is well informed about the organisation's duties with regard to vulnerable adults. Accident rates are very low. Learners' awareness of health and safety, and of their responsibility in ensuring their own and others' welfare, is very high. All learners on providing security services programmes have attended in-house training in dealing with major public safety incidents.
22. Interserve promotes equality of opportunity and diversity well through all its day-to-day activities, effectively supported by comprehensive policies and procedures. The company rigorously analyses participation and achievement on its training programmes, but it has identified little variation between different ethnic or other groups. Service level agreements with subcontractors promote equality and diversity well. Tutors and assessors routinely discuss equality and diversity matters with subcontractors. The provider's staff profile demonstrates a very wide mix of ethnic backgrounds amongst its learners. Learners demonstrate an understanding of terms such as harassment and discrimination, and all are aware of the company's complaints procedure. Interserve's equality and diversity policies effectively prevent discrimination and harassment, and the company has not received any complaints. Learners are aware of their rights and responsibilities. Although a wide range of policies exists on the staff intranet, these are not yet available in a simplified form for learners with poorly-developed literacy.

23. Managers have developed very well planned methods for collecting the views of learners, clients and subcontractors as part of comprehensive quality assurance arrangements. Partner organisations contribute to self-assessment, and the provider has developed a set of useful, productive reports reflecting the provision of each subcontractor, which they have incorporated into an evaluative overarching report.
24. Interserve is in its second contract year and this is its first inspection. It has demonstrated good financial management, has returned accurate data to the funding agency, has produced good outcomes, and provides good value for money.

Subject areas

Public Services

Grade 2

Context

25. Currently 23 learners are on Train to Gain programmes. All are working towards NVQ at level 2 in providing security services. Learners are employed in security positions within various businesses including offices, hotels, hospitals and colleges. A subcontractor provides 'on the job' training and assessment on a national basis on behalf of Interserve.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners in 2009/10 are outstanding, with an overall success rate of 96%, which is 10 percentage points above the national rate. The rate of achievement within the planned time is 94%, 12 percentage points above the national rate.
- Learners' work is of a high standard. Learners are enthusiastic and enjoy taking their qualifications. They develop an enhanced understanding of security legislation, which gives them confidence and improves the communication skills necessary to deal with clients and the public. This results in improved professionalism, increased employability prospects and better promotion opportunities.
- Learners have an excellent awareness of how to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others. They receive in-house training on managing national safety issues and their roles in the event of a terrorism attack, biological, nuclear or other disaster. They have developed a good awareness of workplace hazards, how they can be reduced, and the impact on themselves, the public and their employer's business should lapses occur.
- Teaching and learning are good, with beneficial individual discussions between assessors and learners. Tutors give learners a useful information and knowledge pack, but they do not always read it. The pack does not include checks on understanding, and therefore reading is not effectively encouraged. Tutors give internet references but have not yet introduced other methods of computer-based learning.
- Initial assessment of learners' skills is good. Learners appreciate its value in enabling assessors to take individual learning needs into account. However, assessors did not identify some learners' needs for support in English as a second language.
- Assessment practice is good. Clear guides for learners set out optional units and assessment methods including video, tape recording, detailed observations, discussion of work and extensive oral questioning that suit different learning preferences and work situations. Assessors keep clear records, which enable detailed, constructive feedback extending learners' knowledge and building their confidence. Managers record the internal verification of portfolios, but do

not focus their verification of assessment sufficiently clearly on the work of individual assessors and learners.

- Interserve's response to learners' training needs and its promotion of a culture of continuing education are outstanding. Some learners have prior experience but few have formal qualifications. Many learners, who were initially reluctant to take part, actively promote the benefits of training to work colleagues, and the take-up of additional training and qualifications is high.
- Partnership arrangements are outstanding. A specialist subcontractor undertakes assessment in a good range of workplaces which contract with Interserve to provide security services. Learners have improved work and promotion opportunities and understand how their learning and enhanced professionalism support the business interests of their employer as well as improving their own prospects.
- Support for learners is good. Assessors carry out their initial visits promptly and have clear targets for the number of visits, learners' completion dates and additional entitlements. Learners and assessors make contact between visits by mobile telephone or email, but not all learners receive necessary information relating to dates and times. Assessors do not routinely plan meetings in advance, which discourages learners' preparation and supervisors' involvement in identifying work-related evidence or witness testimony.
- Leadership and management are good and managers are effective in communicating the values of the organisation to its staff. The provider's staff hold regular, productive meetings with subcontractors. Managers set challenging targets for their own staff and for subcontractors and these are met. Self-assessment is comprehensive and generally accurate, although managers have not analysed and used learners' and stakeholders' views sufficiently well.
- Managers monitor the equality and diversity aspects of provision well. They successfully promote the values of continuing education in an industry which historically has not engaged fully in additional training. The provider has recognised the under representation of women in its training programmes and is actively marketing to tackle this imbalance.

What does Interserve need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the consistency of quality monitoring by incorporating subcontractors' awarding body reports, internal verification records and learners' and stakeholders' views routinely into meetings and the quality review process.
- Set minimum standards for the frequency and booking of assessors' visits and ensure all learners have appropriate contact details for their assessors to maintain their progress and motivation.
- Encourage the use of ICT in learning and self-testing in order to develop learners' responsibility for their own learning.
- Develop strategies to improve the language skills of learners where English is not their first language.

Preparation for life and work

Grade 2

Context

26. Currently 49 learners are enrolled on key skills communications and numeracy courses at foundation and intermediate levels. Interserve offers this provision at four employers through a subcontractor. There are 19 female learners, 37 are from minority ethnic groups and 2 have declared a disability. The programme is managed by the skills quality manager supported by two tutors and a coordinator.

Key findings

- The proportion of learners achieving their aims is satisfactory overall. As a new provider, Interserve initially underestimated the time taken to achieve qualifications and success rates were low. Recent data now indicate overall success rates of 75%, with indications of further improvements in the next two quarters. The rate of achievement within the planned time was low at 27% but is also improving, with 55% confidently predicted in the current quarter, based on learners' progress to date.
- Learners develop a very useful range of numeracy and literacy skills which meet their work demands. These skills include presenting data in charts and tables and interpreting these data to inform oral presentations. Learners describe convincingly how their learning has resulted in their improved ability to collect and interpret data in the form of averages and percentages and to produce resulting reports.
- Learners feel safe and recognise the extensive and very effective arrangements in place to ensure their health, safety and well-being. Managers provide daily briefings which cover points of immediate importance, as well as 'toolbox talks' on a very wide range of personal welfare topics. Security staff reinforce health, safety and welfare at regular briefings
- Teaching and learning are good. Tutors provide sensitive feedback on assignments and offer well-paced explanation of any difficulties encountered by learners. Learners' work shows a wide range of activity relevant to their day-to-day work, including the use of charts, tables and health and safety-related written assignments. On occasion, tutors miss opportunities to develop learners' understanding through concepts being explained by the tutor rather than explored by the learner.
- Initial assessment of learners' skills is satisfactory and, from this, tutors and learners develop learning plans which reflect expected individual progress and achievement. However, tutors do not identify and record sufficiently well the potential personal and social barriers which may adversely affect learning.
- Assessors' planning for assessment is very good. Assessors make particularly effective use of a software programme to record progress. Subcontractors routinely send records of learners' progress to the provider. Some learners use

the potential of this programme as a learning aid, although this is not yet well established.

- Leadership and management are particularly effective. Managers at all levels are committed to values which are fully supported by staff and which are communicated to learners at induction, through frequent briefings and through media such as DVDs, posters and individual cards.
- The commitment to equality is very much in evidence. Learning and assessment arrangements are highly flexible to reflect shift patterns. The staff profile shows wide ethnic diversity. Learners speak enthusiastically about the supportive ethos irrespective of gender or racial origin. The achievement of different groups shows no discernible variations. However, the promotion of learners' understanding of diversity through easily accessible and simplified material is insufficient.
- Support for learners is strong. Each area manager checks learners' progress after each session, both through the written evaluations and personal discussion. Tutors make amendments to planned learning timescales where required. Learners have a good understanding of their programme and of their rights and responsibilities. However, tutors' initial assessment of their needs insufficiently covers personal and social circumstances.

What does Interserve need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve success rates by encouraging greater use by learners of the available ILT facilities and by encouraging learners to articulate their understanding of concepts in their learning sessions.
- Ensure that initial assessment is effective in identifying potential barriers to achievement caused by personal and social issues.
- Deepen learners' understanding of equality of opportunity by making available relevant documents in simplified formats.

Information about the inspection

27. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two 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 funding body, and data on learners and their achievement. This is the provider's first inspection.
28. 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)

Interserve (Facilities Management) 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 Part-time learners	71	71
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?	1	
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>		
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>		
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?	1	
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	1	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2	
Leadership and management	2	2
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	1	
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>		
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	1	
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2	
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2	
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2	
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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