

# The Training and Learning Company

## Focused monitoring visit report

---

**Unique reference number:** 55051

**Name of lead inspector:** Nigel Evans HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 19 May 2011

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** Axis 19  
Axis Court  
Riverside Business Park  
Mallard Way  
Swansea Vale  
Swansea  
SA7 0AJ

**Telephone number:** 017927 00611

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

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

Impact Learning and Data Solutions Ltd trading as The Training and Learning Company (TLC) has held contracts to run apprenticeship programmes since May 2006 and Train to Gain since 2008. TLC runs programmes across the United Kingdom, including Scotland and Wales, working with large companies particularly those in service industries.

The previous inspection was in June 2008 when all areas of the provision were judged to be good. This report focuses on the themes explored during the visit, making judgements about the progress made since the inspection and, in particular, how well TLC managed the growth in apprenticeship numbers and how well it works with large employers.

### **Themes**

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

**What progress has been made in building on the good quality improvement arrangements to improve the provision for learners, share good practice and fully involve all relevant stakeholders in the self-assessment process? Significant progress**

At the inspection, arrangements for quality improvement and self-assessment were judged to be good. Significant progress has been made in the quality improvement arrangements and self-assessment process. TLC's delivery model has changed since the inspection and is now more tailored to meet the needs of individual employers. The high expectations of staff and the commitment to very high standards contribute to the excellent overall performance of TLC. Staff have very clear targets and are given good resources, professional development and support to enable them to achieve their targets.

The quality plan has a strong emphasis on the learner experience and monitors the quality of the provision in a well-structured and comprehensive manner. The links between quality, performance and self-assessment are clear and cohesive. The rigorous and robust selection of employers ensures good commitment from, and involvement by, stakeholders and increases the likelihood of successful outcomes for learners. TLC has built on the successful practice identified at the inspection and developed quality-improvement actions to meet the demanding challenges of their current work with employers. Feedback and evaluations are used effectively to identify necessary improvements and where necessary improvements are identified they are swiftly implemented.

## Outcomes for learners

**What progress has been made in maintaining or improving the outcomes for learners? How well are data used to manage, record and monitor the progress of learners?**

**Significant progress**

TLC has made significant progress in building on the good outcomes for learners since the last inspection. Data show an improving trend in success rates. In 2009/10, overall success rates in the apprenticeship programme were high at some 20 points above the national average. Almost all learners were successful by their planned end dates. In the provider's Train to Gain work, learners' success within the time planned was high. The large majority of these learners gained qualifications in business administration; their timely success rates were around 20 points above the sector average.

Learners indicate how successfully the training has raised their confidence levels and enabled them to perform their job roles better. TLC develops and measures learners' wider employment and social skills well.

## Quality of provision

**What progress has been made in engaging and involving employers in developing and supporting the apprenticeship programmes?**

**Significant progress**

Significant progress has been made in engaging and involving employers. Many employers had negative experiences of working with other training providers and TLC has given them a very positive experience. The provider has, in all cases, focused on the needs of employers and learners providing a high quality, flexible service with excellent support to learners. The use of dedicated assessors who, if necessary, are placed on a full-time basis with employers has been particularly successful in improving success rates and creating excellent communication. The role played by the TLC directors and senior managers in establishing the high standards and expectations of employers is pivotal in ensuring a high level of commitment from employers and line managers. Employers value the very responsive and flexible approach that fits in with their own timescale and business needs. Many employers can identify major improvements in their employees' confidence, motivation and performance following involvement in the apprenticeship programme.

**How effective are recent actions in improving and developing initial assessments for learners and how well are they used to plan and monitor learner progress?**

**Significant progress**

Significant progress in the previously satisfactory initial assessment process has resulted in considerable improvements in personalising, planning and monitoring learning. Assessors are highly skilled in adapting initial assessments to meet the needs of learners and employers and use the results well to discuss potential barriers to success with learners and employers. The replacement of the skills scan by an eligibility checklist, closely related to individual job roles, demonstrates to employers

where potential learners need additional experience or responsibilities in order to complete an apprenticeship, or if a different qualification is more appropriate.

Planned support for learners is well managed and highly effective in enabling learners to gain their qualifications. The very good range of progress monitoring activities ensures learners in danger of making slow progress receive swift and effective additional support, including intensive input from assessors and a responsive and flexible approach to assessments which may involve assessors fitting in with learners' shift patterns.

## **Leadership and management**

### **How well has TLC maintained and further developed the good aspects of leadership and management?**

### **Significant progress**

Leadership and management were good at the last inspection and TLC has made significant progress in building on these good aspects. Improvements in information systems and data management have contributed to improved outcomes for learners, enabling managers to have a clear view of learners' progress, so that they may make timely interventions to support learners who may be falling behind. The performance management and appraisal of staff are transparent and focused sharply on improving the provision. Staff are well qualified, and the provider supports them well in developing their professional practice. TLC provides comprehensive training and continuing professional development. These are planned successfully towards meeting both the development needs of the staff and the requirements of learners and their employers.

### **How well is equality and diversity promoted and reinforced in the apprenticeship programmes and to what extent are employers actively supported in ensuring learners understand equality and diversity as relates to their current and future employment?**

### **Significant progress**

The promotion of equality and diversity was satisfactory at the last inspection, and some of the improvement strategies for this area were at an early stage of development. TLC has made significant progress in improving the promotion and reinforcement of equality and diversity. Improved management information systems support thorough analysis of equality and diversity data. The provider investigates thoroughly possible areas of underachievement by particular groups of learners. Scrutiny of these data reveals no areas of significant underperformance by any group of learners.

The provider works well with partners to recruit learners from under-represented groups. TLC provides numerous examples where working with employers has supported a highly inclusive approach to providing training, successfully removing potential barriers to access for learners, such as those with low levels of basic skills and for whom English is a second or other language. The provider has given additional training to broaden assessors' understanding of equality and diversity in support of this highly inclusive approach. Inspectors noted a number of examples of

the progressive development of learners' understanding of equality and diversity in a relevant occupational context. The self-assessment report identifies rightly that more work needs to be done to ensure the formal recording and evaluation of the impact of this development work with learners and employers. The provider has well-considered plans to rectify this area for improvement.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this report in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1231231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

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

T: 0300 1231231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011