

Kirkdale Industrial Training Services

Inspection report

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Name of lead inspector: Howard Foster HMI

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Information about the provider

1. Kirkdale Industrial Training Services (KITS) is an engineering group training company limited by guarantee and registered as a charity. It is based in Brighouse, West Yorkshire, and serves the metropolitan boroughs of Calderdale and Kirklees. A board of trustees is composed of nine representatives of local engineering employers. KITS holds a contract for the delivery of work-based learning for young people with the Skills Funding Agency. It offers intermediate apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships in engineering. KITS also offers commercial courses and health and safety consultancy services to local companies. Approximately 30% of KITS annual turnover is from commercial activities. KITS has five senior managers and 10 instructors and assessors who are directly involved in the apprenticeship training.

2. KITS has 204 learners in engineering, of whom 76 learners are intermediate apprentices and 128 learners are advanced apprentices. Forty-six of the learners are working towards qualifications in motor vehicle engineering, 120 are mechanical engineers and 38 are electrical engineers. Of the apprentices, 3% are women, 8% are from minority-ethnic groups and 4% have a disability. KITS also trains a small group of 10 learners in engineering on a programme for young people who have not been in education, employment or training prior to their programme. This programme was included in the inspection. Apprentices are employed and gain many of their skills and much of their knowledge through on-the-job training given by their workplace supervisors. They receive off-the-job training at KITS training centre, including training towards their technical certificate supplied by staff from a subcontractor.

3. The following organisation provides training on behalf of the provider:
 - Leeds City College

Type of provision	Number of learners in 2010/11
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	2 learners 119 apprentices

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Grade 3
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3
Subject Areas	Grade
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	3

Overall effectiveness

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Most learners develop good levels of practical skills and also gain valuable additional qualifications. Overall success rates were good in motor vehicle engineering in 2010/11. They were low in mechanical and electrical engineering in 2010/11 but are improving in the current year and learners are making steady progress.
5. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in some areas. The classroom and workshop resources at the training centre are very good. Insufficient use is made of observation evidence in assessments. Progress reviews are satisfactory but targets for learners are not sufficiently specific. Support for learners with additional needs is not systematic but what is provided is effective.
6. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The board of trustees provides satisfactory strategic direction. Managers have good information to enable them to monitor performance and the progress of learners. Safeguarding is good with a strong emphasis on the health and safety of learners. KITS arrangements for equality and diversity are satisfactory. The systems for collecting, analysing and addressing the concerns of learners and employers are not sufficiently effective.

Main findings

- Success rates in motor vehicle engineering were good but those in mechanical and electrical engineering were low in 2010/11. Current learners are making steady progress and the success rates in the current year are improving and are close to the national average.
- Most learners attain good levels of skill during their programme. Their employability skills are good and they gain valuable additional qualifications. Some learners progress to high-level qualifications.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in some areas. The resources and equipment at the training centre are very good. Training in the centre is thoroughly planned but learners' knowledge is not always extended as much as it could be. Training in the workplace is of a high standard.
- Assessment of advanced apprentices by assessors in the workplace is not sufficiently based on observation of learners' competence in performing tasks and activities. Internal verification of assessments in motor vehicle engineering has been allowed to lapse.
- Learners' progress is monitored methodically and slow progress by any of the learners is readily identified. Trainers are given challenging targets and their performance against those targets is reviewed regularly.
- Progress reviews have improved and are satisfactory. They are held frequently and normally involve the learner's workplace supervisor. Trainers take the opportunity to check the health and safety of the learners and to enhance their understanding of equality and diversity. Targets are identified and agreed but they are insufficiently specific and not recorded in enough detail.
- Programmes are flexible and able to meet the needs of learners and employers. Some employers are not sufficiently familiar with the qualification to contribute fully to the planning of learners' training.
- Learners identified as needing additional support in literacy and numeracy receive this help from their trainers. Workplace supervisors also provide support. KITS does not have a specialist literacy and numeracy tutor and the support is not systematic but what is provided is effective.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. KITS has good management information. Frequent meetings are held at all levels. They are purposeful, and decisions and actions are recorded in detail. KITS has successfully adapted to changes but learners have been affected by a high turnover of staff. The board of trustees provides satisfactory strategic direction in meeting the needs of engineering employers and monitors performance effectively.
- Safeguarding is good. Health and safety are given a high priority. Training for staff and learners in safeguarding is good. KITS also promotes safeguarding to the learners' parents.
- Learners have a satisfactory understanding of equality and diversity which is enhanced throughout their programme. Targets for increasing participation by under-represented groups are displayed prominently throughout the training

centre. Actions have been taken over many years to try to increase the number of women engineering apprentices but with little effect.

- Some employers and learners have given critical feedback to KITS on the quality of its provision. The existing systems for collecting and analysing the views of users, and then addressing genuine concerns, are not sufficiently effective. The system of observation is satisfactory and leads to improvements in teaching and learning.

What does KITS need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the success rates of learners in mechanical and electrical engineering by closely monitoring the progress they make and developing action plans to support them if they are making slow progress.
- Increase the proportion of assessments by observation of learners' performance in the workplace so that assessment decisions are based on a more balanced range of evidence.
- Further improve the standard and thoroughness of learners' progress reviews so that the records of the meetings contain more specifically defined targets for learners to achieve by the time of the next progress review.
- Support learners with literacy and numeracy needs using a more systematic approach. The results of initial assessment should be used to plan specific activities drawing on specialist support where it is needed to supplement the support given by trainers and workplace supervisors.
- Implement effective internal verification arrangements in motor vehicle engineering, ensuring sufficient staff are available to check assessment decisions during the learners' programme and to feed back suggestions for improvement.
- Find more effective and innovative ways of encouraging more women and other under-represented groups into training. When actions have been tried over several years and have not yielded results, look for other ways which may be more effective.
- Respond more rapidly and effectively to criticism from learners and employers to improve the quality of the provision. Consider using the existing rigorous complaints process in commercial training to address any significant negative comments made by apprentices and their employers.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- very good workshop and classroom facilities
- helpful advice and guidance
- the supportive working relationships with the trainers
- the opportunity to develop a wide range of skills
- help in finding a job in good companies

- being treated fairly and with respect
- the additional support given to those with learning difficulties
- the relaxed learning atmosphere.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the high turnover of staff which disrupts learning
- the attitude of some staff to the learners, sometimes being rude and ignoring them
- the absence of additional support when requested by some learners.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the high standards of skills gained by the learners
- the experience and knowledge of the trainers
- the regular and frequent visits by trainers to the learners in the workplace
- the involvement of workplace supervisors in planning the training
- the range of additional courses available to learners
- the good resources at the training centre
- the close working relationship between KITS and the employers.

What employers would like to see improved:

- the frequent staff changes
- the lack of improvement after complaining about aspects of the service
- the vagueness of trainers sometimes in explaining what evidence is needed to demonstrate competence.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

7. KITS has satisfactory capacity to make and sustain improvements. Since the previous inspection a substantial investment has been made in resources and equipment at the training centre, which has been to the benefit of learners. Improvements have been made to aspects of the provision, including learners' progress reviews and the promotion of equality and diversity to learners. KITS has maintained the high level of skills development and continues to meet the needs of learners and employers.
8. The success rates in mechanical and electrical engineering have not improved and fell to a low level in 2010/11. The success rates in the current year are improving but not exceeding the national average. The trustees and managers have guided the company through a difficult financial period and have maintained effective monitoring of performance.
9. KITS approach to self-assessment is satisfactory. The self-assessment report identifies the key areas for improvement although they are not fully reflected in some of the grading judgements. KITS uses its frequent meetings effectively as a method of managing improvements to the provision rather than the quality-improvement plan contained in the self-assessment report. Quality-improvement processes, such as observation of teaching and learning, are in place. KITS has received significant negative comments from employers and learners but does not address their concerns in a timely manner.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

10. In 2010/11, the overall success rate for motor vehicle engineering apprentices was close to the national average and was significantly above the national average in terms of those who completed within the planned timescale. The overall success rate and the rate for completion within planned timescales for mechanical and electrical engineering learners dropped in 2010/11 to a low level, considerably below the national average. Several advanced apprentices who were due to complete in 2010/11 left at a very early stage of their four-year programme in 2007. In addition, a significant number of learners transferred to another provider to complete their training. Success rates in the current year are improving substantially and are closer to the national average. Those due to complete in the current year are making steady progress. The success rates of learners from minority-ethnic groups are high.
11. Most learners achieve high levels of skills during their apprenticeship programmes. Many learners gain additional qualifications beyond the requirements of their apprenticeship framework and some also progress to higher-level courses.

12. By the end of their programme, advanced apprentices are highly employable. They often gain promotion to jobs with greater responsibility and have, additionally, developed strong social skills. Learners feel safe and have a good understanding of KITS safeguarding arrangements. They use safe working practices and use the correct personal protective equipment at the training centre and at work.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

13. Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory, although good in some areas. At the training centre, sessions are thoroughly planned and managed. Opportunities to stretch, challenge and extend learners' knowledge are sometimes missed. The classroom facilities and the workshop equipment at KITS training centre are exceptional. Pleasant, new classrooms have been built to accommodate the technical certificate training provided by the subcontractor. The workshops have been recently re-equipped with new machine tools.
14. The training by workplace supervisors is of a high standard. Learners develop vocationally relevant skills, often on complex engineering machines in the workplace. Larger employers have carefully planned on-the-job training programmes for the learners but in some smaller companies the planning is informal. Some employers are not sufficiently familiar with the qualification to contribute fully to the planning of learners' training
15. Assessment of apprentices in the training centre workshop follows satisfactory procedures and ensures learners reach an appropriate standard of competence. Assessment of advanced apprentices in the workplace is based on portfolio evidence with no direct observation by the assessors of the learners' competence in carrying out their work. Internal verification of assessment in motor vehicle engineering has been allowed to lapse.
16. KITS makes good use of electronic portfolios for collecting evidence in motor vehicle engineering. The progress of learners in other areas of engineering is also monitored in detail using other systems. Progress of individual learners is checked frequently and action is taken to address slow progress by any individual. Trainers are given challenging targets for their learners' progress and their manager reviews each trainer's performance at monthly meetings.
17. Learners' progress reviews have improved since the previous inspection and are of a satisfactory standard. They are planned and carried out frequently. Actions are agreed and targets are set at the review meetings which normally include the participation of the workplace supervisor for advanced apprentices. The reviews cover all aspects of the learners' programmes but are insufficiently focused to be of a good standard. Relevant information is recorded but lacks detail and does not contain sufficiently specific targets. Trainers take the opportunity to check learners' health and safety and to enhance their understanding of equality and diversity by asking them questions and discussing the issues.

18. Learners are recruited to programmes to meet their needs and those of their employer. The design of the programmes is sufficiently flexible to allow a close match with the work of the employer, particularly with the availability of the additional qualifications. Some employers do not have sufficient knowledge of the apprenticeship framework and the National Vocational Qualification to contribute to the planning of the training.
19. Learners receive an initial assessment at the start of their programme to identify any additional support needs in literacy and numeracy. Those needing additional support receive adequate support from their trainers and its effectiveness is monitored at progress reviews. KITS does not have a specialist tutor for literacy and numeracy and the support given by trainers is not systematic but it is effective. Workplace supervisors also provide learners with support when it is needed. KITS offers good information, advice and guidance to learners at all stages of their programme.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

20. Leadership and management of the provision are satisfactory. Management information is comprehensive and accessible to all staff and managers. Frequent well-recorded meetings are held to manage the provision at all levels of the company. These meetings are used to monitor the progress of individual learners. Communication is good between KITS and most employers. KITS managers and the subcontractor meet regularly to discuss the technical certificate training. The transition from apprenticeships which start before the learners are employed to apprenticeships in which they are employed from the outset has been challenging and has been managed effectively. The high turnover of staff in some areas has affected the experience of some learners.
21. The board of trustees meets eight times each year. The nine trustees are all representatives of employers. They make a satisfactory contribution to the strategic direction of the company. They are given good information in advance of each meeting and discuss key issues for the company.
22. KITS management of safeguarding is good. Health and safety are given a high priority at all stages of the learners' training. Employers' premises are checked prior to an apprentice starting the programme and at six-monthly intervals. Accidents are reported and investigated. The person designated as responsible for safeguarding is highly experienced and has trained other providers. Good training is given to all staff and learners specifically in safeguarding. KITS also raises the safeguarding awareness of learners' parents during open evenings.
23. KITS has promoted training to under-represented groups over many years. It offers a two-day taster course to one-hundred female school students each year. These have not been effective in significantly increasing the proportion of women on the programmes but the company continues to try. Targets are set and widely displayed in the training centre for participation by under-represented groups, and performance is monitored. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of equality and diversity. Equality and diversity are

fully explained to them at their induction through the good use of case studies. Their understanding is developed further at progress review meetings.

24. The views of employers are collected each year using questionnaires. The responses are satisfactorily analysed but insufficient action is taken in response to the comments. Learners have only recently been asked for their views at the end of their workshop training and have not been asked during or at the end of their advanced apprenticeship. Some learners have significant criticisms of the provision but these have not been acted on in a timely manner. A learners' forum is active in representing the views of learners and has led to improvements, such as better lighting in the fabrication area.
25. Staff have been effectively involved in self-assessment and are committed to its findings. A satisfactory system of observation is in place and the subcontractor gives KITS access to its teaching and learning observation records that are related to the programme. An innovative system of measuring and displaying graphically the quality of learners' work helps to motivate learners to achieve a higher level of skill. Value for money is satisfactory.

Information about the inspection

26. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's skills training manager, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, the previous inspection report, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.
27. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, 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)
Kirkdale Industrial Training Services 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	204	204
Part-time learners	10	10
Overall effectiveness	3	3
Capacity to improve	3	
Outcomes for learners	3	3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3	
How well do learners progress?	3	
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	
Quality of provision	3	3
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3	
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	3	
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	3	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3	
Leadership and management	3	
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2	
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	3	
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2	
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3	
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	4	
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?	3	

*where applicable to the type of provision

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