

DHL International UK Ltd

Employer provider

Inspection dates		19-23 November 2012
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- Overall, most learners achieve their qualifications.
- Learners develop good personal, social and employability skills including vocational skills.
- Progression to higher-level job roles and further learning is good.
- Learners receive good, supportive coaching and mentoring from well-motivated staff at DHL who have high expectations of their employees as learners.
- On-the-job training, which is well supported by in-house trainers and mentors, is good.
- Supportive, assessment methods used in transportation and vehicle maintenance qualifications are very good.
- Able customer service apprentices are stretched and challenged, leading to higher-level English and mathematics functional skills achievements.
- The leadership is excellent.
- Strategic management is very good.
- Quality improvement activities are very effective.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Some planning for learning for the small group of transportation and vehicle maintenance learners is poor.
- The promotion of equality and diversity throughout the learners' programme is not prioritised.
- The self-assessment report and quality improvement plan are poor and do not reflect the good quality improvement activities and training provision.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Develop clearer and personalised learning plans for transportation and vehicle maintenance learners, taking into account an initial assessment of their English and mathematics skills and barriers to learning. Ensure they are on the right level of qualification, are able to progress at a rate appropriate to their needs and improve their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Write a self-assessment report and quality improvement plan that more accurately reflect the quality of training, coaching and assessment at DHL. Give reference to strengths, areas for improvement and actions to maintain and further improve the quality of provision and enable a clear and coherent approach to its development.
- Prioritise the promotion of equality and diversity throughout the learners' training programmes, with particular attention to the content of training. Ensure learners understand and respond to the diversity of customers they work with, and how they adapt their approach to them, to maintain good communication and customer care. As part of this process, continue to reinforce equality and diversity themes through progress reviews, monitoring learners' understanding and behaviours.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall success rates are good with most learners achieving their qualifications. Qualification success rates in 2010/11 for Train to Gain learners at both intermediate and advanced levels in transportation and vehicle maintenance and warehousing and distribution were high. Success rates for administration learners in 2010/11 were satisfactory and close to national rates for all providers. Apprenticeship intermediate and advanced level success rates were outstanding at 96%. ▪ Progress was slow for some Train to Gain learners. Nearly a quarter of learners taking distribution and warehousing qualifications made slow progress and for transportation and vehicle maintenance learners' progress was very slow, with two thirds achieving qualifications beyond their agreed timescales. Only half of administration learners completed on time. However, just over three quarters of marketing and sales apprentices complete within their timescales which is above national rates for all providers. ▪ Success rates for customer service apprentices were high at 86% in 2011/12 and good for advanced apprentices at 80%. Both groups completed their qualifications on time. Learners from different groups do as well as the majority of learners with the exception of advanced level 18 to 24-year-old Train to Gain learners whose success rates were below national rates by nine percentage points. ▪ The development of personal, social and employability skills, including vocational skills, is good. For example, customer service learners develop very good occupational skills through bespoke computer software, or through using complex phone systems. ▪ Learners gain in confidence as a result of completing their qualifications. Supervisors report good work-related skills, including employees increasing in self-esteem and communication skills, and confidently participating in work developments. ▪ Transportation and vehicle maintenance learners demonstrate good vocational skills, completing work tasks well, particularly learners in customer facing roles. Customer service learners develop good independent learning skills through the use of workbooks. ▪ Progression to higher-level job roles and further learning is good. Learners progress at work to specialist departments, for example to the Premier department for large accounts and the service desk for moving parcels from one country to another with no United Kingdom 	

involvement. Learners develop new skills and one learner is seeking to learn French to add to her Spanish.

- Learners are successful in gaining higher-level jobs once they complete their qualifications, such as senior courier roles. Internal training opportunities are good, including a wide range of in-service training and opportunities to take team leading qualifications and management training. All learners are employed and apprentices receive salary increases as they progress through their apprenticeship.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
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- Learners achieve well and develop a wide range of skills because DHL has high expectations of its employees as learners, and a wide range of training and development opportunities are available to all staff at all levels. Those completing the transportation and vehicle maintenance qualifications benefit from good coaching and support from their line managers.
- Learners report good relationships with their assessors and appreciate their ability to put them at ease when assessing their competencies, for example while driving. Staff at DHL are committed to supporting and developing employees and a vast range of learning opportunities are provided including management development courses. DHL managers are good role models for learners who are enthused, well motivated and engaged in their learning.
- On-the-job training is particularly good. In-house trainers who oversee a dedicated group of learners and offer a tutorial support role are very effective and support on-the-job training very well. Experienced and supportive mentors enable learners to maintain engagement and motivation to succeed.
- The apprenticeship programme closely aligned to DHL's own induction and initial staff training scheme recognises learners' skills development from a very early stage of employment. Portfolios of learners' work are well organised. Good, supportive key skills training for customer service apprentices provided by the subcontractor's trainer/assessor, is very effective in helping learners develop their English and mathematics knowledge and skills.
- Initial assessment of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills, for the largest group of learners, is thorough and effective, ensuring learners are on the right programme at the right level and any barriers to learning or engagement identified and concerns remedied. However, the few transportation and vehicle maintenance learners have no initial assessment and planning for individual learning is scarce.
- For the larger group of customer service and administration learners, assessment and review records are good. Reviews focus on the learners' experience of learning at work and effectively help drive learners through their programme and monitor their progress. Assessment and internal verification records for the transportation and vehicle maintenance learners are satisfactory.
- The promotion of English and mathematics is good for the larger group of intermediate and advanced apprentices. Targets set are challenging and stretch learners, for example by taking a higher level of functional skills where appropriate for customer service apprentices.
- Very good supportive assessment methods used to evidence competence for transportation and vehicle maintenance learners include the use of video, digital recording of professional discussions, oral questioning and photographs of product evidence. This is particularly useful for learners' job roles as drivers, but does not encourage the development of learners' literacy skills.
- Information, advice and guidance are appropriate and informal discussions between learners and assessors include exploring opportunities to develop in their job roles and enter further learning. DHL's appraisal system effectively identifies learning and development opportunities and supervisors readily access a wide range of information through the company's intranet. Records are thorough and comprehensive.
- Insufficient priority is given to the promotion of equality and diversity in the content of training, coaching or assessment. Many learners on transportation and vehicle maintenance qualifications

are in customer facing roles, often dealing with customers with disabilities, from different ethnic groups and cultures or with learning difficulties. However, no specific records are kept of how they deal with these customers to ensure their needs are met. Records of learners' responses to equality and diversity questions in progress reviews consist of ticking a box and do not make clear what the learner said or if they could apply equality and diversity principles at work.

Administration and customer service

Apprenticeships

Good

- A high proportion of learners achieve their qualifications because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in customer services and business administration is good. Learners develop social and employability skills such as presentation, problem solving, advertising, listening and questioning skills. Learners make good gains in confidence and say they have increased their self-esteem, which leads to an enhanced development of their social and employability skills.
- Highly effective on-the-job training assists learners in developing vocational skills. Learners receive excellent support through coaching, mentoring, one-to-one sessions with their supervisors and monthly meetings. The applied coaching techniques, use of workbooks and websites encourage learners to develop good independent learning skills. On-the-job training links very effectively with off-the-job training. The induction activities linked to the technical certificate and some aspects of the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) are good. The business administration learners develop good presentation and advertising skills within the context of their employment.
- Learners are highly enthusiastic and motivated. DHL has high expectations of its learners and is committed to learners' success. Learners benefit from effective support at work. Targets set are by supervisors matching DHL business needs to qualification requirements. The checking and reviewing of progress are continuous. Excellent working relationships between the assessors and supervisors foster effective and timely support for learners. The supervisors monitor learners' progress in close collaboration with the assessors. Learners benefit from this relationship in developing skills required for their qualification and business needs. Learners value the support offered by assessors and supervisors.
- Assessment practices are mostly good, meeting the needs of learners and DHL. Learners receive feedback in a variety of ways including verbal, written and recorded feedback. The feedback is timely and learners find it useful and constructive, promoting their progress in learning. However, a few of the feedback records are too general to be helpful. Assessors provide effective formative assessment to develop learners' understanding and to support progress in learning. There are clear links between the formative and summative assessments. Learners know what is expected of them and how they are progressing. Learners value the positive and developmental feedback which increases their confidence.
- Learners develop mathematics, English and information and communication technology skills and consistently apply these skills in their work. Key skills assignments are set in the context of the customer service and administration tasks which learners are able to understand. At the start of the study programme, additional support needs, including in mathematics and English, are accurately identified. For learners that need it, additional learning support through extra workshops, workbooks and one-to-one sessions is helpful and its effectiveness is monitored through progress review meetings.
- The promotion of equality and diversity themes discussed during progress reviews requires improvement. Learners access available resources; however, they have insufficient understanding of equality and diversity and therefore they do not always appreciate the wider implications in the world of work.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leadership is excellent. Training has a very high profile at senior management level and directors recognise the importance of accredited learning to complement the in-house training. Directors have a clear vision for the future development of the training programme in which all staff will be involved.
- Strategic management is very good. Directors set very high standards and have clear strategies which are already effective in implementing the initial stages of the training programme. Well-developed plans to broaden the provision to meet the needs of the company better and to enhance the learning experience are good.
- DHL uses its resources well. Trainers are well qualified occupationally and experienced. They have recently completed a basic teaching qualification and have enrolled onto a further learning and development apprenticeship. The assessors employed by the subcontractors are similarly well qualified and experienced. High-quality learning materials are used to good effect, as is electronic learning.
- Management of the provision is good. Well-managed courses suit the needs of learners and the company. Managers observe the work of the assessors and the trainers and give detailed and helpful feedback to them. The subcontractors observe the work of assessors, although there have been no action points for improvement.
- Managers monitor the carefully negotiated work of the subcontractors to ensure that it fits into the work schedule and in-house training schedule for each learner. Service level agreements specify the exact provision, but this is not always checked sufficiently well as some documentation is incomplete.
- The staff appraisal system is rigorous and supplemented by additional meetings to review performance. Systems to support learners are good with coaching, mentoring and one-to-one support managed well. Managers use team meetings to identify and share good practice across the provision.
- Quality improvement procedures are good. Senior managers have researched the training needs for the whole organisation and plans are well developed for a comprehensive training programme which meets the changing needs of the company. Managers constantly review the content of the training courses to ensure that it is up to date and also suits the varying needs of learners.
- The self-assessment process is inclusive, but the self-assessment report and the quality improvement plan are poor and do not reflect the good quality improvement work which has taken place. Managers collect useful feedback from learners and use it to improve aspects of the provision. DHL has a staff forum and an annual employee opinion survey which managers use to collate staff views and help shape the provision.
- The promotion of equality and diversity requires improvement. DHL has policies and procedures for equality and diversity, but these are not currently up to date and do not refer to new legislation. Recently updated policies are about to be issued. DHL has trained staff in equality and diversity and updated equality and diversity information is made available to staff.
- Equality and diversity themes are introduced at induction but are not followed up at review and learners' understanding of equality and diversity is poor. Managers monitor the performance of different groups and there are no performance gaps. The management of procedures to prevent bullying, harassment and discrimination is effective. DHL meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)**DHL International UK Ltd**

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	Apprenticeships
Overall effectiveness	2	2
Outcomes for learners	2	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Administration	2
Customer service	2

Additional socio-economic information

DHL Express started operations in the UK in 1974 and is today an international company delivering shipments to over 220 countries and territories. It operates from 39 service centres in England and has a head office based at Hounslow in London and two airport hubs at Heathrow and East Midlands. DHL Express is part of the wider DPDHL group and employs over 3,700 staff and operates 1,300 vehicles. Its UK customer service agents are based at East Midlands Airport.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Rosy Belton HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the qualifications and funding manager as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject area listed in the report above.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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