

Southampton Engineering Training Association Ltd (SETA)

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		27–30 November 2012
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
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:

- Learners' success rates and qualifications achieved within planned timescales are high, and have improved each year over the past three years.
- Teaching and learning within practical workshops are particularly good, with the high expectations of trainers driving learners to achieve high levels of technical competence.
- Leaders' clear strategic planning ensures that the training offered meets the needs of learners, employers and the industry very well.
- SETA has developed strong and effective links with the local community through its excellent engagement with employers for both apprenticeship training and private commercial work, and learners' participation in local community projects enhances the positive links further.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- While teaching, learning and assessment are good overall and practical teaching is of a high standard, not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Individual learning plans do not record, in sufficient detail, learners' unique starting points or the specific content of their programme, including the additional skills and qualifications negotiated between learners, their employers and SETA.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is not sufficiently well planned, particularly in theory sessions, to develop learners' understanding of the diverse world around them and how it might influence their future work practices.
- Managers do not yet analyse the information they collect on learners comprehensively enough to track the quality of all learners' activities or identify actions to improve provision.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Develop individual learning plans to include learners' starting points and specific details of their individual programmes so that staff, learners and employers are more aware of the individual needs of each learner when planning training.
- Improve the marking and feedback of learners' written work to include comments on the use of English, punctuation and the correction of spelling mistakes to develop learners' literacy skills more fully.
- Further develop the arrangements for improvement planning by completing the full cycle of the quality monitoring plan, and by analysing and using data more thoroughly.
- Improve the promotion of equality and diversity in teaching situations to broaden learners' knowledge and cultural understanding of the diverse client group with which they work.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Success rates for apprentices have improved each year over the past three years and are very high. The number of learners succeeding within planned timescales has also improved within the same period and is high. The small number of adult learners on workplace learning last year all achieved vocational qualifications, and those on programme with employers this year are making good progress. ▪ Employers work productively with SETA to negotiate additional areas of training to meet the needs of their company. As a result, learners gain a good variety of additional skills and qualifications, such as computer-aided design (CAD), fibre optic jointing and welding. ▪ SETA regularly collates information on different groups and the performance of all learners. This information clearly shows there is no significant difference in the achievement of learners from different backgrounds. ▪ Employers appreciate the considerable progress that learners make in developing high levels of occupational skills that they bring into the workplace. Learners enjoy their training and the standard of the work they produce is consistently high. As a result their employability skills improve significantly. ▪ Learners' progression to higher-level training is particularly good. Over the past three years the rate of apprentices progressing from intermediate to advanced training has increased each year. A small, but improving, number of learners are progressing on to higher education qualifications. 	
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, and is particularly strong in practical workshop sessions. Learners work well, both independently and with their peers, to produce precise and well-presented work. The development of mathematical skills is good. Learners on the bench-fitting course are able to calculate gear ratios and speeds when stripping out and repairing a lathe in the workshop, and pipefitting learners demonstrate a good knowledge and application of the various jointing techniques they use.
- Learners perform well in theory sessions where they undertake research topics and produce assignments. In the better lessons, trainers encourage and assist learners with their research. In a minority of lessons there are not enough activities where learners can share their experiences or opinions, or where they are encouraged to work together to solve problems.

- Trainers have high expectations for the quality of the work they expect learners to produce. Many learners work for companies manufacturing components for the defence, aerospace or oil industries, and the exacting tolerances demanded by these industries reflect the standards of work demanded of learners in the training centre. As a result, learners often exceed the standards required to achieve their qualification.
- The majority of learners meet SETA's exacting requirements of educational qualifications to enrol on advanced apprenticeship programmes. The initial assessment process is comprehensive, using a range of psychometric assessment that includes verbal and non-verbal reasoning. However, these tests are primarily for selection and the results do not feature on individual learning plans. These plans generally do not reflect the individuality of each learner and, in some cases, the bespoke nature of their programmes negotiated to meet their employers' needs.
- The commitment of learners to their studies is very good. Learners take pride in their work and show high levels of enthusiasm for their course and work placements. The quality of portfolios is very good, with a small number now completed electronically.
- Resources are good, with well-equipped workshops that are up to industry standards. Employers donate plant and equipment for training purposes, and its use enhances learners' self-expectation and motivation. Good use is made of computer-based simulation packages to develop theoretical and practical knowledge, and carefully planned assignments further develop learners' understanding and practical fault-finding skills.
- Feedback to learners is well structured and highly supportive, with effective tracking sheets enabling apprentices to plot their progress towards their qualifications. Good and challenging targets are set during progress reviews. Learners are clear on what they have done well and what they need to do to improve, and this helps to keep up the high rate of learners who successfully complete their training within planned timescales.
- Key skills are very well embedded into learners' programmes. The development of mathematics is good, with learners readily applying what they learn in the classroom to practical activities. However, not enough attention is given to correcting mistakes in written English in assignment work.
- Information, advice, guidance and support are good. Apprentices act as good role models during the well-attended open evenings, where they explain the realities of working in engineering to prospective learners and their parents. SETA works closely with employers and learners to help ensure good matches to the intended types of work. The company also provides very effective support if learners need to find replacement employers.
- The planning of how to promote equality and diversity in theory classes requires improvement. Lesson plans do not always clearly indicate what activities trainers will use to promote equality and diversity in lessons, and there are some missed opportunities to discuss the diverse range of the employers' clients. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of their rights and responsibilities and the procedures in place at SETA relating to unfair treatment.
- Learners feel safe. The training centre workshops have stringent requirements for risk assessments and trainers rigorously enforce requirements to wear appropriate personal protective equipment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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- Leadership and strategic management are good. Senior managers have a clear vision for developing SETA's provision and have implemented highly effective strategies that meet the needs of employers and learners very well. The company has implemented a significant change to its qualification framework that is particularly relevant to the needs of employers, and has invested substantially in information and learning technologies since the last inspection.

- Managers have established very effective communication with the board of trustees, all of whom represent local employers. Formal meetings include detailed reports on the progress of, and changes to, the training.
- Operational management is good, ensuring effective communication with all staff, employers and learners. Tutors now share spacious open plan accommodation, which greatly enhances opportunities to share information both within and across teams. More formal team meetings keep staff up to date with new initiatives and enable the sharing of good practice. An annual newsletter provides interesting and useful details about new training initiatives, present and past successes, and information about community projects that learners get involved with.
- The company has a clear aim to improve the quality of teaching through the teaching and learning observation scheme. However, the recording of observations requires further improvement to ensure that records focus more on the learning that is taking place and grades are standardised to agreed criteria.
- Staff value the support from SETA for the good opportunities to develop and gain a range of qualifications, including those for teaching skills and to update or gain additional occupational skills. All tutors now have some type of teaching qualification and a small number of staff are supported to progress to degree-level courses.
- SETA provides specific and very effective training for employers to assist them in mentoring their apprentices in the workplace. Employers were very appreciative of the content and quality of the well-run and well-attended two workshops that took place during the week of the inspection. Employers feel better able, as a result, to support their apprentices.
- Arrangements for self-assessment have improved since the last inspection. A thorough evaluation of the new training programme led to a very useful and detailed report, which all teams will adopt this year, to ensure the views of all staff and learners inform the self-assessment process through this revised structure. The company's quality improvement plan clearly links to the self-assessment report, with regular reviews of identified areas for improvement. Managers collect the views of employers through many informal communications, and more formally during the annual employers' forum.
- Arrangements for monitoring the quality of training require further improvement. While monitoring checks are carried out, managers do not plan them systematically to ensure they cover all activities. SETA has recently developed and implemented an annual quality monitoring plan that clearly identifies all areas of training and learner activities, but this has not yet completed a full cycle.
- SETA meets the needs of its local community very well. Links with employers are excellent and programmes offered by SETA meet the needs of employers and interests of learners exceptionally well. Links with a local special school are well established and pupils attend the training centre half a day a week for practical training, where they have good opportunities to integrating with all learners. Learners are actively involved in local community building and refurbishment projects.
- There is an ethos of mutual respect between SETA staff, learners and employers. An equality and diversity policy and suitable procedures are in place and staff received updated training last year. Staff do not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment and there are clear procedures for reporting any incidents, although none have been reported to date. However, the promotion of equality and diversity in teaching activities is not sufficiently well planned and requires further improvement.
- SETA collates information on applications, starts and performance of different groups of learners, but does not analyse or use it well enough to plan improvements.
- SETA has good safeguarding practices. The provider meets statutory requirements for safeguarding learners, provides good information and contacts for learners, and has effective safeguarding procedures. SETA is particularly diligent at promoting health and safety in the training workshops and in the workplace.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

SETA 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

SETA Ltd	
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 235
	Part-time: 0
CEO	Richard Heighington
Date of previous inspection	November 2009
Website address	www.setatraining.co.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	-	-	-	4	-	19	-	1
Part-time	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	6	2	118	59	-	-		
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City College, Southampton Basingstoke College of Technology Fareham College 							

Additional socio-economic information

The provider operates mainly around Southampton in Hampshire. Last year the percentage of pupils gaining at least five GCSEs at grades A to C was just one percentage point below that of England as a whole. The proportion of the population that is unemployed is significantly higher in Southampton than across the whole of the south east, but just below the national average. The number of people with a level 2 or higher qualification is significantly lower than in the south east as a whole.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Diane Stacey HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the work-based learning 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, and the previous inspection report. 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 and employers; 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.

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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