

JTL

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		10–14 December 2012
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
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:

- Apprentices develop good trade skills, strong technical understanding and achieve qualifications. Most are well on their way to becoming approved electricians and plumbers earning a decent living at a relatively young age.
- Apprentices benefit from good on- and off-the-job teaching, learning and assessment. This includes construction theory and practical skills.
- JTL works very successfully with over 2,500 employers and 140 subcontractors, including colleges, throughout England, providing a broad range of work experience and learning locally.
- Training officers and workplace mentors are occupationally competent, well qualified and knowledgeable. They conduct highly effective reviews that keep apprentices on track to complete their course and fully understand the health and safety implications of their roles.
- Training officers provide timely advice and guidance as well as very effective academic and personal support, especially to apprentices who are made redundant. Recruitment and selection of apprentices is particularly effective.
- Leaders and managers have high ambitions for the apprentices. They set high standards for the training and manage the contracts well to provide invaluable learning for the apprentices.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including feedback, is not consistently good. Few training officers and no work-based recorders have teaching qualifications. Off- and on-the-job learning is not always well coordinated with the employers.
- A small number of apprentices in several regions do not complete their qualifications within the allocated time as evidence gathering is slow and targets in progress reviews are not always specific and measurable.
- The board of JTL do not fully scrutinise the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment.
- The numbers of minority ethnic and female apprentices remains low.
- Tutors do not reinforce equality and diversity in teaching and learning.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Work with subcontracting colleges to further improve the quality of teaching and learning to engage all apprentices fully in learning and provide ample challenge to the more-able ones. Improve the teaching and training skills of the training officers and work-based recorders so that they can provide outstanding levels of on-the-job training and assessment. Ensure that the feedback following assessment consistently details what the apprentices need to do to improve their performance.
- Ensure that all apprentices complete their qualifications in the planned period by introducing evidence gathering for electrical apprentices earlier in the programme so that assessment may begin when they have achieved competence. Through more rigorous monitoring, ensure that all training officers set challenging and more specific targets to the apprentices to enable them to make faster progress and achieve their qualifications in time.
- Ensure the board has a much closer focus on the core business of teaching, learning and assessment that impacts directly on the apprentices' experience.
- Increase the numbers of apprentices from minority ethnic groups and females through planned activities and initiatives including specific positive action programmes.
- Work with all subcontractors to develop the expertise and confidence of all tutors to integrate issues of equality and diversity into all lessons. Ensure that this aspect is clearly included in the contract specifications and monitor it closely during the contract review meetings.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for apprentices	Good
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- Apprentices demonstrate very good electrical, plumbing, heating and ventilating skills as well as technical understanding in workplaces and in classrooms. They are able to identify, locate and rectify faults in building services promptly. Most apprentices produce a high standard of practical and written work and are able to speak confidently about it.
- In-year retention for first year apprentices in the current year has significantly improved and is excellent. Almost all apprentices are making good progress and are on target to achieve by their planned end dates.
- Attendance and punctuality rates are very high. Apprentices enjoy their learning and are very well motivated by the prospects of learning a trade and enhanced earning potential. They feel safe and adopt safe working practices after carrying out thorough risk assessments of their workplaces and tasks.
- Apprentices make good progress in the learning sessions. Most apprentices in plumbing progress to advanced apprenticeship enabling them to improve their skills and knowledge. An increasing number of electrical apprentices progress post-completion to electrical regulations and inspecting and testing courses to become approved electricians.
- Most apprentices improve their skills in mathematics, English and information technology (IT). They acquire good personal thinking and learning skills and are able to work independently and as part of a team. They work very effectively alongside other trades on site, developing a detailed understanding of broader construction work.
- In the past three years, success rates for all types of apprentices have improved after decline in 2009/10. These are still above national average despite the number of redundancies in the building services industry. Although the number of apprentices completing their apprenticeships within the planned time has improved markedly, it is slightly below national average. Some 10% of apprentices are making slow progress.

- For advanced apprentices, which constitutes 84% of the provision, overall success rates have improved after a decline in 2009/10 and are still in line with the high national averages. Success rates are very high for apprentices and advanced apprentices on plumbing programmes, counting for 14% of the total provision. Success rates for a small minority of apprentices in heating and ventilating and engineering maintenance are low.
- Success rates vary significantly across JTL regions. Achievement for males and females are broadly similar but apprentices from minority ethnic groups achieve less well and make slower progress. Apprentices with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve broadly in line with all learners.
- Apprentices gain a good range of highly relevant additional qualifications such as inspecting and testing and 17th edition regulations. Most apprentices achieve their Achievement Measurement 2 skills test at the first attempt. Apprentices leaving early gain skills in English, mathematics and IT skills and many gain technical certificates with the majority joining other college courses.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
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- Apprentices enjoy good teaching, learning and assessment and the highly effective on-the-job training, resulting in the good outcomes and the completion of qualifications in the planned timescale. Teachers and training officers encourage apprentices to achieve high standards at college and on-the-job training. Staff reflect on and evaluate their lessons at most centres and effectively implement required improvements.
- Many apprentices benefit from very good on-the-job training. They work alongside skilled professionals on a wide range of building services work covering large industrial, commercial and domestic installations. They gain good experience on site and develop their skills and understanding well.
- Apprentices are challenged and inspired by good off-the-job teaching in both practical and theory sessions. In the good or outstanding lessons, carefully planned schemes of work ensure sessions meet the needs of most learners through flexible learning. In the weaker lessons teachers fail to challenge the more-able apprentices and do not make effective use of question and answer to check and extend learning.
- Assessment, by highly qualified, technically competent and industrially experienced training officers, is well planned, accurate and reliable. Apprentices benefit from a wide range of assessment activities which helps them make good progress. Electrical installation apprentices develop a broad range of competences and skills from the very start. Training officers follow the awarding organisation requirements and do not introduce apprentices to collecting evidence early enough, resulting in delayed achievement.
- Feedback to apprentices following assessment in college mostly recognises and celebrates good work but does not always provide details of how they can improve further. Similarly, feedback on site is generally positive with little detail of what and how apprentices could improve further. In a minority of centres, assessment feedback is only given verbally and apprentices have difficulty in recalling what they need to do to improve.
- Very effective and timely learner progress reviews help apprentices make good progress towards their framework qualifications and a deeper understanding of health and safety issues. Training officers generally provide good guidance on collecting NVQ evidence. Most apprentices are set challenging targets but for a minority of apprentices targets are not sufficiently specific. The use of short-term targets to improve apprentices' communication, interpersonal and customer services skills is less well developed.
- Apprentices receive very effective academic, pastoral and personal support through their training officers, work-based recorders and teachers. Apprentices who are made redundant are given particularly strong support and the majority are found alternative employment to enable them to complete their apprenticeship. JTL carefully tracks the attendance of apprentices, which

ensures that swift action is taken to support and safeguard learners. A small minority of apprentices are inspired and plan to take higher level qualifications to become engineers.

- Key skills achievement is high. Apprentices demonstrate good skills in English, mathematics and IT using them to research and produce professional quotes for electrical and plumbing work. In many centres the delivery of functional skills is contextualised to building services which makes the learning more relevant to learners. In electrical, many teachers are highly effective in developing apprentices' understanding of key mathematical formulae.
- Recruitment and selection processes are highly effective in recruiting the right apprentices for the apprenticeship programme. Very few apprentices leave the programme early and those who do are carefully guided to join colleges to achieve alternative qualifications. All apprentices receive a comprehensive initial assessment on entry which accurately identifies the learner's level of literacy and numeracy and the need for additional learning support. The support provided is very effective and enables these apprentices to achieve.
- During progress reviews training officers ask in-depth and searching questions relating to equality and diversity on a wide range of subjects. These are effectively linked to the workplace or current issues in the news, resulting in a sensitive and considerate attitude among apprentices. Equality and diversity is less well promoted during teaching and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Managers and staff within JTL promote ambition well and expect high levels of learner performance. Senior managers support regional and functional managers very well, enabling them to contribute effectively to improve the quality of the learners' experience and their outcomes. Since its previous inspection, JTL has successfully dealt with all areas for improvement and maintained its strengths, thus improving its capacity to improve to good levels.
- The newly restructured JTL board of trustees, while focusing on the overall performance of the company, has little focus on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The members have little involvement in the development of the self-assessment report. The independent chairman of the board has robust plans and clear ideas about the direction of the company.
- Managers monitor sub-contracted provision particularly well against a clear, comprehensive and detailed criteria. The auditing and monitoring processes are rigorous. JTL makes good use of learners' views to plan developments. Managers are refining the current observation system used by JTL staff and are working effectively with many sub-contractors to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- The management of staff performance is very effective. Managers appraise staff biannually against the competencies for their role and agree their targets. They monitor these targets appropriately; however, few include actions for the development of interpersonal and team-working skills. Managers use robust data from the management information system to analyse the performance of individual training officers effectively, hold them to account and give helpful support.
- Staff development and training is good and is well managed. The wide ranging programme meets most organisational needs. However, not all training officers have training qualifications to assist them in the critical role of delivering, assessing or quality assuring the on-the-job training of the work-based recorders. Managers monitor training activities well and evaluate the impact on the performance of their staff over time.
- Quality improvement arrangements are working well and are led by a team drawn from across the company. The team evaluates annually the quality of all stages of the learners' experience and takes actions to make improvements. Internal verification is strong and a newly appointed cross-regional internal verifier is beginning to ensure consistency across the regions. Managers use regional meetings informally to share good practice, although this process is not fully effective.

- Most staff members contribute effectively to the process of self-assessment and are aware of the content of the report. The process, accuracy and the content of the report have improved significantly since the previous inspection and now includes clear judgements, most of which inspectors confirmed. However, JTL does not share the report with its subcontractors.
- Communications with employers are mostly good. JTL has recently appointed an external relationships manager to develop new programmes to meet the needs of both existing and new employers. Staff work closely with employers to research and establish new programmes and support their development. One example is a leadership and management course which JTL provides for supervisors and managers in a large construction company.
- JTL effectively meets the needs of many apprentices who become redundant during their course. This includes offering financial incentives to employers who re-employ them. It also negotiates job exchanges, provides additional work and skills development opportunities and enables apprentices to complete their assessments.
- The promotion of equality and diversity at induction and during learners' reviews is very good. The company has developed excellent support materials which enable very good discussions with learners, although the detail is not well recorded during reviews. Promotion within the curriculum is less effective.
- The number of female and minority ethnic apprentices is low. Managers are aware of this and have put in place a number of projects to resolve it. For example, JTL is now training a number of female apprentices to act as ambassadors for the apprenticeship programme. Staff are visiting schools with high numbers of minority ethnic learners. These initiatives are increasing enquiries and enrolments.
- JTL meets its statutory requirements for the safeguarding of learners. All staff working with apprentices have enhanced CRB checks and managers maintain a complete register. Staff handle incidents relating to safeguarding sensitively and confidentially, monitor them carefully and make any necessary external referrals. JTL pays excellent attention to health and safety and apprentices feel safe at work and while training.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

JTL

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
Building services	2

Provider details

JTL	
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all apprentices over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 4,674
	Part-time: 0
Principal/CEO	Denis Hird
Date of previous inspection	March 2008
Website address	www.jtltraining.com

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 apprentices(excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Part-time	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	275	69	3,757	1,013	N/A	N/A		
Number of apprentices aged 14-16	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<div><div></div><div>EAGIT Limited</div><div></div><div>Alpha Building Services Engineering Limited</div><div></div><div>Intaplumb Limited</div><div></div><div>Elearner</div><div></div><div>Construction Training Specialists</div><div></div><div>North West Training Council</div><div></div><div>Trade Skills4U Limited</div><div></div><div>D.C.E.T. Limited</div><div></div><div>P&R Hurt</div><div></div><div>Aldercar Community Language College</div><div></div><div>Laisterdyke Business and Enterprise College and over 100 colleges of further education in England.</div></div>							

Additional socio-economic information

JTL is a work-based learning organisation mainly serving the Building Services Engineering industry. Established in 1990 by the Electrical Contractors' Association and Unite the Union, JTL is a company limited by guarantee and is a registered charity. In March 2012, 2.04 million workers were employed in the UK construction industry, 6.4% of all workforce jobs. The construction industry, particularly house building, has experienced a downturn during the recession. Many of the applicants who apply to join the JTL training programmes have achieved GCSE's at grade A* to

C and some A levels, including a high number of learners joining the JTL scheme from full time courses at colleges.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Harmesh Manghra HMI
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Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the quality assurance manager as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and business plans, the survey report 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 apprentices 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 and graded these in the single subject area of building services.

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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