

McArthur Dean Training Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		11–14 December 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:

- A high proportion of learners achieve their qualifications across the provision.
- Intermediate level apprentices on business administration courses are doing particularly well, with over three quarters of learners achieving within the planned timescale.
- Learners develop good personal, social and employability skills.
- Learners make good progression from intermediate-level programmes to advanced-level programmes and into permanent employment following completion of apprenticeship programmes.
- Assessors meet the needs of learners and employers flexibly and learners who have been made redundant benefit from support that helps them to complete their programmes.
- It makes good use of an online learning tool to motivate learners and to involve their employers in measuring learners' progress.
- Training programmes are managed well, and introduce young learners into the working environment successfully.
- It makes good use of management information systems and data to set challenging targets which have improved the quality of the provision.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- The proportion of learners achieving the full framework before the planned end date is low.
- English and mathematics functional skills are not sufficiently integrated into the teaching, learning and assessment aspects of the programmes.
- There is insufficient critical focus on learning and attainment during observation and evaluation of teaching.
- Not all assessors are confident working with the new online learning tool.
- There is insufficient depth of discussion regarding equality and diversity during learners' reviews.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the observation and evaluation of the teaching and learning processes by adopting a more critical focus on learning and attainment.
- Improve the integration of English and mathematics into the teaching, learning and assessment aspects of the programmes by ensuring assignments capture and reflect naturally occurring tasks in the workplace.
- Increase the number of learners achieving the full framework within the planned timescale by improving monitoring and tracking.
- Increase the effectiveness of the online learning tool by supporting all assessors to improve their confidence in using it.
- Deepen learners' understanding of equality and diversity issues by improving questioning and discussion during reviews.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
------------------------------	------

- Historical data show a significant decrease in both overall success rates and achievement within the planned timescale for the provider in 2010/11. Performance data from previous years indicate an improving trend and were around the national rate. Much of this recent decline was due to the downturn in the economic climate causing many learners to lose their jobs. The provider has worked hard to make up the ground lost following the decrease in success rates for learners. Success rates are now high.
- Intermediate learners on the business administration course are doing particularly well, with very high success rates for 2011/12 with the majority achieving within the planned timescales. Current learners are making good progress.
- There are no significant differences in the achievement of outcomes between different groups of learners apart from underperformance of the over 25 age group, which constitutes a minority of the learners. Current data show improvement. However, a large number of learners do not achieve their qualification within the planned timescale. This is particularly evident for learners aged over 25.
- The outcomes for learners studying English and mathematics are good. However, there is insufficient integration of these subjects into the apprenticeship programmes.
- Learners on business administration courses quickly develop good personal, social and employability skills. They demonstrate valuable practical skills in the workplace and gain a good knowledge and understanding of their work role and business. Learners become more confident and interact well with their work colleagues and customers. Many become responsible for important tasks in their workplaces within several months of starting their training.
- The majority of learners' work is of good quality and meets employers' expectations. All learners enjoy their work and are highly motivated.
- Progression for learners from the intermediate-level to advanced-level programmes is good. High numbers of learners gain permanent employment following completion of their apprenticeship programmes. Learners are able to develop their careers well. A high proportion of learners subsequently take on additional responsibilities through promotion.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, as is reflected in the improved and good outcomes for learners. Teaching and assessment successfully challenge and inspire learners to achieve well. Learners are very clear about what is expected of them and the majority make good progress. Staff work with individual learners and provide personalised coaching and support. Teaching sessions for business administration learners prepare them very effectively for their placements. Teaching sessions for accounting are well planned and contain challenging tasks that successfully engage learners.
- The support and care provided by assessors are particularly strong and secure a good level of engagement from learners. Productive, frequent visits and email contact with learners and employers enable effective teamwork. Processes for placing young learners in companies are well managed. Assessors are appropriately qualified and have relevant experience of the specialist areas they teach.
- Learners' starting points are assessed effectively early in their training. Individual learning plans are well designed and used effectively by staff to agree challenging targets. Staff, learners and employers focus carefully as a team on the selection of optional units to match workplace priorities and learners' aspirations. Procedures to monitor learners' participation and progress have been improved since the last inspection by the introduction of new online assessment and virtual learning resources. These are used effectively by learners and employers to measure learners' progress. Learners frequently access online facilities to submit independently completed work.
- Technology for assessment is used adequately by most staff but only a minority of them assess learners' work online. Online assessment is very efficient and accurate, and aids the development of learners' communication and practical skills. Not all assessors are confident in using the more advanced aspects of the technology.
- Learners receive clear and unambiguous feedback on their achievements. Assessors adapt assessments to suit learner's work patterns well. Regular reviews are clearly focused on learners' progress and staff engage employers well in reviewing achievement and agreeing new targets.
- In teaching sessions, technology is used very effectively to engage learners. Well-structured initial assessment activities ensure learners are working towards the appropriate key and functional skills. Learners who are not required to undertake functional skills training are still provided with support and resources to improve their skills in these areas. Key and functional skills assignments are not always relevant to learners' workplaces and there is insufficient highlighting of these skills within the work context.
- Information, advice and guidance are good. Pre-course information is very clear and helps school-leavers to make appropriate career choices. Learners have a clear picture of the courses and progression routes offered by McArthur Dean. Assessors work carefully with learners and employers to identify appropriate on-the-job training opportunities and progression routes. Learners are supported with additional information to progress to higher qualifications.
- Learners have an adequate awareness of equality and diversity. They develop respect for others' diverse needs and cultures and behave appropriately at work. Assessors routinely check learners' understanding at every progress review; however, the discussions sometimes lack depth. Prejudice and discrimination are addressed suitably, although aspects of learners' employment rights and entitlements receive less attention.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- McArthur Dean provides good leadership and management, has a clear vision and has implemented a range of effective strategies to improve performance and quality. The business

plan, clearly linked to the strategic plan, has detailed annual targets and action points that are frequently monitored. These aspects have improved since the time of the previous inspection.

- Management information is used well by managers and assessors to monitor learners' progress and to set challenging targets. The provider managed the downturn in performance experienced during 2010/11 effectively and has subsequently improved outcomes for learners. Performance management is good, and staff have a clear understanding of individual and company targets to improve achievement rates. Regular team and management meetings that have generated successful initiatives and actions have improved the performance of learners aged over 25 years, and have improved overall success rates. The proportion of learners achieving within their planned timescale however, is still low.
- The provider has established systems to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and staff are observed regularly. However, teaching observations are insufficiently focused on the effectiveness of learning and attainment, and action points resulting from observations are not sufficiently challenging. McArthur Dean follows a quality calendar to ensure improvements across the provision, but reviews of lesson plans are not sufficiently evaluative.
- Managers have invested significantly in modern technology to facilitate the tracking of learners' progress. Many staff use these innovative processes to improve learners' experiences and to contribute to high levels of learner and employer satisfaction. A recently introduced online system has enhanced the management of assessment and the recording of learners' progress. However, not all staff are fully confident in its use. These technologies have enabled the increase in the breadth of independent learning available to learners, for example, through the use of video files of technical skills lessons.
- Self-assessment processes are a key part of the provider's improvement strategy, and provide managers and staff with clear actions for development. The process is inclusive of staff, learners and employers and uses data accurately to reflect the provision. Quality-improvement actions are successful at improving learners' performance and take account of both learners' and employers' feedback.
- Management of the training programmes is good. Off-the-job training is well structured and flexible and meets the needs of learners and employers. The provider has adequate accommodation and good quality training resources. Good collaborative working arrangements with another training provider have provided additional premises in Grimsby. A recruitment team has developed productive and well-established links with employers that provide good quality training and continued employment for learners. Strengthening of the activities of the recruitment team has provided additional support to learners at risk of either leaving the programme or requiring further employment.
- Staff receive regular training and assessment on equality and diversity from an external online provider. Learners have a satisfactory awareness of issues related to equality and diversity. McArthur Dean supports equality and diversity actively through successful initiatives to widen participation of under-represented groups in apprenticeship programmes. Taster courses under the access to apprenticeship programme have high success rates for those not previously in education or training. Targets to increase the numbers of young male learners and of learners from ethnic minorities are being met using local community links.
- In partnership with another training provider, graduation ceremonies give a strong emphasis on learners' success. Local celebrities are used as role models and motivational speakers.
- McArthur Dean has good systems to safeguard learners and meets statutory requirements. A director has designated responsibilities and the provider maintains a complete central list of staff with entries that are updated every three years. Learners have a good awareness of safeguarding and health and safety. Safeguarding is promoted well to learners through the distribution of safeguarding cards and bracelets.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

McArthur Dean Training Limited		
<p>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</p> <p>1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate</p>	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
Accounting and finance	2

Provider details

McArthur Dean Training Limited	
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 450
	Part-time: N/A
Principal/CEO	Audrey Dawson
Date of previous inspection	March 2011
Website address	www.mcarthurdean.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	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+		
	79	52	26	58	3	26		
Number of learners 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:								
N/A								

Additional socio-economic information

McArthur Dean Training Limited (McArthur Dean) was established in 1995. Two directors with responsibility for strategic, financial and operational management, lead a team of 11 assessors and six administrative/business development staff. Accountancy learners attend the centrally located training centre one day each week for theory. All other learners attend one day each week over a 12 week period to complete their technical certificate. All assessments are completed in the workplace.

Hull has a population of approximately 263,900, of whom 7% belong to minority ethnic heritage groups. Hull has one of the lowest employment rates in the UK, with a 15.5% unemployment rate, compared to the national average of 8%. In 2012, 47.4% of pupils attained five GCSEs A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, compared to a national average of 59.4%.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Deavon Baker-Oxley HMI
-----------------------	------------------------

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the director of operational management 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 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 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>

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



Learner View is a new website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk or if you have any questions about Learner View please email Ofsted at: learnerview@ofsted.gov.uk

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, community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email 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.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and provider inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013