

# DCET Training

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		11-14 December 2012
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider requires improvement because:

- Poor punctuality by apprentices is insufficiently challenged and monitored by staff and excessively long breaks during training days disrupt teaching and learning.
- The quality of teaching and learning is not consistently good or better in theory sessions.
- Processes to evaluate and improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are weak.
- Self-assessment and quality improvement processes, including the use of data for target setting and decision making, are weak.
- The promotion and reinforcement of equality and diversity within teaching and learning and progress reviews are insufficiently well developed.

#### This provider has the following strengths:

- Overall success rates are consistently high and most apprentices complete within the planned period.
- The majority of apprentices are highly motivated and ambitious and develop good technical skills. They successfully engage in a wide range of activities in the workplace and many move to positions involving high levels of responsibility.
- The provider has a well-informed understanding of the industry through long established, very effective and productive relationships with employers. Employers value DCET Training (DCET) highly and have continued to use the provider over a number of years to help recruit employees and to access bespoke training.
- Apprentices benefit from good practical teaching and learning and thorough workplace assessment by staff with high levels of expertise and knowledge of the industry.
- Apprentices develop a good understanding of health and safety which matches the very high expectations of DCET and the industry.

## Full report

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning of theory through better planning and the use of a greater variety of strategies so that sessions provide a more stimulating experience and become consistently good or better.
- Further develop systems for tracking learners' progress so that staff, apprentices and employers can access information on all aspects of the apprenticeship programme.
- Ensure that functional skills are introduced into the apprenticeship programme as planned to ensure that apprentices' needs are fully met.
- Improve the teaching and learning observation process to ensure that it is reliable and it provides accurate and clear judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. Ensure that the process is integrated into self-assessment and quality improvement planning.
- Improve the effectiveness of all staff through the setting and monitoring of comprehensive and challenging performance targets that lead to continuous improvement.
- Fully develop and implement accurate self-assessment and action planning processes and ensure that they are used constructively and effectively to prioritise improvement in all aspects of DCET's training programmes against key performance targets.
- Introduce more constructive and relevant discussions of equality and diversity in teaching, learning and progress reviews so that apprentices' understanding is better informed and further developed.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- Outcomes for advanced apprentices at DCET are good. Overall success rates have remained above national averages for the last three years, although they fell in 2010/11. In 2011/12 success rates rose to 8 percentage points above the national average. Since the previous inspection, the rate at which apprentices succeed by their agreed end date has significantly improved.
- There is little difference in the achievement of different groups. However, overall, some learners aged 16 to 18 do not achieve as well as those aged over 19. This difference is mainly due to redundancies and job losses in the industry. DCET works well and successfully with employers and most apprentices soon find employment with other companies.
- Most apprentices make good progress in the workplace, reflecting the high standards required by the industry. They take on high levels of responsibility in their employment, including supervising new apprentices. Apprentices develop good technical skills and work with high levels of confidence. They are highly motivated and ambitious and their work and contributions are valued by employers. One apprentice was given joint responsibility for first fixing the wiring in a barn conversion. He was able accurately to set out and install cabling to a client specification in preparation for the other trades to follow.
- Apprentices gain good personal, social and employability skills through the good guidance given by employers, trainers and assessors. They receive appropriate advice and guidance to support their further development and enhance their promotion prospects. Most gain additional awards during their apprenticeship.
- Attendance at the training centres is generally good. However, some apprentices arrive late for learning sessions and their poor punctuality is not always challenged. Breaks in electrical theory teaching and learning sessions are too long at both centres. Morning breaks of three quarters of

an hour inhibit the continuity of teaching and learning and significantly reduce the time available for teaching and learning.

- Apprentices make insufficient progress towards the development and achievement of functional skills which are not yet an integral part of the apprenticeship programme. Opportunities are being missed in the early stages of the programme to support apprentices and help them work towards functional skills qualifications.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. Most apprentices are making appropriate progress towards completing their qualifications within planned timescales. Training staff having good industrial experience and, along with employers, have high expectations of apprentices and develop their confidence and self-esteem both in the workplace and at DCET.
- Apprentices develop or enhance good personal, social and employability skills to improve their effectiveness in the workplace. At work and at DCET they are able to work independently and as part of teams whilst solving problems relating to various electrical tasks. In addition, many are promoted to positions of increased responsibility within their workplace. One apprentice on site was able to liaise effectively with a client about precise electrical detailing of an installation and communicate clearly with all parties as to how and when work would be achieved to the client's wishes.
- Attendance monitoring at DCET is very effective. Employers are notified promptly of apprentices' non attendance at DCET using a range of communications, such as email and telephone. Employers value highly the attendance reporting arrangements, especially the flexibility as to how they are notified. However, employers are not routinely informed of any issues concerning punctuality when apprentices are attending the DCET training centres.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in practical training sessions are good. In these sessions trainers plan learning well and use their good industrial knowledge to develop learning tasks. Learning is productive and purposeful and carried out within a safe environment. Apprentices develop good practical skills which include challenging tasks for the more able which reinforce the development of employability skills in the workplace.
- In theory sessions, teaching, learning and assessment are less effective and need to be improved. In these sessions, too much teaching fails to stimulate. Teachers use a narrow range of teaching strategies that fail to fully engage all apprentices and do not focus sufficiently on learning. The pace is often slow and sessions are dominated by trainer-led activities which do not include regular checking or monitoring of progress. Questioning techniques by staff are under developed. Lateness often disrupts the learning activity. In addition, excessively long mid-morning breaks inhibit the continuity of teaching and learning in electrical theory sessions.
- Support for apprentices from employers in the workplace is good. Employers are supportive, caring and provide a broad range of on-site work opportunities. They ensure apprentices develop a full range of skills by practising electrical tasks that meet their needs and the requirements of the apprenticeship programme. Initial assessment of skills is adequate, but is not routinely used to inform the planning of individual learning in sessions or in progress reviews.
- Assessment in the workplace is effective. It is accurate and thorough and includes good questioning by assessors to check learning and understanding. However, assessors do not systematically record apprentices' responses. In addition, staff do not always set written targets in both assessment feedback and progress reviews that would stretch, challenge and further develop technical skills and understanding.
- The teaching and learning of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) skills is adequate overall. Skills are developed through a range of contextualised assignments which adequately prepare most apprentices to gain key skills

qualifications. In a few cases, for those who are initially assessed as having weak English skills, appropriately planned individual support is not offered early enough in their programme. Further opportunities to develop English and mathematical skills in theory and practical sessions are sometimes missed and, in a minority of cases, spelling and grammatical errors in assignment work are not corrected.

- Advice, guidance and support help to motivate apprentices to succeed and make the most of opportunities to enhance their career prospects. Most apprentices gain additional qualifications including first aid and the Electrotechnical Certification Scheme card as part of the apprenticeship. They also benefit from financially discounted specialised training offered by DCET.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is insufficiently reinforced. Topics related to bullying, harassment and equality and diversity are explored both at induction and in progress reviews. However, opportunities to broaden understanding and awareness in reviews and in teaching and learning are often missed.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Requires improvement

- The effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement. Leaders and senior managers have a clear and ambitious vision for the future of the provision and are working closely with partners and other agencies to consolidate their position in the sector. In spite of weaknesses in leadership and management, overall success rates have continued to remain high over the past three years, as apprentices are highly motivated and ambitious. In addition, their employers provide good support and training and help them to develop high level technical skills and achieve their qualifications.
- Managers ensure appropriate careers advice and guidance are given to learners. Learners' and employers' experiences are good and learners improve their confidence, employability and vocational skills. Some apprentices gain promotion, or additional qualifications to enhance their future career prospects.
- Teaching and learning in theory classes are too variable and require improvement. The quality of learning resources is generally adequate and good investment has been made in new training centres in Cornwall and Exeter. Observations of teaching are undertaken regularly but there is no clear and effective structure for this. There is an insufficiently clear focus on what constitutes effective learning within observations and there is inadequate moderation of findings. The feedback following observations does not give a clear indication of what makes a lesson good or outstanding so that managers are unable to accurately evaluate the overall quality or share best practices.
- Links with employers, schools and local providers are particularly good and are further strengthened through involvement with local employer and training groups. The curriculum effectively meets the needs of apprentices and employers within the specialist sector. Senior managers clearly understand the needs of employers and the local community that it serves.
- Self-assessment and planning for improvement are poor. Although the self-assessment report draws on the views of apprentices, employers and staff, the use of data to inform decision making is weak. The self-assessment report is overly descriptive and insufficiently evaluative. There is insufficient attention given to the areas that need to be addressed and the quality improvement plan is poor.
- Performance reviews and annual appraisals are carried out. However, they do not sufficiently identify clear, robust targets for improvement to individual performance. Staff training and development focuses too much on updating technical skills, with insufficient attention given to the development of pedagogical expertise and other important areas such as functional skills.
- The provider has delayed the integration of functional skills into the apprenticeship programme, to meet the needs and requirements of employers. Plans are in place to introduce functional skills in February 2013, but opportunities are missed to help apprentices develop skills during

the early stages of their programme. Most staff do not have intermediate qualifications or above in literacy and numeracy in order to provide adequate support for learners for the planned implementation of functional skills.

- Equalities data are appropriately collated. However, information about the performance of different groups, for example by age, centre, training classes and stages through the programme, is not systematically analysed to identify any issues. This was identified at the last inspection in 2008. DCET staff are kept up to date with legislation about equality and diversity, although there is insufficient reinforcement in teaching and learning sessions and some progress reviews. DCET staff regularly visit local schools to explain career opportunities and promote the sector.
- DCET meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding learners and there are two named safeguarding officers. Health and safety are high on the agenda in the training programmes and thoroughly reinforced.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### DCET Training

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Building Services</b>	<b>3</b>

## Provider details

DCET Training	
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 156
	Part-time: n/a
Principal/CEO	Mr Bob Dow (Chairman)
Date of previous inspection	March 2008
Website address	www.dcet.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+
<b>Full-time</b>	n/n	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Part-time</b>	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+		
	n/a	n/a	80	76	n/a	n/a		
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

DCET Training is the trading name for D.C.E.T. Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Inspiras Ltd. It provides advanced apprenticeship programmes in electrical installation across Devon, Somerset and Cornwall. The provider has training centres in Exeter and Redruth. The number of pupils attaining five GCSEs at A\* to C in the South West is 2.7% below the national average. Unemployment is 2% below the national average. The main employment in the region is manufacturing, construction and the wholesale and retail trade and there is a reasonable proportion of employment in areas supported by DCET Training.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Bob Cowdrey HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the managing director designate 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 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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