

# Inspire 2 Independence Ltd

## Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		14–18 January 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
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:

- The proportion of apprentices successfully completing their frameworks during its first full year of delivery was low.
- Target-setting is not of a consistently high standard to ensure that all learners make rapid progress.
- Arrangements for planning and teaching functional skills are insufficiently developed.
- The new quality improvement arrangements are insufficiently embedded to provide sufficient evaluation of key learning processes, particularly the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Although a large amount of management information is collated it is not always analysed in sufficient detail to fully inform planning and quality improvement.

### This provider has the following strengths:

- Good completion within planned timescales for other workplace learners and very good achievement for classroom-based learners.
- Assessors skilfully support and motivate learners ensuring that they enjoy their learning and develop good personal and professional skills.
- The company has a clear strategic direction which is well informed by local and national priorities with a strong focus on quality improvement.
- The company works very effectively with employers to meet their needs and the needs of learners.
- Good promotion of equality and diversity to learners who show a good understanding in the context of their job roles.

## Full report

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

- Increase the numbers of learners successfully completing their apprenticeships within their planned timescales by closely monitoring the impact of improvement actions taken to ensure their effectiveness.
- Improve the standard of short- and medium-term target-setting so that learners are clearly focused on what they need to learn.
- In addition to the good oral feedback provide comprehensive written feedback following assessment that gives learners detailed guidance about how to improve.
- Strengthen all aspects of the functional skills provision so that learners are expertly guided and helped to succeed in their functional skills examinations.
- Accelerate the embedding of the new quality improvement process to evaluate all key learning processes and link findings to quality improvement targets for staff.
- Amend the observation of teaching, learning and assessment process to ensure it more clearly focuses on learning taking place, identifies areas for staff development and shares good practice throughout the provision.
- Improve the detailed analysis and use of the existing management information to better inform the planning of provision and further links with quality improvement.

### Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Following good success rates on Train to Gain programmes where most learners successfully completed their qualifications within the planned timescales, the success rates on apprenticeships were low in 2011/12, the first full year of delivery. The reasons for the low apprenticeship success rates were quickly identified by Inspire 2 Independence (i2i) and actions taken to remedy the situation.</li> <li>▪ The in-year data indicates that retention of apprentices and the proportion of those successfully achieving their frameworks has improved significantly from the same period in the previous year. The monitoring of current apprentices shows the large majority of them to be making at least satisfactory progress. There are no significant variations in the performance of different groups of learners.</li> <li>▪ The success rates on the classroom-based provision, where short vocational business related qualifications at level 2 are delivered to clients on the Department of Work and Pensions funded Work Programme, are also good with most successfully achieving.</li> <li>▪ Learners demonstrate good workplace and communication skills. For example, one learner showed a good understanding of security issues at the point of sale. Another showed good customer support skills guiding a customer to purchase the right amount of fabric for curtains, allowing for gather and drop around the size of window.</li> <li>▪ Learners enjoy their studies and all learners confirmed that their studies had increased personal confidence and motivation. One learner in particular who had come back into retail after a period in a different occupation was very pleased at how the programme had quickly helped her to improve her self-confidence and competence.</li> <li>▪ Two very large employers confirmed that the engagement of learners with the programmes had resulted in good business benefits and, in particular, contributed to a significant reduction in staff turnover.</li> </ul>	

- It is too early to judge the rate of progression for the apprenticeship provision although for the previous Train to Gain provision it was low. Anecdotal evidence shows some learners taking on more responsibility or gaining promotion. However, i2i staff recognise that they do not routinely collect this information from employers and are currently devising processes to do this in a systematic way.

### **The quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, which is reflected in the outcomes for learners. All assessors visit learners frequently in their workplaces for the purposes of coaching and assessing them. Most assessors use a good range of assessment practices although in some cases there is an over-reliance on professional discussion.
- The better coaching sessions are carefully planned to meet the needs of individual learners. Good emphasis is placed on learning and practical learner-centred activities and very good links are made between the topics being learned and their relevance to learners' work roles, which learners find particularly motivating. In classroom-based sessions in business, learners are actively engaged in learning and there are thorough checks on learning. Some apprentices derive considerable satisfaction from researching and discovering knowledge for themselves.
- In the weaker coaching sessions, too much emphasis is placed on teaching and learners are not sufficiently empowered to become active learners. Insufficient checks are made on learning. Short- and medium-term targets are not specific enough to guide learning. Some learners are not sufficiently challenged.
- Good use is made of assessors' skills and expertise to plan assessment and meet individual learners' needs. Most assessors are well-qualified, with relevant industrial and commercial experience which they use effectively to motivate learners. Learners enjoy their learning and benefit personally and professionally from it.
- Very good relationships have been developed with employers. Employers are encouraged to become involved with apprentices' training and assessment. Many apprentices have good opportunities to attend in-company training events, a significant number of which are directly relevant to their occupational diplomas and technical certificates. For example, an employment related services apprentice attended in-house training in safeguarding, equality and diversity, and data security, all of which were directly relevant to her level 3 diploma as well as to her work role.
- Programme-related initial assessment satisfactorily identifies learners' existing competencies and their training needs. However, the results are not always used effectively to plan individual training programmes that focus on what each apprentice needs to learn within defined periods of time. Some individual learning plans are too general and do not focus on the specific learning that is required.
- Learners receive frequent oral and written feedback after their learning has been assessed. Oral feedback is good but written feedback is insufficiently detailed and specific. Spelling and grammatical errors are not routinely corrected and learners' oral errors are not always corrected.
- The provider recognises that functional skills provision is underdeveloped and is currently working to improve this. Initial assessment requires improvement, there is no systematic diagnostic assessment and learners do not have clearly defined learning targets for developing their functional skills. Too few assessors have qualifications in English, mathematics and information and communication technology at a sufficiently high level to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to deliver functional skills competently. Learning resources for functional skills are inadequate and functional skills are insufficiently embedded into apprenticeship programmes.
- Learners receive good information, advice and guidance pre-entry, mid-course and on exit. Additionally, good opportunities are provided for them to receive appropriate advice and guidance at other times when the need arises. Good use is made of external agencies dealing,

for example, with homelessness and housing issues, drugs and alcohol misuse, and money and debt management when learners require specialist advice. This helps them to remain on programme and succeed when otherwise they would terminate their studies.

- The development of learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity is good overall. A comprehensive equality and diversity handbook provides learners with highly relevant and extensive information.

## Retailing and wholesaling

### Apprenticeships

### Other work based learning

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement as do learners' success rates. The standard of learners' work in most portfolios is adequate. Most assessors use a good range of assessment methods but for a minority of learners there is an over-reliance on professional discussions as the main method of assessment.
- Assessors are well-qualified with relevant industrial and commercial experience. They skilfully motivate and support learners to make good progress and achieve their qualifications. For example, a homeless learner received very good support to find hostel accommodation and was able to stay on the programme. Very good links have been established with employers in the retail industry.
- Coaching is effectively planned to meet learners' needs. Clear links are made between the topics learned and their relevance to the work roles, which motivates learners. Learning resources are satisfactory. Information and communication technology is mostly used well although some missed opportunities for its use restrict opportunities for self-learning and enhanced skill development in those instances.
- Action planning requires improvement. Assessors identify actions and targets for learners rather than involving them in the target-setting process. In a minority of instances opportunities to use workplace activities as a basis for action planning and assessment are missed.
- All learners receive detailed oral feedback following assessment. Written feedback is limited and does not give learners sufficient guidance about how they can improve. Spelling and grammatical errors are not routinely corrected.
- The initial assessment of learners' starting points is appropriate. The assessment outcomes are used satisfactorily to inform individual learning plans. Reviews are frequent and progress is systematically monitored.
- Most learners make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. However, as the provider is aware, some assessors are not sufficiently skilled at supporting their learners with functional skills. Opportunities to integrate English and mathematics into on- and off-the-job learning are not used and this has had an adverse impact on learners completing their apprenticeship framework by the planned end date.
- Learners feel safe in the workplace. Information, advice and guidance are good and they help to motivate and inspire learners to progress and succeed. Good use is made of external organisations to which learners are referred if they need specialised advice such as that relating to drugs and alcohol misuse, money management and homelessness.
- Equality and diversity are promoted effectively. They are introduced at initial assessment through the use of a comprehensive resource pack and followed up at each visit. Very relevant real-life scenarios on equality and diversity, health and safety and safeguarding are discussed with learners. Business scenarios are discussed which further enhances learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity.

**Business Studies****Apprenticeships****Other work based learning****Learning programmes for 19+**

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement as do outcomes for learners. In the better classroom-based sessions learners are actively engaged in learning, the pace of learning is appropriate and there are regular and thorough checks on learning. Feedback is supportive and developmental and it ensures that learners are clear about their progress and what they still have to do to succeed.
- In the weaker sessions there is too much emphasis on teaching and insufficient learner engagement and interaction. Checks on learning are restricted to the review of previous activities rather than on what was learned. Learners do not have enough opportunities to develop and demonstrate independent learning skills.
- Effective assessment practices enable learners to demonstrate their competence. Most assessments are satisfactorily planned. Learners are encouraged to self-assess and reflect on their progress.
- Learners clearly enjoy their learning. They receive very good support from assessors that meets their individual needs and motivates them to succeed. Assessors visit learners in their workplace at least once every four weeks and more frequently when the need arises.
- In the classroom good use is made of information and communication technology to enhance delivery and support learner engagement. Most assessors use digital voice-recording equipment skilfully to support the assessment process, in particular during observations and for professional discussions.
- Satisfactory short- and long-term learning targets are set during progress reviews and these are negotiated with learners and line managers. Although some assessors plan and set targets with learners to ensure early completion of all elements of the apprenticeship framework, some weak target-setting results in learners not completing by their planned end date. Some individual learning plans are very general and insufficiently focused on the specific learning that is required.
- Carefully structured oral feedback supports learners to develop the ability to self-assess against outcomes and take responsibility for their own learning. Clear guidance identifies actions that help learners to progress towards completion of their framework. However, written feedback is insufficiently detailed and spelling and grammatical errors are not routinely corrected. Errors in spoken English are not always corrected and learners' vocabularies are not extended.
- Most learners work towards functional skills qualifications relevant to the level of their framework, although some learners receive good encouragement to achieve functional skills at a higher level. Initial assessment of functional skills does not identify learners' weaknesses in sufficient detail to inform planning and support. As recognised by the provider, functional skills are not embedded in business contexts, and some assessors lack the skills and expertise to provide effective support.
- Information, advice and guidance are thorough and enable learners to make informed career choices. Correctly timed advice and guidance throughout their training helps learners to progress to the next stage. Some learners progress from intermediate to advanced level while others progress to programmes that are relevant to their new job role.
- Learners have a good understanding of equality and diversity. Equality and diversity are effectively embedded in teaching, learning and assessment. Skilful questioning and meaningful discussions in progress reviews extend learners' knowledge and understanding in the context of their job role.

**The effectiveness of leadership and management****Requires improvement**

- A clear strategic vision is well informed by local and national priorities. A key priority for the company is to better integrate the skills aspects of their work with the significantly larger Department for Work and Pensions funded Work Programme. Staff have a good understanding of the company's objectives and value the open style of management.
- Links with employers are very good and i2i is very effective at identifying their specific training needs and linking this to accredited qualifications to benefit learners. One large retail employer provides assessors with very good professional development to ensure they are up-to-date with company developments and able to fully contextualise their visits to learners.
- The overall performance management of staff is effective at improving success rates but insufficiently focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The operational day-to-day management of individual staff performance is generally good with under performance of learner achievement being routinely monitored and challenged.
- Although managers effectively use detailed management information to analyse the performance of individual tutors and programmes they do not carry out sufficiently detailed analysis to fully contribute to the setting of targets for quality improvement.
- Self-assessment is thorough with a well-structured approach involving all staff who have a good understanding of the process and how it links to quality improvement. The self-assessment process also includes the views of employers and learners although it is recognised that this needs to be further developed. The self-assessment report accurately reflects most of the inspection findings.
- Senior managers have recently re-structured the skills arm of i2i to better focus on quality improvement of the newly introduced apprenticeship programmes. New quality improvement systems have been introduced but are not yet sufficiently embedded to provide a detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of the overall quality of key learning process.
- The system for the observation of teaching, learning and assessment has been improved but is still too focused on teaching and does not sufficiently consider the learning taking place in observed sessions.
- The planning and management of retailing and business programmes are effective. On and off-the-job learning is well structured to provide flexible delivery and assessment to meet the individual needs of employers and learners. Learning programmes are well planned and managed with a strong focus on developing learners' employability skills.
- The coordination and management of functional skills requires improvement with insufficient development of staff to ensure that all learners are supported in achieving their qualification in a timely manner. This was recognised by the provider in its self-assessment and actions identified in the quality improvement plan, although it is too early to judge their effectiveness or impact.
- Learners are supported well by assessors who have a good understanding of external organisations that they can refer to for wider support needs. However, no overall formal strategy is in place to guide assessors on the identification and support for learners who require specific additional help with their learning.
- The arrangements for safeguarding learners meet the statutory requirements. Learners feel safe and staff have received appropriate training in how to recognise and report any safeguarding concerns.
- The management and promotion of equality and diversity is good. A current equality and diversity policy is in place which covers all the relevant discrimination legislation and provides clear information for staff and learners on standards of behaviour expected by the company. Equality and diversity training is covered at the staff induction and is then routinely reinforced on a quarterly basis.
- A well-produced, detailed and very informative equality and diversity workbook has been introduced to enable assessors to reinforce and develop learners understanding. Learners'

understanding of the wider aspects of equality and diversity within the context of their workplaces and job roles is good.



## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Inspire 2 Independence Ltd

<b>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</b>  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	<b>Overall</b>	<b>19+ Learning programmes</b>	<b>Apprenticeships</b>	<b>Other work- based learning</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	3	3	3	3
Outcomes for learners	3	2	3	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	3	3	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	3	3	3

<b>Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Retailing and wholesaling</b>	3
<b>Business Studies</b>	3

## Provider details

<b>Inspire 2 Independence Ltd</b>	
<b>Type of provider</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16+
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	Full-time: nil
	Part-time: 1,400
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Matthew Gore
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	January 2010
<b>Website address</b>	www.enteri2i.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 learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time								
Part-time				254		1		
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	10	214	1	109				
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

Inspire 2 Independence Ltd is a private training provider founded in 2004 and is based in York. In addition to the training funded through the Skills Funding Agency i2i acts as a subcontractor delivering the Department of Works and Pension funded Work Programme. The Skills Funding Agency contracts account for approximately 8% of i2i's annual revenue. The skills division of the business delivers provision in Yorkshire and Humberside, North West, North East, East Midlands and West Midlands. In addition to apprenticeships in retailing, administration, customer service, team leading and management, which were graded during the inspection, i2i also delivers an apprenticeship in employment related services for persons working within that occupation. Short qualifications at level 2 are also offered in business related subjects to clients on the Work Programme seeking employment in those areas.

## Information about this inspection

<b>Lead inspector</b>	Mike White HMI
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Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the head of skills 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 that was within scope. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas 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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