

ISS UK Ltd (ISS)

Employer

Inspection dates		14-18 January 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate-4
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 develop a good range of skills and knowledge including practical application of theory to their day-to-day work. Many learners make significant gains in confidence and achieve promotions to charge hand, supervisor, team leader or manager.
- Support from assessors is good. The frequency of visits and the contacts between such visits helps learners to maintain energy and enthusiasm. Assessors use good quality paper-based and online resources to support learning.
- Assessment of functional skills needs is effective, and learners develop good information and communication technology (ICT) skills.
- Senior managers and directors provide very good support for the apprenticeship provision. Strategic planning of training and corporate responsibility activities is excellent.
- Managers have worked effectively to improve provision since the previous inspection. Current subcontractor management is much improved. Measures to evaluate the quality of provision are effective.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- At a small number of workplaces learners do not have access to computers or the internet so that they can use the good quality online learning materials. This particularly disadvantages those who do not have computers or an internet connection at home.
- There are not enough training and learning opportunities to raise quickly the confidence and skills of the small number of learners who enter programmes with significant support needs in English and mathematics.
- Intermediate apprenticeships do not offer enough challenge for those who have held supervisor or management jobs. ISS has recently introduced advanced apprenticeships but it is too early to judge their effectiveness.
- A small number of trainers and learners focus their attention on the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), without giving enough attention to functional skills and the technical certificate elements, and not all learners receive written outcomes from their review meetings.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Develop wider training and learning opportunities for the small numbers of learners with significant identified needs in English and mathematics so they may make more rapid progress from the start of training, and ensure that learning programmes offer sufficient challenge for those learners with substantial prior knowledge and experience of supervisory or management roles.
- Provide learners with a written record of review and target setting discussions to supplement the current digital recording of such discussions so that they may consider their progress and plan more effectively to meet targets between review meetings.
- Improve workplace information and advice at the start of training so that all learners fully understand the whole apprenticeship framework requirements, and ensure that during training the outcomes of reviews are given to all learners.
- Ensure that all learners have sufficient access to computers and the internet at their workplaces to enhance their learning experience and allow them to take full advantage of the good quality online learning resources available.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Outcomes for apprentices across all subject areas at ISS are good, as was the case at the previous inspection. Overall apprenticeship success rates in business administration and law have improved since the previous inspection and remain above average, with a very large majority of apprentices completing their programmes within the expected time.
- In customer service, an area that makes up approximately one third of provision, all apprentices completed their programmes within the expected time. In service industries, there has been a very significant increase in the number of apprentices achieving their qualifications since the previous inspection, and the number achieving within the planned time now stands around the national average. Success rates for those learners from minority ethnic groups, and for those with disabilities or specific individual needs, closely match overall figures.
- Learners make good progress from their starting points. Many learners make significant gains in confidence and achieve promotions to charge hand, supervisor, team leader or manager within the company. Learners value and benefit from a company culture that strongly encourages progression and the development of individual capacity. Promotions and progression through job roles are well supported, with good mentoring arrangements in place.
- The large majority of ISS learners develop a wide range of skills and knowledge including the practical application of theory to their day-to-day work. Learners develop job-related skills in, for example, health and safety, manual handling, customer care, conflict management and corporate responsibility, all highly relevant to their day-to-day employment. In hospital settings, where the majority of apprentices work, there is a clear and effective focus on risk management, safe handling of materials and cleanliness. These skills are valued by clients and help learners to engage more effectively with users of the facilities.
- ISS provides wide-ranging opportunities for learners to progress to higher level training and to further, often high-level, qualifications. For example, team leaders, particularly in cleaning services, are encouraged to participate in accredited management courses. Across the company, learners benefit from clearly mapped and widely publicised progression pathways that lead to foundation degrees in facilities management. However, opportunities to engage in apprenticeship programmes are insufficiently promoted at a minority of workplaces, and a small number of employees receive insufficient notice of enrolment and recruitment activities.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, matching the outcomes for learners. Learners receive high-quality instruction and assessment, which enable them to achieve well and develop a wide range of skills relevant to their job roles.
- ISS' well-planned mandatory training arrangements for employees very effectively complement the requirements of the NVQs. The majority of vocational learning advisors (VLAs) make constructive use of any overlap between company training and NVQ elements, contextualising the qualification and helping learners to make good progress.
- Assessment of knowledge and understanding is frequent and feedback is motivating and well focused on what evidence the learner needs to present. Practical assessments, such as the use of observations, do not occur sufficiently early in a small minority of learners' programmes.
- Review and target setting discussions are thorough. Most learners have a good grasp of their targets and understand where they are in their training. VLAs keep a clear and comprehensive record of review discussions in the form of digital recordings, but most learners would benefit from more formalised written records of review outcomes agreed with VLAs at the end of each meeting.
- Support for learners from VLAs and from on-site training managers is good. Learners value highly the support they receive from their advisers, and the frequency of assessments and support visits is good. On-site ISS managers at all levels are knowledgeable about training available, and the vast majority are committed to supporting and developing employees. At a small number of sites, however, the recording of company training and the matching of this to apprenticeship requirements are ineffective. Managers have recognised the area for improvement and are taking action to improve the situation.
- Learners and VLAs use a good range of high-quality resources well to support learning. An online resource contains good quality information to develop knowledge for the NVQ and apprenticeship technical certificates. In addition, induction modules successfully develop learners' understanding of their rights and responsibilities, as well as health and safety matters particular to their working environments. VLAs are well trained and experienced, and sufficient VLAs have specialist qualifications to support learners' literacy and numeracy needs.
- Learners work, and are encouraged to work, cooperatively, resulting in deeper understanding of the topics under consideration. New learners joining programmes at different stages in the year are able to gain useful support and encouragement from those already in training.
- Learning is well planned, and assessment is scheduled flexibly to meet the needs of learners' shift patterns and other commitments. A broad range of subject area qualifications is available, covering most areas of ISS's activities. However, much of the content of apprenticeships at level 2 is insufficiently challenging for the small numbers of learners with considerable employment history and previous supervisory or management experience. ISS has recently introduced a range of apprenticeships at level 3 to provide training routes for more experienced staff.
- Initial assessment of learners' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills is routinely carried out for all learners and effectively identifies needs. Learners complete additional diagnostic tests and undertake online activities to improve skills where required. For the small minority of learners who have basic skills needs, insufficient learning opportunities are available to develop securely their English and mathematics.
- Functional skills are adequately developed. Online resources and assessment activities ensure that learners develop good ICT skills particularly where they previously had very little experience of the use of these technologies. At a small number of the workplaces however, learners have insufficient access to computers and the internet, and this adversely affects them, especially those who lack these facilities at home.
- Information, advice and guidance are appropriate to the learners' immediate needs. Progression opportunities are plentiful and managers strongly encourage staff to progress and develop. At a small minority of sites, insufficient information is given regarding progression opportunities to

higher learning. At these sites also, the majority of learners receive insufficient guidance about the whole apprenticeship framework, and VLAs and managers refer mainly to NVQ rather than apprenticeship training when talking to learners.

- Equality and diversity awareness is promoted effectively through well-planned in-house training, as well as through online resources, which leads to a high degree of understanding by learners on topics such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and bullying and personal and collective responsibility. Learners are able to discuss ways that their understanding of these topics has enhanced their services to clients.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Management of the apprenticeship provision is good. Senior managers and members of the ISS UK board share a clear and well-publicised commitment to training and development for employees, plan effectively and provide very good support for the apprenticeship provision.
- Learners' aspirations and their engagement with their job roles benefit from clearly structured progression pathways. Development routes have been identified and carefully mapped for employees, providing realistic progression opportunities from foundation and apprenticeship level to general manager and director level. ISS has a clearly articulated and purposeful strategy for the future development and growth of apprenticeships within such progression pathways, and this has very good support from directors.
- Managers have high expectations for what learners can achieve and rightly set high standards for employees, which are valued by clients. Learners appreciate the opportunities they are offered and are encouraged by the company's willingness to invest in their training and development. Integration of training and development with corporate responsibility activities is excellent. Learners' aspirations are raised, and their personal, social and employability skills are enhanced by ISS' wide range of corporate responsibility projects.
- Managers have worked very effectively to improve the leadership and management of provision since the previous inspection. Subcontracting arrangements, which were inadequate, have been significantly improved, and management of the current single subcontractor, Babcock International, is now good. Data are shared productively between Babcock and ISS, and managers at ISS receive useful weekly reports on learners' progress and achievements. Communications between ISS and Babcock at senior management and site level are very good.
- Measures to improve teaching and learning are good and include an effective sampling of learning, assessment and review sessions by senior ISS staff in addition to Babcock's own observations of teaching, learning and assessment. VLAs and ISS training managers are provided with a good range of relevant training and development activities.
- Measures to evaluate the quality of provision overall are adequate to enable managers and staff to identify key strengths and key areas for improvement. Annual self-assessment is well established, and involves thorough review of data and learners' views, as well as outcomes from teaching learning observation. Self-assessment reporting involves insufficient direct, formal input from the subcontractor, although findings are shared and discussed during compilation of the annual report.
- Throughout ISS, managers actively promote equality and diversity, and effectively promote policies to eliminate bullying and discrimination. Learners, as employees, benefit from a very strong culture of mutual respect and value for each individual's contribution at the workplace. Managers frequently review data to ensure that no the achievement gaps exist between identifiable groups of learners. The company meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

ISS UK 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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Administration	2
Customer service	2

ISS UK Ltd	
Type of provider	Employer
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 52
CEO	Richard Sykes
Date of previous inspection	November 2011
Website address	www.uk.issworld.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								
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	3	56		13				
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:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Babcock International Group PLC 							

Additional socio-economic information

ISS UK Ltd is the fourth largest privately-owned company in the world, and one of the largest facility and service management providers, operating in over 50 countries. Its United Kingdom operations started in 1968, where it now employs 43,500 staff from 144 nationalities. ISS UK Ltd contracts directly with the National Apprenticeship Service for its current apprenticeship provision. All learners work in third party client sites, predominantly in the Midlands, but with learners based in London, the south and the north west of England. All learners are employees of ISS, mostly full time.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Richard Beynon HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the Head of Graduates, Apprenticeships and Resourcing 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 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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