

Rolls-Royce Power Engineering Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		4–8 February 2013
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 apprentices successfully complete their apprenticeships and progress well into jobs in engineering.
- Apprentices make good progress and attain a high level of practical engineering and employability skills.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good with well planned, good-paced and varied learning activities that engage, sustain and widen the interests of apprentices, to improve their knowledge and skills to high levels.
- Most apprentices benefit from accurate written and verbal feedback from experienced teachers and instructors which clearly explains how to effectively develop and improve their individual performance.
- Rolls-Royce Power Engineering Limited (RRPEL) provides good leadership and management of their programmes and expects apprentices to achieve high levels of competence. Training programmes meet the needs of apprentices and local employers well.
- Learners benefit from the company's supportive partnerships and good communication with colleges, employers and parents.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Overall success rates and success rates within the planned time fell sharply in 2011/12 to just above the national rate.
- Although teaching, learning and assessment are good there is not enough outstanding teaching.
- Insufficient use is made of the results of the thorough initial assessment apprentices receive to accurately plan and support them throughout their practical training.
- Too few staff are fully skilled in promoting equality and diversity. Learners' knowledge and understanding of wider issues and diversity in society is not sufficiently extended.
- Arrangements to assure and moderate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the best practice is adopted by all partners.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of learners completing their programmes, particularly within the expected timescale, to return to the previously high success rates. Ensure through clear target-setting and close monitoring that learners achieve within their planned end dates.
- Draw from the best practice in the training sector to ensure all staff are equipped to deliver high quality teaching and learning. Use the results of initial assessment effectively to identify starting points and to plan and support apprentices throughout all aspects of their practical training programme.
- Enhance the skills of teachers, assessors and verifiers so that they are able to help apprentices develop a deeper understanding and knowledge of equality and diversity. Complete more detailed records of discussions and learner responses, and evaluate the learning taking place.
- Extend and strengthen arrangements to assure the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that the best practice is adopted by all partners. Provide further training to all observers and formalise moderation arrangements to ensure that grades awarded are accurate and can be justified by the recorded evidence.
- Review quality improvement measures to ensure that all actions needed are completed and that after improvements have taken place they are sustained. Make rigorous use of deadlines for completing actions and accurately record evidence of progress. Evaluate the impact of actions taken to bring about improvements.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Overall success rates for apprentices have remained well above national rates over the last three years but declined in 2011/12 to just above the national average for that year. The proportion of apprentices completing their qualifications within the expected timescale rose steadily over three years to well above the national rate in 2010/11. Rates then declined sharply in 2011/12 but remained just above the national rate for that year.
- Success rates for engineering learners on intermediate programmes are consistently high. The proportion of apprentices completing their qualifications within the expected timescale on intermediate programmes has also remained high. Success rates for engineering learners on advanced programmes were high until 2011/12 when they matched the national average. The proportion of apprentices completing their qualifications within the expected timescale was also high until 2011/12.
- There is no sustained, significant difference between the performance of learners from different groups. Although numbers of women, learners from minority ethnic groups and learners who have declared a learning difficulty or disability are low, all of these groups of learners attain well, mostly within expected timescales.
- RRPEL is highly successful in helping learners gain employment. Of 561 learners commencing programmes with RRPEL since 2008, 396 have progressed into employment in engineering. All of the 44 unemployed adult learners who attended short employability courses achieved the award leading to the certificate in preparation for working in the engineering and manufacturing industry. However, RRPEL does not sufficiently record how many of these learners progress into employment.
- Apprentices attain a high level of engineering and employability skills. They gain in confidence and maturity and are competent in practical engineering applications. They demonstrate a

useful range and high-level of skills and knowledge in the training centre, the main college subcontractor and on employers' premises. Apprentices demonstrate a very good understanding of health and safety and use safe working practices during their training. They confidently operate specialised industry standard equipment to demanding industrial and commercial tolerances.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, reflecting the trend of high levels of outcomes over the last three years. However, in 2011/12 outcomes declined to around the national average. The well-paced and well-managed teaching and practical training sessions contain a good range of teaching activities to engage and interest the apprentices. Very good use is made of frequent question and answer sessions and short written assessments to check apprentices' knowledge, understanding and progress.
- Teaching and training staff are knowledgeable and experienced. They use their own vocational experience to skilfully widen and enrich their teaching. The well-structured teaching and learning sessions build on and extend apprentices' previous knowledge. Apprentices' involvement in learning is good and they remain engaged and interested throughout sessions. They develop a good knowledge and understanding of engineering applications and apply themselves well throughout their programme.
- In a small minority of teaching sessions at the college, the high number of apprentices present restricts the teacher's ability to give individual support to all learners throughout the lesson. In a few sessions, some apprentices are not fully involved in asking and answering questions to clarify their understanding of engineering concepts. The teacher's use of non-directed questions fails to engage all learners and opportunities are missed to check their knowledge and understanding.
- RRPEL is very skilful in designing training programmes to meet the needs of apprentices and local employers. It works well with Tyne Metropolitan College to provide a coherent programme covering all aspects of on- and off-the-job training and assessment to meet local need. Employers and parents are kept fully informed about the progress apprentices are making throughout their programme.
- Many apprentices, employed at prominent and high profile engineering companies, access excellent resources in the workplace, enabling them to develop their skills and knowledge of engineering practices and work to industry standards. Employers are involved in planning their learning and take a great interest in the progress their apprentices make. For example, in a significant number of companies, apprentices gain support from skilled engineering mentors who provide them with advice and guidance on engineering aspects during their on-the-job training.
- Instructors in the RRPEL training workshops, using a good range of resources, skilfully build on and extend learning and skills through well thought out practical exercises and additional challenging activities. Good use is made of a daily logbook in which apprentices set their daily goals and reflect on the progress they have made.
- Support for apprentices is good. During their own individual goal setting, apprentices are encouraged to identify when they will use and develop their functional skills in English and mathematics. Effective use is made of further mathematics sessions to prepare many apprentices for progression on to higher-level qualifications. They are encouraged to achieve at merit or distinction levels to assist their transition. Tyne Metropolitan College provides effective support for the few learners who require functional skills in English and mathematics.
- Apprentices complete a comprehensive initial assessment of their English and mathematical abilities at the college. RRPEL carry out a detailed assessment of learners' engineering aptitude through vocational assessments in the training centre. However, insufficient use is made of the

college initial assessment results to plan the support for apprentices during training in the RRPEL training centre.

- Progress reviews are regular and comprehensive. They have a strong focus on checking apprentices' progress and setting challenging and relevant targets to support the next stage of their training. Assessors at the training centre provide informative, helpful feedback. Instructors' comments are thorough and detailed and provide apprentices with a good insight into how they could improve their individual performance. Staff maintain thorough records of the overall progress of all apprentices.
- Equality and diversity, introduced during induction to the programme, is insufficiently promoted throughout training. Although reinforced during progress reviews, training staff do not use good examples to explore gender and cultural differences and introduce other topics that promote discussion. During their college sessions, topical media reports are used well to encourage apprentices to consider the wider issues in society.
- Information, advice and guidance are good. Apprentices' receive effective guidance on employability skills, progression opportunities and the structure and content of their programme. Induction is effective and delivered both at the college and at the training centre. Apprentices gain a full understanding of the requirements of their framework.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- RRPEL expects its apprentices to achieve highly and to find good engineering jobs. Learners benefit from good leadership and management of their programmes. The training centre makes best use of its mutually supportive partnerships with Tyne Metropolitan College and employers to ensure that learners perform to the best of their abilities.
- Managers closely scrutinise targets for finance, learner recruitment and learner outcomes. Good communication supports close collaborative working between managers, assessors, instructors and partners. Success rates are generally high including for learners within the planned time, although in 2011/12 they declined to around the national average.
- Through good dialogue and regular meetings, the monitoring of learner progress and their experience within the college and the workplace is improving. Resources and accommodation to support training are mostly good. Staff are appropriately qualified and operational managers effectively monitor their progress towards meeting performance objectives.
- The self-assessment takes good account of the views of apprentices, staff and partners. Parents and employers evaluate programmes and suggest improvements. The report does not address all criteria in the Common Inspection Framework. Managers scrutinise well the progress made towards meeting action plan targets. Measures used to bring about improvements are not always well documented. Progress in bringing about improvements is not always sustained. Managers use data well to assess learners' performance and to improve standards.
- Good progress has been made in addressing issues since the last inspection but not all staff are sufficiently skilled to assess learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity including during progress reviews. Managers monitor progress in implementing required improvements but do not sufficiently evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken.
- Learners benefit from good opportunities to become an engineering apprentice. Impartial advice helps them to choose the right course and good links with employers enable nearly all to find work. Teachers, assessors and instructors play a vital role in helping learners deal with problems that affect their successful participation.
- A broad range of additional vocational units are offered to meet employers' specific needs. Adults benefit from newly developed programmes that help them develop employability skills including good interviewing skills. Managers make good use of regional data and very good links with employers to determine priority areas for development.

- Learners and staff are protected well from bullying, harassment or discrimination. Equality and diversity policies meet statutory requirements. The company has appointed an equality and diversity champion. Learners benefit from a good induction, which provides them with an initial understanding of equality topics. They respond to questions online and during reviews to test their understanding of issues and factual knowledge. Complaints are investigated and resolved although outcomes are not always recorded in sufficient detail. Apprentices understand the ground rules for behaviour and know that staff will challenge any inappropriate behaviour.
- The company recruits low numbers of females and learners from minority groups. Management data shows no significant differences in the performance outcomes of particular groups. Staff are suitably trained but some assessors and instructors require additional guidance on how to explore equality and diversity topics with learners in more depth.
- The provider meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. Safeguarding arrangements meet legislative requirements and learners feel safe in the college, the training centre and the workplace. High priority is given to ensure that learners can work safely. The safeguarding policy is audited and all staff are trained to recognise issues. Staff recruitment practice is sound and central records show that all staff undertake an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Rolls-Royce Power Engineering Limited		
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
Engineering	2

Provider details

Rolls-Royce Power Engineering 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: 22
	Part-time: 218
Principal/CEO	Mr A Beeton
Date of previous inspection	May 2010
Website address	http://www.rrnetc.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	199	41	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+		
	N/A	N/A	199	41	N/A	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>Tyne Metropolitan College</div><div></div><div>City of Sunderland College</div><div></div><div>Newcastle College</div><div></div><div>South Tyneside College</div><div></div><div>Northumberland College</div></div>							

Additional socio-economic information

RRPEL offers advanced apprenticeships in engineering in Newcastle and the north-east of England. The percentage of pupils in the local area gaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Mathematics is 6% below the national average. Unemployment is comparable with the rate for the north-east which is more than 2% above the national average. The proportion of the local population who have no qualifications is 23.6%, which is 1.4% more than nationally. The proportion of the local population who hold qualifications at advanced level or above is 44%, which is 4.3% above the national average. The main employment in the local area is in the wholesale and retail trade, the repair of motor vehicles and in health and social work.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Bob Busby HMI
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One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the operations manager 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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