

# South West Association of Training Providers Ltd

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		25–28 February 2013
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good-2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
Outcomes for learners		Outstanding-1
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:

- Almost all learners complete their apprenticeships in health and social care, early years and playwork, finance and accounting, and business management on time.
- Learners develop very good personal, social and employability skills.
- All learners progress to further or higher qualifications or gain promotion at work.
- Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned, and link well to the world of work.
- Teachers and assessors, who are well qualified and experienced, motivate and enthuse learners so that they achieve their qualifications on time.
- Directors and managers have set an ambitious vision for the development of the organisation which they manage very effectively.

### This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Not enough teaching and learning sessions are outstanding.
- Quality improvement initiatives are not yet standard across the provision, and are not yet sufficiently well established.

## Full report

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by fully implementing the new procedures for the observation of teaching and learning and sharing best practice across the provision.
- Ensure that quality improvement initiatives are standard across the provision. Monitor the impact of these initiatives to maintain the outstanding outcomes and improve the quality of all aspects of the provision by:
  - helping the subcontractors to improve their self-assessment and develop the overall self-assessment process and report
  - making full use of the quality review team to identify and share best practice
  - developing the quality improvement plan to include more specific detail on actions needed to meet objectives.

### Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outcomes for learners at the South West Association of Training Providers (SWATPro) are outstanding. Overall, apprenticeship success rates are outstanding. Almost all learners complete their qualification, a proportion that is significantly above the national average. The proportion of learners who complete within planned timescales is also significantly above average. A few learners in business administration do not complete their qualification within the allocated time.</li> <li>▪ Learners make very good progress towards their learning goals and are clear about their progress. They understand what they need to do to complete their qualification. Learners enjoy their learning and have high expectations which are encouraged by regular visits from staff.</li> <li>▪ SWATPro collects and analyses performance data for different groups of learners and provides this information to the subcontractors. Success rates have improved over the last 18 months. The quality and improvement manager works very effectively with the subcontractors to minimise performance gaps. There are still some gaps, with males performing less well on some courses and some subcontractors performing less well than others. However, plans are well developed to reduce these gaps.</li> <li>▪ Learners develop a wide range of additional skills including independent learning, team working, English, mathematics and functional skills. Learners develop very good personal and social skills and gain much confidence to become more self-assured in their work activities. Learners in early years and playwork have many opportunities to develop employability skills, which they use to very good effect. Learners in health and social care develop very good vocational skills.</li> <li>▪ Most apprentices take up the opportunity to complete a management qualification. The proportion of learners who progress from intermediate to advanced apprenticeships is high. All learners progress into higher-level qualifications or jobs.</li> </ul>	

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, contributing to the outstanding achievement of qualifications and the very good development of skills. Learning is typically well planned and all sessions observed on inspection were judged to be good or better. Teaching staff and employers work well together to coordinate the training.</li> <li>▪ In most observed lessons in early years and playwork, teaching and learning were judged outstanding. However, in a few lessons in health and social care, learners were not actively engaged and tutors did not check that learning had taken place.</li> </ul>	

- Staff set high expectations and engage well with the learners to set challenging, but realistic, learning targets. They provide a high level of support for learners and additional one-to-one support when requested or when necessary. Support and care extend to broader pastoral and welfare issues to enable learners to achieve well, and in some cases are exceptional.
- Staff are well qualified, experienced and very knowledgeable. They are highly motivated, enthusiastic and share their vocational expertise very well with learners. They link classroom sessions very well with workplace activity. Learners reported that they enjoyed their learning and were very keen to move on to further study and progress within their jobs.
- Staff and employers work well together to ensure that learning is occupationally relevant and that the training sessions match the workplace activity wherever possible. Good use is made of additional activities to stretch and challenge learners beyond the boundaries of the actual courses.
- Rigorous and thorough initial assessment ensures that learners are on the correct course and at the appropriate level. Regular meetings are held between learners, assessors and employers to discuss learners' progress. Learners at risk of not completing within the allotted time are identified and remedial action plans are put into place. The assessment of learners' work is good, and learners receive very detailed feedback.
- Learners have a good understanding of their qualifications, their progress and what they need to do to achieve their goals. They often request additional assessment and feedback, which are ably provided by tutors. Individual learning plans contain clear targets with detailed feedback and clear indications of how learners can improve. Assessors monitor progress carefully and are quick to identify any learner who is at risk of failing to complete on time.
- The development of English, mathematics and computer skills is generally good and is well integrated into the vocational training. In health and social care, it is well planned and links to the administering of medicines and patient care. In business management, it relates well to professional practice such as chairing meetings and report writing. The needs of the few learners who require functional skills in finance and accounting are met well.
- The provision of information, advice and guidance is good. Learners have a clear understanding of their career pathways and the options available to them. This extends beyond the actual occupational area so that learners have a good knowledge of broader career options such as management. In one subcontractor, this is provided by an independent specialist to ensure that the service provided is impartial.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. They are promoted well in all aspects of the teaching, from induction to regular reviews, as well additional vocational activities. All learners have a good understanding of equality and diversity, especially those aspects which relate to professional practice. Early years providers have a wide variety of resources and toys which effectively illustrate cultural differences. Business management learners are made aware of how to communicate appropriately with clients from a wide age range.

## Health and social care

### Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, contributing to the high success rates for learners. Learners make very good progress. Current learners are on track to complete their apprenticeship frameworks within agreed timescales. Learners grow in confidence and self-esteem as they develop very good vocational and employment skills. Progression opportunities are very good.
- Learning is well planned. Learners demonstrate a good level of knowledge and understanding of issues such as emergency response and the role of the support care worker. However, in some lessons, learners are too passive and do not actively engage with their learning. Teachers do not

regularly check to make sure that enough learning has taken place, and use only a narrow range of assessment activities.

- Staff are highly motivated, enthusiastic and share their vocational expertise well to engage learners. Assessors and teachers are occupationally competent and knowledgeable. They help learners to make very effective links between what they do in the classroom and at work. Teachers regularly visit the workplace to update learners' knowledge. On one occasion, a learner was well supported to develop his confidence in using a dialysis machine.
- Support, care and guidance to learners are good. A coordinated approach between teaching staff, assessors, mentors and clinical staff ensures that the individual needs of learners are met well and enable them to meet their career aims. Positive changes have been made to staff roles and the programme structure. However, some learners feel confused about these changes and the impact on their learning.
- Links between on- and off-the-job training are good. Teaching and clinical staff have contributed to the planning of a coordinated programme which ensures that learners and ward staff are fully aware of the study days and know what will be taught in lessons. Learners are able to apply their knowledge to their workplace situation well.
- Rigorous assessment processes enable the learners to be aware of what will be observed. Learners work well alongside their mentor in the workplace to prepare for assessment. Learners benefit from assessments and appreciate the good quality feedback, which is detailed and very effective in identifying what they need to do to improve.
- Progress reviews effectively monitor each learner's progress and identify any concerns that may prevent the learner from completing their qualification. Assessors and other staff in the workplace give good quality guidance and encourage learners to take responsibility for their own work.
- The teaching of functional skills is good. It is well planned to link with vocational topics such as administering medicines and the recording of patient information. Learners work productively during lessons, take responsibility for their own learning and frequently support their peers.
- Assessors give good quality, timely information. This ensures learners are well informed, and know what to do to be able to complete their training programmes to a good standard.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. They are promoted very effectively in all aspects of the learners' qualification. Learners are very well supported to understand cultural and religious practices in many aspects of their work. Teaching and mortuary staff work very effectively to plan training programmes that develop the learners' understanding of 'end of life' practices which respect cultural diversity.

## Early years and playwork

### Apprenticeships

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding. Most teaching observed on inspection was good or better and this is reflected in the very high success rates for learners. Learners develop excellent personal, social and employability skills and progress well onto higher-level courses.
- Learners receive outstanding pastoral care from all staff. Teachers, managers and assessors motivate learners effectively to achieve by their target date and are very responsive to learners' welfare needs. Staff are available and flexible to support learners by text, email and phone.
- Learners progress very well in taught sessions and in the workplace, and produce very good quality work. Teachers plan lessons well and pay particular attention to matching the level of work to the individual needs of learners. Teachers use assignments and question-and-answer sessions extremely effectively to stretch and challenge learners.

- Teachers and assessors encourage learners to develop a high standard of employability skills to enhance their opportunities in the workplace. External training, accessed via the local authority, enlivens the curriculum and makes it more relevant to the childcare industry. Employers use and value the short courses offered by the Puffins and Wessex training providers, which improve their service delivery to parents, carers and children.
- Assessment of learners' work is excellent. It is regular, timely and very thorough. Detailed feedback from teachers and assessors stretches and challenges learners to produce better standards of work in shorter timescales. Learner progress is monitored for quality through effective electronic systems. These are valued by learners, parents and carers and employers, who can study with high quality learning resources and online tutorial support around family and work commitments.
- Tutors and teachers provide excellent support to learners and successfully encourage them to become autonomous and independent learners. Learners make particularly good progress following one-to-one tuition in mathematics.
- The teaching and promotion of English within lessons and assessment are very good. This is often specific to the subject area context and also linked to life skills. Slower progress is made in developing mathematical skills, although discrete lessons and one-to-one tuition are offered to less-able learners.
- Learners receive excellent information, advice and guidance, mainly from specialist staff. This enables them to make the right course choices for their future aspirations. This is supported by highly effective initial assessment of English, mathematical and computer skills to ensure they are on the right level of course. Nearly all learners spoken to confirmed that they plan to progress to a higher level of study.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is excellent. It is very well developed in lesson and assessment plans, and is evident in classroom-based resources. It is very effectively promoted in most lessons and assessments. There is a strong focus on the promotion of males working in childcare in marketing materials and at recruitment events. The organisation has already exceeded its target for recruiting males onto childcare apprenticeships.

## Accounting and finance

### Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, and reflected in the very good progress and very high success rates for learners. This was recognised when a team of learners from the provider won the WorldSkills UK accounting technicians' national competition in 2012. Learners demonstrate good accounting skills and are confident in working through solutions to accounting problems.
- Learners receive good support from knowledgeable and well-qualified teachers who have high expectations of their learners. Additional one-to-one support is available as required. Online exercises, along with email and telephone support between training sessions, further support learners.
- Teaching and learning are planned well. Accounting concepts are explained carefully. Challenging exercises are chosen well to develop learners' understanding and accounting skills. Learners speak highly about the good quality of the teaching they receive and the support which helps them to achieve. Some of the questioning in class is not effective in checking the understanding of all learners.
- The training, learning and assessment are flexible in meeting the specific needs of employers and learners. For example, training does not take place during busy periods for accountancy firms and learners can start at different times within the year. Some learners comment that they

require more notice of some of the training sessions in order to plan time away from the workplace more effectively.

- Assessment is good. All learners receive a detailed initial assessment to identify any additional support needs. The initial assessments include numeracy, literacy and accountancy skills. Tutors monitor and review learners' progress carefully and frequently. Employers also review learners' progress and learners receive relevant challenging targets. In addition, learners assess their own progress at the end of each block of teaching and set their own targets for improvement.
- Assessment of learners' work is accurate and frequent, and learners know what is required to succeed. Tutors ensure that learners' preparation for examinations is thorough by setting challenging tasks and giving clear feedback that indicates what the learner needs to do to improve.
- Learners have good numeracy and literacy skills. Their numeracy and problem-solving skills are developed well through the many accounting exercises set. Tutors meet the needs of the few learners who lack the necessary functional skills very well.
- Learners receive good advice and guidance. Comprehensive pre-course information prepares learners well for the accounting courses, and this includes a thorough coverage of the structure of the course and the assessment requirements. Learners are clear about the next steps in training available, and the career options open to them.
- Learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity are developed well during the early stages of the course and this is regularly reviewed. A thorough coverage of rights and responsibilities is included in the training. Learners treat each other with respect.

## Business management

### Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, as reflected in the high outcomes for the large majority of learners. Most learners are assigned additional responsibilities that result in them gaining very useful and relevant business skills. Well-qualified and experienced assessors encourage learners to become more self-confident and reflective in the workplace. All learners use the electronic portfolio system well to work independently and flexibly, and also to remain in contact with the assessor in between visits. In addition to regular four-weekly visits, assessors are available by telephone, email and in person to provide additional support to learners when required.
- Useful and relevant resources create good opportunities for learners to identify their own skills and weaknesses. However, some learners would benefit from a wider range of examples of best practice working methods and tips about how to avoid typical mistakes in the workplace.
- Learners, assessors and supervisors are using an electronic system well to monitor and track progress. Regular, monthly meetings to discuss learners' progress highlight any who may be at risk of not completing on time. In addition, regular internal quality assurance checks to review the quality of work produced also highlight concerns which are followed up appropriately.
- Several learners are doing extra optional units in addition to their main course to provide additional challenge. A few learners who have a high level of previous qualifications, including A levels and over 10 GCSEs, are not sufficiently challenged to expand their knowledge beyond the requirements of the course, which is academically too easy for them.
- Learners receive useful, detailed verbal, written and electronic feedback to help them improve their work. Regular visits from assessors, and a designated member of staff responsible for conducting the eight-weekly reviews, ensure clear target setting which enables learners to remain on track and complete their qualifications on time. Concerns are highlighted and resolved promptly.



- Key skills qualifications are gradually being replaced with functional skills. A designated member of staff who specialises in teaching functional skills is available to support learners preparing for their functional skills tests. These skills are integrated well into the main course content to enable learners to produce evidence or practise relevant skills, for example chairing meetings, taking minutes and writing formal reports.
- Assessors and employers are actively involved in the decision-making process to ensure that the course is most appropriate to the needs of the learner and employer. Initial assessment and induction are conducted efficiently by a designated member of staff. Good care, support and guidance are provided to learners at risk of not completing on time. For example, some pregnant learners have received extra, more frequent visits to enable them to complete the qualification before they leave work on maternity leave.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well, by using content from modules for customer service and business administration and applying this knowledge to the workplace. For example, learners working in the council and NHS know how to use an appropriate style of communication for older clients and those who are very young.

### The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Management of the provision is good. SWATPro carries out its responsibility for contract management, risk management and liaison with the subcontractors and funding body to a high standard. Considerable progress has been made over 18 months, with the business being developed rapidly, but sensitively, to meet the needs of learners and subcontractors. SWATPro adds value to subcontractors' provision, and they in turn highly appreciate and are committed to their involvement in its development.
- Strategic leadership is outstanding. An ambitious vision for learners and the future of the association is communicated well by the core group of managers. Plans for the development of the business are developed well to meet local and national needs.
- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved as a result of the regular monitoring of performance followed by good improvement support. For example, a more effective system to observe and grade teaching and learning has recently been introduced. SWATPro has also introduced a valuable system of target setting, for both learners and subcontractors, that provides additional clarity for all.
- Managers are enthusiastic, well qualified and have substantial experience in training and development. Operational and board meetings are well attended, managed and recorded with clear actions leading to improvements. Subcontractors appreciate this, together with the good opportunities to network and share good practice. All subcontractors engage in, and benefit from, a range of activities that include development projects and training. Subcontractors are increasingly feeling confident about sharing their practice with one another to improve the practice of all.
- Management information and data are used well to secure improvements and analyse success rates. Financial management is good. Managers monitor overall performance well, and track the performance of individual subcontractors carefully so that any concerns or underperformance are identified early and quickly rectified.
- Communication with subcontractors is good, with regular contact and quick response to queries. Managers are keen to improve the business further and plans are well advanced for a website and further development of the governance arrangements. Evaluation of the quality of subcontractors' provision is good. SWATPro actively challenges and gives highly valuable support when needed. For example, an evidence checklist has been designed to help with accurate and evaluative self-assessment, and supportive visits have ensured improved quality. Self-assessment reports are well written and evaluative, and managers know the provision well.
- The self-assessment process is planned well as part of an annual quality cycle that includes feedback from learners at all stages of their training. A very effective quality review team has

been established, with subcontractors taking an active part in shaping future provision. A well-monitored quality improvement plan sets objectives for improvement, but specific detail on how outcomes are to be achieved is not yet formally recorded.

- Programmes are planned and managed well to meet the needs of learners and employers. SWATPro has a very good understanding of the community it serves and keeps abreast of forthcoming changes. Strong partnerships, especially with the South West Training Providers Network, benefit learners through the provision of a wide range of opportunities.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well. Plans are in place to secure further improvements to equality and diversity outcomes, as well as to develop understanding further. Challenging targets are set and monitored well. Subcontractors promote equality and diversity well and learners' understanding is good. The recent introduction of questions at reviews to check learners' understanding of equality and diversity has contributed well their knowledge.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good. The provider meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners and the managing director is the named safeguarding officer. The safeguarding policy is clear and appropriate action is taken to safeguard any learner who is identified as being at risk. All staff in contact with those who may be vulnerable have checks through the Criminal Records Bureau and SWATPro holds a central register. Health and safety are reinforced well and subcontractors are referred to appropriate training.



## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### SWATPro

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Health and social care</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Early years and playwork</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Accounting and finance</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Business management</b>	<b>2</b>

# SWATPro

<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: 698
	Part-time: 0
<b>Managing Director</b>	Rod Davies
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Website address</b>	N/A

[illegible]

## Additional socio-economic information

The South West Association for Training Providers Ltd (SWATPro) was formed in 2011 and consists of 11 partners located across the South West of England. Six of the partners work together operationally as subcontractors in order to satisfy the minimum contract policy, and have allocated their contract value to SWATPro. The other five partners manage their own contracts and engage with SWATPro with sharing of good practice, training, and quality improvement. SWATPro consists of a managing director, a quality and improvement manager, and a compliance manager.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Charles Clark HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the quality 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. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last year 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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