

# The Training and Learning Company

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		8–12 July 2013
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Outstanding-1</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Outstanding-1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding-1
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Outstanding-1

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider is outstanding because:

- Outcomes for learners, assessment practices and leadership and management are outstanding, leading to the vast majority of learners gaining their qualifications and progressing onto further learning or securing timely promotion.
- Excellent and effective working between assessors, employers and the management team and their close involvement in the learning of apprentices ensure learners enjoy their programmes and make outstanding progress.
- Assessors are well qualified, skilled and passionate about their work; they enthuse learners and use their excellent experience from which learners greatly benefit and produce very high standards of work.
- Managers and assessors monitor learners' progress and their achievements daily and closely and their careful attention ensures that the learners succeed.
- Learners receive outstanding support for their learning; this arises from excellent staff development and resources that enable assessors to plan and deliver high quality facilities management programmes tailored expertly to the individual needs of employers and learners.
- Learners become better equipped to work successfully with the diverse range of clients as a result of receiving excellent training in equality and appreciation of diversity.

## Full report

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

- Help learners to improve their independent learning skills by further developing the virtual learning environment (VLE) and making its information and learning technology (ILT) resources more easily available to all learners.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Outstanding
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- Nearly all learners achieve their qualifications. A large proportion of these are well within the agreed timescales for gaining their apprenticeship qualification. The success rates of learners are significantly above the national average and have been high for successive years. Achievements for all groups of learners are very high with no differences between any of them.
- The vast majority of learners make at least good progress whilst in learning; for a significant proportion this exceeds expectations based on their previous learning and qualifications. Their success owes much to the very clear time frames set out for them and to the very close and helpful tracking by their assessors. They make good progress as a result of the timely, regular and often challenging, but supportive, reviews of their goals and progress.
- Learners develop appropriate and relevant knowledge and enhance their skills in their jobs, largely as a result of the well-structured planning of their programmes. For example, some cleaners in a hospital after attending very informative training on the theory behind use of different chemicals changed their practices and helped other co-workers to understand the rationale.
- Very many learners have higher career aspirations through taking part in their apprenticeships. They are greatly encouraged by keen and enthusiastic assessors. They are keen to progress to the next level courses, and taking part in learning has opened new opportunities and helped further career advancement. A significant proportion of the Training and Learning Company's learners make good progression onto higher level courses with the company.
- Many learners secure promotion or career progression, especially in the cleaning profession and facilities management. Putting into practice the knowledge they gain from their studies has enhanced their more general personal development and built their confidence and self-belief. The excellent practical project of one learner reshaped the business strategy of their company and secured a more senior managerial position.
- Learners have acquired important skills and knowledge in project management, budgeting and customer care, for example. They demonstrate high standards in their everyday work. For example, a group using an information and communication technology (ICT) assignment showed good initiative and proficiency in identifying 'hazards, slips and trips' from a key source; they then applied this successfully in the workplace, with an evaluation of benefit and cost, showing their ability to coherently link different aspects of their work.
- Learners develop excellent skills, which they put into practice very proficiently in the workplace and enhance the business of their employers. For example, customer service apprentices working on helpdesks have shown themselves adept at problem solving and use their improved communication skills to deal highly professionally with customers in difficult situations. As a result of their apprenticeships, team leaders improve their management skills and learn to delegate and prioritise work more effectively.
- The learners' development of English and mathematics is outstanding. Many learners achieve English or mathematics qualifications and gain the confidence of knowing they can go further. Learners improve their English and mathematics skills quickly as a result of the careful and thorough planning of assessors and managers.

- The expert guidance of assessors has helped learners whose English was not their main language to acquire a good understanding of spoken and written English, enabling them to do their jobs better and progress in their workplaces.

<b>The quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	Outstanding
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- The learners, inspired by the high calibre of skilled and experienced assessors, have great enthusiasm and commitment and achieve outstanding results across all the programmes: facilities management, customer service, support services and business administration.
- They make excellent progress due to the expert, regular and helpful face-to-face support of the assessors. Employers are very positive about the good impact of assessors due to the continuous, close support and frequency of the help they give.
- The learners respond well to, and benefit from, the coaching of assessors. They enjoy the opportunities of working in small groups and they develop good communication and social skills, as in the case of an excellent and successful programme to help ex-offenders gain employment.
- Assessors across all locations of the country plan and deliver effective training; they engage and motivate learners successfully through well-designed activities related to their job role, using quizzes, and role play. Training in the different aspects of management and, for example, the interesting explanation of health, safety and security is particularly successful, because it is explained in the context of the workplaces of learners. Cleaning services apprentices working in high risk areas such as hospitals and airports quickly learn how to effectively manage the risks and possible hazards of working with the disposal of chemical and medical waste.
- Learners perform very well as a result of very well planned assignments that bring out the best in them. For example, learners working in a neurology hospital are better able to deal with challenging situations and vulnerable patients with brain injuries as a result of undertaking customer service apprenticeships. Assessments are practical and relevant to their work, bringing to life the theoretical aspects. For example, a hospital department benefited from a change to how it logged stores when a spreadsheet was revised in a practical assignment that also resulted in commendation by the employer.
- Learning resources for the high numbers of learners on facilities management programmes are well planned and well used because they are easily accessible online from remote locations. Resources for other programmes are good, but they are not fully accessible to all learners and, therefore, do not always enable them to work independently between visits. In contrast, learners on facilities management courses use electronic portfolios effectively and upload work for assessment between visits. This system has yet to be extended to other programmes.
- Learners receive good support promptly for identified needs, such as help with keyboard skills if these are a personal issue or if they have very limited computer skills. This is a direct result of how the management team has greatly improved how learners' needs are assessed at the start of their courses since the last inspection.
- Personal support is excellent, particularly when learners have problems such as illness or a particularly high workload. Assessors work well with employers to ensure learners still achieve their qualifications on time, giving extra support where necessary. Assessors have kept in contact sensitively with learners who have missed work. At the right time they helped them to get started and designed suitable programmes around their situations. The learners still completed the programme on time due to the extra help received.
- Assessment practices are exceptional. Assessors visit and assess learners in their workplaces at the best time for learners when they can fully demonstrate and explain what they have learned. The assessors involve learners and their employers in reviewing their work and agreeing next steps. These visits are at all times of day or night to suit the learners.
- Learners extend their occupational knowledge more deeply and improve their work performance from the thorough and very useful verbal and written feedback from their assessors. They use very well considered and clear questions that draw out from learners what they have learned,

extend the depth of their knowledge and show them how to improve. Employers and learners are positive about the good progress they are making. The standard of learners' work in portfolios is very high.

- Learners develop and use practical English and mathematics skills well in their job roles. Assessors use excellent techniques to overcome learners' apprehension about numbers, such as devising simple memory aids and making learning activities enjoyable and fun. In one session, assessors motivated some unemployed learners by carefully and sensitively exploring their backgrounds and experiences and related this to how improving their English and mathematics skills will benefit them.
- Learners for whom English is not their first language are particularly well supported in improving listening, speaking, reading and writing skills by their assessors. Many start their learning programmes with a very poor knowledge of the English language. For example, one group of Polish learners at an airport are being well supported by a Polish-speaking assessor and are making excellent progress in learning English and developing role-specific expertise. The early acquisition of the customer service ethos and language helps customer service apprentices improve quickly in their job roles.
- Advice and guidance are very good. Learners and employers receive clear details about course options and levels. For example, kitchen staff promoted to management roles by undertaking a business administration course are gaining appropriate management skills. Induction is comprehensive and prepares learners very well for their programmes. A high number of learners progress to further courses or are promoted at work as they successfully complete their programmes.
- Assessors promote equality and diversity particularly well throughout the training of learners. Learners from a variety of cultures and backgrounds feel comfortable in learning in their workplaces due to the respectful and sensitive approach of their assessors. The assessors set good examples. The learners, too, as a result of the training in equality and diversity, are confident in working with a range of clients treating them and colleagues with respect.
- Apprentices working in a hospital sensitively respect the boundaries of vulnerable people. Learners working with sensory impaired patients are learning sign language to communicate with them more effectively. Other apprentices working in the hospitality sector demonstrate a mature understanding of different cultures, behaviours and dietary requirements of their clients.

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

Outstanding

- The small leadership and management team provides outstanding direction, leadership and training. The members have extremely high expectations and aspirations. Their planning and quality assurance processes are outstanding and ensure that high standards of performance are achieved and maintained.
- The directors have grown the company carefully in recent years and adapted their programmes appropriately to meet national priorities. Learners experience high quality training and learning and their training programmes meet employers' needs very well because of the active support and involvement of employers.
- The quality improvement strategy, underpinned by tight personal management and monitoring of all their processes, is highly effective. Interventions are put in place swiftly due to good analysis of information based on very detailed information on learners' performance and progress from daily returns from assessors. The system of internal verification of learners' assessments works very well and ensures standards remain high.
- Self-assessment is effective and the evaluations of the strengths and areas for improvement are clear and accurate. The process is based on the continuous flow of 'real-time' information and thorough evaluation of the management information and experiences of learners. It leads to continuous improvements.

- Arrangements for performance management are highly successful. All assessors are observed regularly and receive excellent feedback and support that enable them to improve their practices quickly. The performance management system is closely aligned to continuous professional development. Induction is very well organised and an excellent mentoring and shadowing system leads to learners benefiting from them doing their jobs very well.
- Communication is very effective and the directors have consciously created a learning culture within the company in which staff listen sensitively to feedback and support each other. All staff contribute positively to making improvements in how the company works. They are highly skilled at working with both learners and employers in a wide variety of workplaces and creating a culture that values training and learning.
- Learners' views, including the views of the small number who leave their programmes early, are carefully assessed and used to make improvements. The overwhelming majority of learners provide positive feedback on the quality of their programmes and learning. Many explain with great enthusiasm how assessors have helped them to become more confident and better motivated. Employers' feedback also leads to improvements in training and assessment practice. For example, a dedicated assessor was deployed fully to one employer at their request to support learners who have very variable work and shift patterns.
- Partner organisations and employers with whom it works state that the Training and Learning Company listens carefully and responds very well to their requests. It is consistently seen as a reliable, trustworthy provider that has high standards and expectations of their staff and learners with a track record of successful delivery over many years and in many locations. For example, it is working very effectively with colleges and the voluntary sector to help younger learners gain the skills and confidence to secure employment and training.
- The company promotes the benefits of equality and diversity well across the range of provision and assessors reinforce positive messages well during progress reviews. They are adept at drawing on learners' own experiences and using these as the basis for discussions exploring fairness, differences and prejudices. At a major airport, for example, an assessor skilfully drew on the experience of the workers who had recently come to work in Britain to explain about rights and responsibilities.
- Performance data are analysed frequently and carefully to identify any gaps in performance between different groups. The information shows that all groups, such as males and females, younger or older learners and those of different ethnic heritage, are succeeding equally well.
- The Training and Learning Company meets its statutory requirements regarding safeguarding. Staff have received appropriate training and updates. Health and safety have a high priority in training sessions and during assessments. As a result, learners feel safe and adopt safe working practices.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### The Training and Learning Company

<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>1</b>	1
Outcomes for learners	<b>1</b>	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>1</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>1</b>	1

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Business management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Provider details

The Training and Learning Company	
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 938
	Part-time: 0
Principal/CEO	Mr Richard Allison (Managing Director)
Date of previous inspection	June 2008
Website address	www.tlc-uk.org

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	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)								
Full-time	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Part-time	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	-	667	12	227	-	-		
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

The Training and Learning Company (TLC) is a national training provider delivering a variety of qualifications across the United Kingdom, predominantly in the facilities management sector. It works with a range of employers from independent companies to global organisations. TLC also engages with learners from disadvantaged backgrounds and who face multiple barriers to learning and employment. The company delivers qualifications from intermediate to post-graduate management level for experienced senior managers in the sector to pre-employed inexperienced learners looking for career development.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Peter Green HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the Director of Quality Assurance 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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