

# Consortium of Vocational and Educational Trainers Limited

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		17-20 September 2013
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good-2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

## Summary of key findings for learners

### This provider is good because:

- The motor vehicle apprenticeship programme, which accounts for a majority of the Consortium of Vocational and Educational Trainers' (COVET's) provision, is outstanding.
- Vocational learners develop high level skills that employers value and that enhance their opportunities to progress into further training and employment.
- Staff use their knowledge and excellent vocational experience to ensure a large majority of learners make rapid progress on their programmes.
- Feedback to a large majority of learners is constructive and helps them to improve the quality of their work.
- Managers listen carefully to employers and use this information, along with their industry expertise, to develop programmes that are highly valued by car dealerships and plant industry operators.
- In vocational areas, learners and staff promote health and safety well through careful planning, good use of resources and feedback to learners.

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

- Not enough learners on programmes in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and computing achieve their qualification.
- Managers do not monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment closely enough and then use the outcomes of the monitoring to manage the performance of staff sufficiently.
- Managers do not use the self-assessment processes or quality improvement plans well enough to monitor and improve the quality of provision.

## Full report

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

- Set each ESOL learner clear and challenging targets and then closely monitor their progress towards achieving these.
- Ensure there are enough computers, with the correct software, for all learners attending computing courses.
- Ensure managers improve their knowledge of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and use this knowledge to:
  - inform staff appraisals
  - share good practice
  - provide training that improves the range of teaching and learning methodologies (including the use of learning technologies) where appropriate
  - provide a consistently high standard of feedback to learners that clearly tells them how to improve their work further
  - improve teachers' planning of the courses delivered by Languages, Training and Development (LTD) so that learners of all abilities are set appropriate learning activities.
- Ensure managers of COVET set performance targets for the quality of programmes and then monitor progress towards these targets closely throughout the year.
- Produce a self-assessment report that evaluates the quality of all programmes. This needs to be followed by a quality improvement plan that sets specific actions to meet improvement targets. Managers need to monitor the effectiveness of these actions in improving the weaker provision and maintaining the high standards in better programmes.
- Monitor learners' progress through their programme, with a particular focus on groups of learners from minority groups, to ensure all are making the progress expected.
- Provide training to the appropriate staff that enables them to:
  - understand how better to support learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
  - increase their knowledge of social and workplace diversity and their confidence to lead discussions about these with learners
  - develop a wider range of resources that staff can use to discuss and promote equality issues with learners
  - update their knowledge of safeguarding, including e-safety.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
------------------------------	------

- A very high proportion of learners in motor vehicle and business administration achieve their apprenticeships. This highly successful performance by learners has been sustained over a four-year period. In 2011/12 every learner enrolled on an apprenticeship completed within the expected timescale, and in other recent years, the proportion of successful learners has been significantly higher than the national average. All apprenticeships are run by Calex UK and account for over half of COVET's provision.
- A high proportion of learners on National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in plant operations achieve their qualification. All qualifications in plant operations are run by National Plant Vocational Skills Limited (NPVSL) and account for approximately a third of COVET's provision.
- A high proportion of learners training to teach English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) achieves their qualification. However, too few learners on ESOL courses and unemployed learners on computing courses are successful, particularly those on intermediate and long programmes. Managers have not identified the reasons for this low level of achievement nor

taken sufficient action to improve the teaching, learning and assessment to ensure more learners are successful. All courses in ESOL and computing are run by Languages, Training and Development (LTD), and account for less than one fifth of COVET's provision.

- White learners who are not from a British background do not achieve their qualifications within the allocated time as successfully as learners from other ethnic backgrounds. The small numbers of learners with a learning difficulty or disability are not as successful as other learners.
- Standards of apprentices' work are high and in motor vehicle are very high. Learners on apprenticeships and those working on heavy plant machinery make good progress using high quality, specialist resources. A majority of those on ESOL courses make at least the progress expected and, on the higher level courses, a small number of learners are making better progress than expected.
- Learners on motor vehicle apprenticeships and those taking NVQs develop their employability skills well. Apprentices achieve this through a programme that quickly develops the skills they need to carry out work for their employer. For example, within the first six weeks of their apprenticeship they complete additional qualifications in tyre fitting and wheel alignment. The NVQ plant operator qualification enhances learners' prospects for employment by enabling them to work on sites that they would be excluded from if they did not achieve it. Learners on business and customer service apprenticeships, and their employers, report that the programme helps them develop their confidence in dealing with members of the public.
- Apprentices' progression into further training is excellent. All learners on intermediate apprenticeships in motor vehicle progress onto an advanced level training. The apprenticeship programme is designed to provide seamless progression into Volvo Car UK's in-house competency framework. Through this, a high proportion of learners go on to develop high level service and technician skills. Staff do not sufficiently monitor the progression of learners on ESOL and computing programmes.

<b>The quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	Good
---	------

- Trainers motivate apprentices and employed learners well to develop excellent vocational skills and successfully establish a culture in which learners aspire to reach the highest standards. Teachers ensure that ESOL learners develop the fluency and accuracy of their language skills in lessons. Trainers and teachers provide good care and support, both in individual and group work, that effectively build learners' confidence. A very small number of learners disclose a learning difficulty or disability. Whilst staff willingly provide them with support, too few have sufficient expertise or qualifications in supporting these learners.
- Trainers, teachers and assessors are extremely well qualified and highly experienced. They use their knowledge and experience well to ensure learners make rapid progress in lessons and acquire the skills in the workplace that employers value. All learners enjoy learning and are highly positive about their learning experience.
- Resources available to learners vary considerably across the provision. The resources used by motor vehicle apprentices are exceptional and employed learners on courses for plant operators are assessed using a wide range of specialist, complex machinery. Resources for ESOL learners are satisfactory, but there are too few computers with the correct software for the small number of unemployed learners attending computing courses.
- Learners on vocational courses are set targets that are stretching but achievable. As a result they make rapid progress through their qualification. ESOL learners do not receive the same quality of target setting and their progress is not as carefully monitored. As a result, they are not as successful as vocational learners in achieving their qualification.
- Assessors provide very useful feedback to learners that helps them to improve the quality of their work. Written feedback to vocational learners is detailed and copious. Teachers' feedback to ESOL learners is more variable. Oral feedback is good, but too much written feedback does not tell the learner how to improve their work further.

- Apprentices develop their English and mathematics well. Much of the apprentices' work demands highly technical terminology; apprentices use this with confidence and produce eloquent written descriptions of processes. However too little attention is paid to developing the English of other vocational learners and ESOL learners do not have clear targets for improving their English language.
- Learners and staff treat each other with respect and staff instigate discussions about equality in the workplace; these discussions are rich and relevant for motor vehicle apprentices but superficial for other apprentices and employed learners. During learning activities learners, teachers and trainers introduce opportunities to discuss diversity, but staff lack the confidence or knowledge to lead discussions that might make the most of these opportunities.

## Motor vehicle

### Apprenticeships

Outstanding

- The outstanding quality of teaching, learning and assessment is reflected in the outstanding outcomes apprentices achieve. Trainers and assessors are extremely well qualified and very highly experienced; most come from higher-level employment in the motor industry. Their expertise is highly valued by the apprentices and their employers.
- Staff have extremely high expectations of the apprentices and a lot of time and effort go into ensuring they are enthused by their programme and understand what they are expected to achieve during on- and off-the-job training. Safe working and well-being are well promoted and reinforced during taught sessions, workplace assessments and reviews.
- The resources in both the training centre and the employers' workshops are exemplary. In the training centre, apprentices work on the latest Volvo cars and advanced computer-based diagnostic equipment. Hand tools are of a very high standard. Learning materials are of an extremely high standard and also include Volvo Car UK's e-learning materials, which are outstanding. Apprentices have access to this material whilst at work, home and at the training centre.
- Apprentices produce a very high standard of written work and portfolios are comprehensively referenced. Learners and assessors make excellent use of technology in both assessing and recording portfolio evidence. For example, assessors use tablet computers efficiently to carry out assessments, provide feedback and maintain electronic portfolios of evidence.
- Employers support apprentices well in the workplace. For example, apprentices have a designated mentor who is usually a highly experienced master technician. Apprentices work with the master technicians to develop high levels of advanced problem-solving skills using manufacturers' diagnostic equipment and web-based resources.
- Feedback to apprentices is very detailed and is highly effective in motivating learners to improve their skills and knowledge. Staff assess apprentices' work thoroughly and apprentices use feedback they receive to review and revise their work. Staff sign off work only when the highest standards have been achieved.
- Workplace and training-centre reviews are outstanding. Trainers negotiate stretching targets with apprentices and the service managers in dealerships. Trainers monitor progress towards these targets rigorously and apprentices achieve them quickly.
- Information, advice and guidance are very thorough and much effort goes into selecting the correct pathways for prospective apprentices. Induction is particularly detailed and fully involves the apprentice, parents and guardians, and employers.
- Trainers amplify an understanding of equality by posing a variety of relevant scenarios to apprentices, encouraging in-depth discussions and then recording the learning well on review

documentation. However, trainers miss some opportunities to explore with apprentices wider issues about the diversity of the world.

- Staff in Calex UK, employers and Volvo Cars UK celebrate apprentices' achievements extremely well. Apprentices develop confidence and pride in their work through regular team and confidence-building events, such as World Skills events, awarding body competitions and visits to the manufacturer's plant in Sweden. Each apprentice receives a large and comprehensive tool trolley, which becomes the property of the apprentice on successful completion of their apprenticeship.

## Construction crafts

### 19+ Learning programmes

Good

- The high quality of teaching, learning and assessment is reflected in the high success rates achieved by learners. The majority of learners make good progress developing skills as heavy plant operators in the construction and quarrying industry.
- Learners work hard to improve their skills effectively as independent machine operators. They are competent on an extensive range of plant machinery, which provides them with better opportunities for finding work and provides employers with greater staff flexibility. In addition to developing excellent driving skills, learners improve their alertness, thinking and responsiveness.
- Learners are able to drive and operate complex plant safely in harsh operating environments, particularly in quarries. They use communication signals very effectively to ensure productivity is maintained. For example, learners are able accurately to manoeuvre forty-ton dumper trucks with a high degree of precision and speed. Other learners are able to use large mechanical shovels and 360-degree excavators well to relocate ground fill when establishing a new access route through a quarry. As a result of their training, learners are responsible for the weekly maintenance schedules of their machine that ensure smooth operation and no interruptions to production.
- Learners and employers have a high regard for safe working practices, which assessors reinforce well in assessment and reviews. Learners take their responsibilities for safety very seriously. They have a very good understanding of the importance and use of personal protective equipment. Learners are able to articulate well their responsibilities for personal safety and the safety of colleagues and customers.
- Assessors carry out all assessment in the workplace to a high standard, and set high expectations for learners that challenge them to make better progress. Assessment is frequent and thorough. Learners are given detailed assessment planning schedules. However, these are not always shared with employers to help them plan assessment opportunities into the employee's work schedule. A small number of learners are making slow progress as a result of assessment opportunities being missed.
- Learners receive effective information, advice and guidance that ensure they are working towards an appropriate qualification for their own and their employer's benefit. During the induction period learners take initial assessments and, where appropriate, additional learning support is offered. However the take up of this is very low. The standard of the majority of learners' written work is good. However, assessors do not promote improvements in spelling and the use of grammar sufficiently.
- Assessors provide detailed and comprehensive feedback to learners following assessment, and managers rigorously check the quality of this feedback. Learners find feedback very helpful, particularly when preparing for the next assessment. However, most learners do not monitor

their own progress closely enough and rely on the assessor to keep them informed of their progress and skills still to be completed.

- The promotion of safeguarding is excellent, but promotion of equality and diversity is weak. Assessors ask learners pre-planned questions about equality and diversity when reviewing their progress and learners demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of some issues. However, discussions lack detail and do not sufficiently ensure learners really understand the equality and diversity issues related to the workplace.

## English for speakers of other languages

### 19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Success rates are improving but are still only around the national average for the large majority of learners on ESOL programmes. This is largely the result of teachers setting ESOL learners individual language targets that are not sufficiently precise or challenging.
- In lessons, most learners make the progress expected of them and a few make better progress than expected. For example, ESOL intermediate learners used complex vocabulary and key phrases well in an animated debate on the advantages and disadvantages of television.
- Learners appreciate the high levels of support that trainers provide both inside and outside the classroom. They also value the flexibility of the programme as it allows them to attend classes at times that best suit them. However, this flexibility presents teachers with a challenge when planning their course since learners' attendance can vary from week to week.
- In the better learning activities, teachers use their experience and expertise well to plan engaging activities. For example, in an entry-level ESOL class the teacher used fun activities, in which the learners acted out words to each other, to reinforce learners' understanding of target phrases well. Teachers also explain the meaning and use of key lexis and grammar well and carefully select topics to engage and motivate the class. As a consequence, learners make significant progress during the lesson in developing both the fluency and accuracy of their language skills.
- In the weaker aspects of the provision there is little planning of programmes over an extended period of time, resources are of variable quality and all learners are doing the same work regardless of their ability. This means that some activities are too easy for some and too hard for others. Teachers use the interactive whiteboard well, but there is little use of technology by learners.
- Satisfactory initial assessment is in place for all learners to establish a starting point on their ESOL programmes and teachers review learners' progress for the majority of learners every six weeks. However, many targets set are too generic and there is little evidence of teachers monitoring learners' progress or using the outcomes of the initial assessments to set individualised, focused language targets.
- Teachers give good oral feedback to learners. Teachers use questioning well in lessons to help learners to develop their language skills, probing persistently to help them explore and understand language and to review and reinforce learning. A minority of written feedback highlights key language mistakes and effectively tells learners what they need to do to improve further. However, this good practice does not happen consistently enough and often learners receive little feedback on the quality of their written work.
- Teachers use materials and teaching methods effectively to foster good relationships across a diverse group of students. There are, however, many occasions when they do not explore diversity sufficiently, even when the opportunity to do so occurs naturally; for example, during a discussion on childhood and television, no invitation was made for ESOL learners to explore their different cultures and backgrounds.



**The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Requires improvement

- Managers in each of the three partner companies in COVET have separate, clear visions that ensure their companies respond well to industry or local needs, but they do not have a clear vision and strategy for COVET. Senior managers of COVET meet monthly to review financial and business needs of the consortium but do not monitor the quality of provision across COVET sufficiently or take action to ensure consistently high quality in all partners' provision.
- Managers ensure that staff are recruited who have appropriate qualifications and experience which contribute to the high quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Managers observe assessments regularly and provide detailed supportive feedback to assessors. However, managers do not use observations of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment sufficiently to identify the strengths and areas for improvement. Judgements in observations focus too heavily on the activity of the teacher or trainer rather than the learning that is taking place and do not sufficiently identify how the learning activity could be improved. Records of observations are not always retained by managers and managers do not take sufficient action to further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Managers in Calex UK and NPVSL monitor staff performance, and staff regularly take part in appraisals where their development needs are discussed and recorded. Staff take part in a good range of professional development activities which extend their vocational skills. For example, Calex UK staff participate in Volvo Cars UK training that leads to additional qualifications. However, too few staff take part in professional development activities to improve the teaching and learning methodologies they use, their understanding of safeguarding or their promotion of equality and diversity. LTD has an overall staff development plan but this is not linked to individual staff appraisals or development needs.
- Managers have led improvements well across a large majority of the provision since previous, separate inspections of each provider. They have only recently produced a self-assessment report that covers all the provision in COVET. As a result, they have not fully recognised all the weaknesses in the provision and its impact on learners. Separate self-assessment reports completed by Calex UK and NPVSL are broadly accurate but do not identify sufficiently well the impact of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment on learners. The self-assessment report completed by LTD is weak and fails to identify areas for improvement. Quality improvement plans are in place for a large majority of the provision and proposed actions are informed well by the self-assessment reports. However, there are insufficient measurements in place to identify the impact actions have on improving provision.
- Calex UK and NPVSL managers work very well with employers to ensure learning programmes meet their needs. Employers are overwhelmingly positive about the provision. Managers use local and national business intelligence well to plan their provision. Managers at Calex UK organise off-the-job residential training sessions extremely well to ensure learners develop the skills required to be effective technicians throughout the Volvo Cars UK dealership network. NPVSL managers work well with employers to provide additional relevant qualifications, such as manual handling and emergency first aid, at employers' premises to minimize disruption to business operations.
- Managers have policies and procedures in place to promote equality and diversity and learners are successfully protected from bullying and discrimination. Learners have high levels of respect for each other. However, equality and diversity are insufficiently well reinforced since some staff lack the confidence and training to have meaningful discussions with learners that will raise their awareness of equality and diversity. Managers do not analyse the achievements of different groups of learners sufficiently to decide what actions to take that will improve the performance of each group of learners.
- COVET meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners and learners feel safe. Policies and procedures for safeguarding arrangements are detailed and are understood by staff. However, staff have not recently participated in suitable training. Managers at Calex UK have implemented rigorous safeguarding procedures to ensure the safety of learners taking part in

residential training. Health and safety procedures are thorough, comprehensive and implemented effectively. Health and safety are reinforced well in the workplace. Risk is assessed and managed appropriately. However, e-safety is not included in safeguarding procedures.



## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Consortium of Vocational and Educational Trainers Limited

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Motor vehicle</b>	1
<b>Construction crafts</b>	2
<b>ESOL</b>	3

Type of provider	Independent learning provider								
Age range of learners	16+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 397								
	Part-time: 0								
Principal/CEO	Ms S Crowther, Mr P Davies, Mr D Miell-Ingram								
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected								
Website address	www.the-COVET.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	-	210	-	30	-	-	-	54	
Part-time	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total				
	0		0		0				
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18		19+		
	36	16	12	20	-		-		
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A								
Full-time	N/A								
Part-time	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"><li>■ Calex UK</li><li>■ Languages Training and Development</li><li>■ National Plant Vocational Skills Limited</li></ul>								

## Contextual information

COVET was formed in 2011 by three companies: Calex UK; Languages Training and Development (LTD); and National Plant Vocational Skills Limited (NPVSL). Calex UK provides apprenticeships to the automotive industry; Languages Training and Development recruits learners in the Witney area to courses in English as a second language, and Preparation for Life and Work; and NPVSL provides training on plant operations to the construction industry. Both Calex UK and NPVSL recruit learners throughout the country. Calex UK receives the majority of the Skills Funding Agency funding given to COVET; NPVSL receives approximately half as much funding as Calex UK and less than one fifth of the funding is allocated to LTD.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Steven Tucker HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the operational manager of Calex UK 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 previous inspection reports on the individual companies in COVET. 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>

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



Learner View is a new website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to [www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and provider inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013