

Kwik-Fit (GB) Limited

Employer

Inspection dates		28 October–01 November 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding-1
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- Learners' achievements and their progression rates vary too much across the organisation. Too few apprentices complete their qualifications within the expected timescale and success rates on classroom-based programmes are low.
- Trainers and assessors do not integrate well enough the development of English, mathematics and equality and diversity themes into the learners' vocational training.
- Trainers and assessors do not always accurately identify learners' starting points through initial assessment and link this to individual programmes of learning to allow learners to reach their full potential.
- Since the last inspection, standards and performance have declined. Managers' use of data is underdeveloped to secure improvement in the quality of provision.
- Aspects of quality assurance are weak. Self-assessment is underdeveloped and managers do not evaluate teaching, learning and assessment carefully enough to raise standards.

This provider has the following strengths:

- The development and application of apprentices' skills in the workplace are good. They quickly develop the confidence and technical skills to carry out challenging tasks in the workplace.
- Kwik-Fit training academies provide apprentices with safe, well-equipped learning environments that raise learners' expectations and inspire them to high standards.
- Since 2009/10, a high proportion of apprentices, progress into sustained long-term employment with Kwik-Fit that improves their economic and social well-being. A few gain promotion with extra responsibilities at work.
- Senior leaders have a strong commitment to support apprenticeship training. They have invested heavily in new training resources at the company's four training academies to develop learners' skills well.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase progression rates and the proportion of learners who complete all parts of their qualification within the planned timescale by:
 - using the outcomes of initial assessment more effectively to plan individual and supportive learning to allow each learner to fulfil their potential
 - ensuring that the learning aims, length and provision of the programmes are appropriate to learners' starting points and aspirations
 - more accurate monitoring of individual learners' progress across all aspects of their programme, identifying reasons for underperformance in detail and taking prompt action to support learners at risk of falling behind
 - better coordination of learning and assessment within the workplace through setting challenging, ambitious and measurable targets for progress and achievement for all learners.
- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring trainers and assessors use all available assessment information to plan learning in lessons, coaching and other learning activities to meet fully the individual needs of learners
 - ensuring learners have detailed and clear short and medium-term learning targets and then closely monitor their progress towards the achievement of these targets
 - improving learners' application of English, mathematics and functional skills during all learning activities with staff routinely correcting grammar and spelling errors in learners' written work
 - improving the use of information and learning technology (ILT) to make lessons more engaging, memorable, and enjoyable
 - ensuring all learners have a good understanding of equality and diversity and are confident to apply this understanding into vocationally relevant contexts.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - improving the availability and use of data so that managers and staff promptly identify underperformance in programmes and by groups of learners and can intervene swiftly to lift standards
 - ensure that the company's board members set and regularly monitors performance indicators on learners' progress and success rates and hold managers to account to raise standards
 - strengthening the rigour and accuracy of self-assessment by ensuring it takes place annually and board members review the process particularly the impact of improvement actions on learners and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
 - increasing the rigour and accuracy of teaching and learning observations to identify all areas for improvement and by giving a precise and balanced view of learners' experiences.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
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- Outcomes for learners require improvement. In 2011/12, the number of apprentices successfully completing their programme declined from being high previously to around the national average. In addition, the proportion of apprentices who achieved within the planned timescale was very low. Managers have identified and discontinued two poorly performing adult

apprenticeship programmes that significantly impacted upon success rates. Apprentices on both programmes continue to receive support towards completing their qualifications.

- Current learners are making satisfactory progress and in-year retention has improved with the very large majority of learners remaining on programme when compared to the same point in previous years. The provider's own data for 2012/13 indicates that the proportion of learners on the main apprenticeship programme who completed successfully within the planned time is increasing towards the national average. However, completion rates for learners particularly classroom based learning is low. Managers have now discontinued this programme.
- Learners enjoy training courses at one of the four regional training academies in England. Attendance is high and learners develop good vocational skills on industry-standard equipment that replicates the resources found in the Kwik-Fit service centres.
- In the workplace, learners demonstrate good vocational skills. They know how to use complex automotive diagnostic, service and repair equipment competently and follow safe working practices. They are highly motivated and develop good independent learning skills at an early stage in their programme. Learners benefit from and respond well to the mutual respect and coaching from staff.
- No significant differences exist in the achievements of learners from different minority ethnic groups. However, apprentices aged 16 to 18 achieve at a much higher rate than adult learners do, and male learners have better success rates than the very small number of female learners, and this gap is widening. Managers do not routinely analyse or review the outcomes for different groups of learners.
- Learners' attitudes to training and development are good. They are on programmes that meet their needs and aspirations well. Learners develop good personal and social skills resulting in increased levels of confidence that supports them well in their employment. For example, interacting with customers in a professional manner to clarify vehicle defects and then proposing the most suitable repair option. Customers comment positively on the social skills of apprentices.
- Learners have a good understanding of career progression and employment opportunities within Kwik-Fit. Since 2009/10, the large majority of apprentices who complete their programme remain with the company. A small minority of apprentices move to supervisory and management positions, becoming mentors and role models for newer apprentices.
- All apprentices have an adequate understanding of their rights and responsibilities and confidently apply this in their job. However, the development of their skills in English and mathematics for their job and to meet the requirements of their qualifications requires improvement.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement as reflected in outcomes for learners. Too many lessons and assessment activities are not of a high enough standard.
- In the better training and coaching sessions, trainers use their industrial knowledge effectively to plan and provide training that develops learners' work-related knowledge and skills to a high level. Trainers set high expectations for apprentices and use their extensive industrial experience to plan a good variety of classroom and workshop activities. Apprentices make good use of ILT in the training academies, but although they have access to training computers in the workplace not all receive sufficient time to log on to online training.
- In weaker lessons, trainers do not sufficiently challenge learners to make the progress they are capable of, resulting in missed opportunities to extend their learning. A minority of trainers do not regularly check that learning is taking place and in a few lessons, they show little attention

to meeting individual needs and interests of learners. The pace of these sessions is often too slow and uninspiring.

- Resources available to support learners are good. Learners benefit from good specialist training facilities at the four regional academies. The trainers at the academies develop learners' technical skill particularly well. Apprentices train on up-to-date vehicles and use the latest industry standard training tools that mirror equipment at Kwik-Fit service centres.
- Initial assessment of learners' English, mathematics and vocational skills is satisfactory. However, the results from these assessments staff do not routinely use to inform apprentices' learning programmes. Staff arrange inductions well. Diagnostic and additional assessments accurately identify learners' starting points, wider needs and interests. However, staff do not always accurately identify learners' additional support needs or ensures that learners receive support from appropriately qualified staff.
- The quality of individual learning plans varies greatly and require improvement. Although targets are set at the start of apprenticeships, these are too broad and training staff make insufficient use of the results of initial assessment when planning for individual learning.
- Workplace progress reviews are not of a good enough quality. Trainers and assessors review learners' progress regularly and make appropriate use of both learners and supervisors' contributions, but they do not capture all aspects of apprentices' vocational skill development and their progress while at work. In a minority of instances, assessors fail to challenge adequately the few apprentices that do not meet their targets.
- Learners' portfolios are satisfactory. The vast majority of apprentices use electronic portfolios to record their progress, but not all use these arrangements. Trainers and assessors use a different electronic recording system which contains conflicting information. This results in uncertainty about the achievement of apprentices.
- Assessment is effective. Assessors plan assessment in the workplace mostly well. They make good use of a range of evidence sources to check learners' skill development. Assessors provide apprentices with appropriate feedback, written and verbal, to help them improve. However, in a few instances, assessors provide too much guidance during assessment stopping a minority of learners developing independent learning skills or the confidence to plan their own development.
- The teaching of English, mathematics and functional skills is adequate. Learners achieve their functional skills qualifications in the first twelve months of the apprenticeship. However, trainers and assessors do not often correct spelling, grammatical and mathematical errors in apprentices' written work. In a minority of cases, trainers' written feedback contains incorrect spellings and learners repeat the same mistakes in their own work.
- Information, advice and guidance are good. Learners have a good understanding of the career paths available to them at Kwik-Fit. Annual celebration events help reinforce career paths and a high proportion of apprentices stay with the company after graduation. A few apprentices progress into supervisory and management positions.
- Learners' understanding of equality and diversity requires improvement. Although learners cover these topics at the start of training, staff do not always further develop the promotion of equality and diversity during progress reviews. Learners' health and safety practices are good both during their training and at work. They feel safe and contribute well to maintaining a safe working environment. Assessors routinely check on learners' well-being during reviews and learners treat each other with respect.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Board members and senior managers have a clear and far-reaching vision for the organisation and high expectations for the achievement and progress of learners, but recent initiatives have not secured consistent enough improvement in provision.
- The annual business plan gives appropriate importance to training to achieving broader business objectives. Board members and senior managers are committed to developing future managers from within the business and improve individual and team performance. The current business plan includes the introduction of new master technician roles, the provider is piloting this with twelve apprentices aged 16 to 18 following an advanced apprenticeship programme, which offers good progression for apprentices to take on these roles in the future.
- Learners benefit from good workplaces and industry standard resources that develop their skill well. Board members and senior managers show their commitment to training by significant investment in new training resources at the four training academies and their service centres.
- Management of staff performance requires improvement. Senior managers responsible for training attend monthly board meetings to present reports on performance, but board papers focus too heavily on the financial aspects of training. Board members do not routinely receive reports on apprenticeship performance, retention rates or the proportion completing their programmes within expected timescales. This stops board members robustly challenging managers to account for performance. At an operational level, monthly apprenticeship programme meetings attended by training managers have an increased focus on trainers and assessors' performance. All training staff now have individual performance targets linked to retention and success rates for apprentices, but it is too early to judge its effectiveness.
- Although aspects of quality assurance are weak, leaders and managers have taken some effective steps to improve teaching and learning including the introduction of a virtual learning environment (VLE) which learners can access in their workplace or at home. The recent introduction of tablet computers has improved assessment in the workplace and reduced the requirement of learners to produce written evidence. Evaluative learners' feedback gained through online surveys and at reviews, audits of paperwork and observations of teaching and learning help to inform the company of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. However, analysis of survey results and the circulation of the survey to include formally centre supervisors and parents need improving. Managers do not produce detailed action plans to improve individual teaching from the outcomes of observations of teaching and learning.
- Self-assessment is weak. It is not sufficiently consultative and the current self-assessment report contains contradictions. Inspectors agreed with a minority of the key points in the report, but the report fails to identify the impact of declining success rates and the low proportion of learners completing their programmes in the expected timescale.
- Kwik-Fit offers a limited range of programmes, but it does meet the needs of the company well. The curriculum appropriately matches learners' needs, interests and aspirations. Apprentices gain additional qualification units well above the requirement of the programme. The maximum class size of eight learners ensures good personal attention during training sessions.
- The promotion of equality and diversity requires improvement. Learners receive detailed information on equality and diversity during induction to promote understanding and respect. However, staff do not sufficiently reinforce or extend this during progress reviews. Numbers of female learners or learners from minority ethnic groups are too low for statistical analysis. Managers do not sufficiently analyse data to identify trends and inform action to reduce gaps in achievement.

- Kwik-Fit meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners and staff. Appropriate checks take place before staff work with individual learners. Staff have received relevant training. Kwik-Fit has suitable policies, procedures and guidance notes for safeguarding, which managers frequently review. Managers provide clear guidance for all staff involved in residential training. Learners have a good awareness of their rights and responsibilities at work and know who they would approach if they have any safeguarding issues. Incidences of bullying or harassment are extremely rare and managers thoroughly investigate reported case and take action if required. Health and safety has a particularly high priority. Learners feel safe and closely follow safe working practices.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Kwik-Fit (GB) Ltd

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Transportation operations and maintenance	3

Contextual information

Kwik-Fit (GB) Ltd is a privately owned company that specialises in automotive parts repair. The company operates across a network of over 800 service centres nationally and employs over 5000 staff in a range of engineering, administrative and managerial roles. The company started in Edinburgh in 1973 and has gone through a significant number of changes in the last few years. The most recent change of ownership occurred in 2011, when Itochu Corporation of Japan purchased the business. The company contracts directly with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) to provide apprenticeships for new recruits and development opportunities for existing employees.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Victor Reid HMI
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Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the quality and standards 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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