

# ESG (Skills) Limited

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		9–13 December 2013
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
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:

- Good teaching, learning and assessments are resulting in overall improvements in learners' progress and achievements.
- Learners achieve high success rates on childcare, hairdressing and employability courses.
- Frequent and flexibly arranged assessments meet learners and employers needs particularly well.
- Good support for learners helps them to achieve and increases their confidence.
- Good safeguarding practices are in place to protect learners.
- Strong strategic management decisions are leading to overall programme improvements.

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

- Success rates for apprenticeship programmes need improvement in some areas, in particular the completion of qualifications within the planned time.
- A minority of tutors do not always use a wide enough range of teaching methods to fully engage all learners and apprentices.
- The development of functional skills is not always effective, resulting in too few learners passing their examinations first time.
- The results of initial and diagnostic assessments are not always used effectively in all areas to plan additional support, particularly when learners progress onto higher-level apprenticeships.
- The promotion of equality and diversity requires improvement. Many tutors do not take advantage of naturally occurring opportunities to raise awareness of equality and understanding of diversity.

## Full report

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

- Improve success rates for apprenticeship programmes. Provide frequent and regular assessor visits to apprentices in the workplace, to provide support and rigorously monitor progress against clear targets and expectations. Targets need to focus sufficiently on the learning or personal development required to achieve agreed short-term goals.
- Share the best practice that exists across the provider to ensure that all assessors use questioning techniques to test, stretch, consolidate and extend apprentices' knowledge and understanding. Improve the effectiveness of functional skills teaching and learning to increase first-time pass rates and quicken learners' progress. Provide relevant links to real-life or vocational situations to contextualise functional skills and to demonstrate the transferability of functional skills.
- Carry out initial and diagnostic assessments to identify and plan specific areas where support is required early on in programmes, to help apprentices and learners to make good progress and achieve on time. All tutors should use the information provided by initial assessment to ensure that all learners receive the support they need. When learners progress onto higher-level apprenticeships, carry out assessments of their ability to achieve any higher-level functional skills requirements, and provide effective additional support if necessary.
- Improve the promotion and recording of equality and diversity, particularly during taught sessions. Ensure that all tutors use the naturally occurring opportunities to explore issues relevant to the vocational training areas. Ensure that tutors are confident about challenging inappropriate language, behaviour or stereotypical attitudes observed in a very small minority of lessons.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Requires improvement
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- The latest published data for overall success rates for apprentices and advanced apprentices, who are the majority of learners, are slightly above the national average. However, the current success rates have declined slightly for apprentices in health and social care, administration and hospitality and catering, and require improvement. Success rates for learners on adult skills programmes in 2011/12 were below the national average but improved in 2012/13 to a satisfactory level. Significant changes to the company in July 2012 coincided with a fall in overall success rates. However, marked improvements to achievements are apparent across all programmes as a result of a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- Success rates for learners on employability programmes are very high for the achievement of qualifications and accredited units and good for learners gaining employment. ESG is successful in enabling a good proportion of learners who complete the accredited units to progress into sustainable employment.
- ESG identified small but significant learner achievement gaps of different learner groups for gender, ethnicity, age and learning difficulties/disabilities. Suitable action plans are in place and the gaps are successfully narrowing across all the identified areas.
- Most learners achieve and make good progress relative to their starting points and learning goals. Recently introduced electronic portfolios are effective at helping to accurately track

learners' progress. They also provide useful alerts for staff and managers if learners' progress is below that expected.

- The overall success rate for apprentices passing their functional skills tests is satisfactory at 75%. However, the first time pass rate is low at 49% with most needing to sit the exams several times before being successful. This slows learners' overall progress. Training for tutors and assessors to support learners' and apprentices' functional skills development is helping assessors to incorporate English and mathematics better within vocational training and assessment.
- Learners develop appropriate personal, social and employability skills. Learners enjoy their programmes and comment favourably on the support they receive from their assessors and tutors. Assessors work well with learners to help them improve their skills, knowledge and understanding. This often results in good improvements in learners' confidence and increased motivation levels. Attendance and punctuality are good on most employability courses
- The proportion of apprentices that progress onto advanced apprenticeships is satisfactory. The achievement of those who progress from apprentices to advanced apprentices requires improvement as just 66% of them go on to achieve the full qualification framework.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, which reflects the good rates of progress made by current learners. ESG has good systems for observing teaching, learning and assessment resulting in well-trained tutors and assessors who deliver good quality learning sessions. This helps apprentices and learners quickly gain confidence, team-working skills and communicate more effectively.
- In the best learning sessions, tutors and assessors plan and use innovative learning activities well. They question learners skilfully to check their understanding and stimulate discussion. Tutors and assessors provide learners and apprentices with highly effective coaching which they link well to workplace situations. Assessors use their commercial experience to enliven teaching and learning and provide apprentices with good quality individual support.
- Assessors frequently set apprentices activities to research current and relevant topics, helping them develop their subject knowledge and become independent in managing and accessing their own learning. Apprentices value the immediate marking and resulting tuition they receive. Where learning activities are less effective, this is largely because learners and apprentices complete unimaginative and insufficiently challenging activities, often using workbooks, with a heavy emphasis on written work.
- Most employers provide apprentices with good quality training and support at work that quickens their progress and helps them to acquire new skills and knowledge. Assessors carefully plan and coordinate employers' and the apprenticeship training to provide learners with a coherent programme. A minority of health and social care employers do not give apprentices sufficient study time or release them from work to meet with their assessor, which impedes their progress.
- Assessment practice is good, frequent and flexible around apprentices' shifts and workplace priorities. Tutors and assessors use their good experience and qualifications to plan and mark learners' and apprentices' work providing them with developmental verbal feedback to help them improve. Most assessors use electronic portfolios well to motivate apprentices but a few less-experienced assessors lack strategies to maintain the pace when technology connectivity problems affect assessment visits.
- Tutors and assessors assess learners' and apprentices' levels of English and mathematics at the start of their programme but not all use this information to plan learning and support effectively or ensure learners complete diagnostic assessments to identify the specific areas they need to

improve. Apprentices have clear short-term targets and a good awareness of the progress they are making.

- ESG established good structures and training for tutors and assessors to support learners' and apprentices' functional skills development in English and mathematics, locating specialist tutors in subject and geographical areas with lower achievement rates. This has helped assessors to incorporate fully English, mathematics and, to a lesser extent, information and communication technology (ICT) within vocational training and assessment. Although some employability learners have recently started taking English courses, most have insufficient opportunities to develop their English and/or mathematics skills. Not all tutors and assessors correct learners' and apprentices' spelling and grammatical mistakes.
- Tutors and assessors take good care in matching ESGs broad range of programmes to learners' and apprentices' current and future needs. Learners and apprentices are given accurate information and sufficient detail about their programme before they start. Apprentices and learners have access to a broad range of information and advice, often displayed in learning centres.
- Learners receive effective advice and guidance supported by ESGs good links with external organisations, which have particularly helped employability learners with topics such as debt advice and signposting to providers of additional qualifications. In some centres, tutors establish strong links with employers to provide employability learners with work experience and employment opportunities, and set up areas that replicate major employers' premises, such as in warehouses. Careers advice varies too much, some employability learners only receive information pertinent to the job they are applying for while others have detailed careers advice based on their aspirations.
- Learners and apprentices have a satisfactory understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Most tutors' and assessors' promotion of equality and diversity in learning sessions requires improvement because they do not explore the topic in sufficient depth or make it relevant to the vocational subject or workplace. The exception is on child development and well-being and management programmes, where the highly trained assessors use a broad range of techniques to relate the subject to practice and make it interesting to apprentices.

## Health and social care

### Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement, which is reflected in the success rates that are below national rates. Most current apprentices however make satisfactory or better progress towards achieving their qualification.
- In the better learning sessions, assessors provide good quality coaching that improves apprentices' confidence. They put learning into real-life situations and focus questions on reinforcing learning in topics like checking for awareness of different types of abuse that can sometimes affect elderly people. They plan training to ensure apprentices are well prepared for assessment. For example, one assessor created a very effective simulation where the apprentice gained a good understating of residents' care needs giving them more confidence to answer questions set by the assessor.
- Apprentices complete research tasks between assessor visits which help develop their knowledge in areas such as safeguarding and health and safety. Those using electronic portfolios have access to a wide range of learning materials supplemented with assessors' contact, where needed. Learners value the immediate feedback and tuition they receive after submitting work, which helps build their self-confidence and skills.
- Many assessors use a narrow range of learning activities relying too heavily on holding discussions with apprentices rather than setting them active or practical learning activities. They

do not always allow apprentices sufficient time or opportunity to reflect on, or extend, their learning. Although employers provide good training at work, some apprentices have insufficient time allowed to study or meet with their assessors.

- Apprentices complete initial assessment tests to identify their current level of English and mathematics, but assessors do not always use these results to plan learning. They use diagnostic assessments inconsistently or too late, which means some learners' specific learning needs are not identified sufficiently early in their programme.
- Assessors use their good skills, knowledge and expertise to skilfully question apprentices during assessment. Apprentices receive frequent and constructive verbal feedback from assessors that raises their aspirations and helps them improve their work, which is generally of a high standard. However, assessors' marking and written feedback is often insufficient.
- Where assessors use the electronic portfolio, which is quite recent in health and social care, this helps motivate apprentices to achieve more quickly and monitor their own progress. A few assessors spend too long updating the electronic portfolio during their visits, which wastes apprentices' time as it does not directly involve them. Apprentices are clear about the progress they are making.
- Assessors do not plan training, support and assessment of English and mathematics functional skills sufficiently to enable all apprentices to achieve by their planned deadlines. They rarely link functional-skills learning and assessment to real-life situations or vocational learning. Too often apprentices complete generic paper-based functional skills worksheets that are not relevant to health and social care.
- Assessors form productive working relationships with apprentices creating a good ethos of mutual respect. They provide good quality care, guidance and support. Specialist tutors are starting to provide valuable and good quality help for apprentices with specific learning needs.
- Apprentices have a suitable understanding of their responsibilities for equality, diversity and dignity within their work. Assessors do not extend this knowledge sufficiently during discussions they hold with apprentices at learning and assessment sessions. Not all apprentices have good access to computers, which restricts the opportunities they have to use electronic portfolios to improve the tracking of progress or develop computer skills independently of their assessor.

## Early years and playwork

### Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment in child development and well-being are good as reflected in outcomes, which remain above the national average despite a recent dip. Apprentices develop wider social and teamwork skills and increased confidence, due to on-the-job training.
- Assessors support their apprentices well throughout their training. Assessors ensure apprentices understand course requirements, which encourages and motivates them to develop independent learning skills. Assessors have appropriate qualifications and occupational experience, which they use well to plan, deliver and assess learning by regularly setting and reviewing targets.
- Assessment practice is good with apprentices' learning thoroughly checked in most assessments, aiding their development. A few assessments have insufficient stretch and challenge to extend and develop apprentices' knowledge. Employers are not always included in feedback to apprentices so they do not always know how well their apprentices are progressing or how they can support them in the workplace.
- Apprentices receive frequent visits to assess and monitor their learning and progress. However, a minority of assessors do not use exploratory questioning to consolidate and extend learning. Apprentices have access to a range of online information sheets and assessors recommend a textbook and signpost to appropriate web sites to aid learning.

- Results of initial assessment are used well to inform individual learning plans. Employers like having a named assessor, which provides continuity for their employees. Employers say their apprentices develop their workplace skills well and become confident practitioners at work.
- Feedback to apprentices is detailed and accurate, which informs further development of their knowledge. In better feedback sessions there is a real focus on coaching, which encourages apprentices to develop deeper learning. Written feedback via the electronic portfolio is variable. Assessors inform learners how to improve although they are not always told why they have done well. Assessors effectively monitor the progress of their apprentices.
- The integration of English and mathematics into learning results in good learners’ development of these skills. However, the delivery of ICT is ineffective in helping learners to understand its relevance to their work situations. A large number of learners have to re-sit functional skills tests, which affects timely achievement.
- Promotion of equality and diversity is excellent during assessment and reviews. Apprentices have a well-developed knowledge of equality, diversity and inclusion, which they apply to their everyday practice. ESGs successful recruitment strategy has resulted in almost doubling the recruitment of male apprentices.
- Apprentices have a good knowledge of safeguarding requirements and can relate this to their work with children and themselves in the context of their employment. They identify health and safety issues and know how to deal with them; for example, a learner dealt effectively with an accident when a child was injured and had to go to hospital.

<b>Employability</b>	Good
<b>Employability</b>	

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in employability training is good, which reflects the high success rate for qualifications. Some learners are initially reluctant to attend the compulsory training, but the vast majority of learners stay and attendance is good. Learners develop their confidence through a daily routine and a chance to meet others, which they value highly. Learners’ motivation and belief in their ability to succeed are quickly increased while on the courses.
- Tutors promote a very caring, friendly and supportive learning environment so learners are happy to contribute and voice their opinion and learn from each other. In better sessions, tutors meet the individual needs of learners well and include extension activities. Learners enjoy taking part in lively activities. Tutors use good resources and a range of assessment methods very effectively. An outstanding session demonstrated excellent progress and learning because all learners were able to use commas confidently, which they were not able to do at the start of the session.
- Weaker sessions, which are the minority, are too tutor dominated. Planning is ineffective and an over reliance on the employability skills workbook means that individual learning needs are not met. In these sessions, tutors make little use of technology, or, when they do, they use it in a way that does not enhance learning or understanding of the topic.
- Tutors challenge and encourage learners well in most sessions. Tutors give very motivating feedback, which helps to build learners’ confidence and team-building skills. Learners apply themselves well during sessions. Learners complete their workbooks to at least an acceptable standard and some add to their workbook with extra assignments.
- Tutors identify learners’ initial starting points well but a minority do not fully use this information to plan sessions or plan for those learners that may need extra support during the session. Individual learning targets focus on units of a qualification and do not reflect progress towards addressing personal barriers to employment.

- Workbooks are set out well so learners have clear learning objectives and know they will demonstrate their learning. Tutors give oral and written feedback in their workbook after each module so learners know how well they are progressing. However, written feedback does not always inform the learner how to improve their work.
- Learners do not sufficiently develop their English, mathematics or functional skills as tutors do not plan well for the embedding and development of these skills in their lessons. Mistakes in spelling and grammar are not corrected routinely. However, learners practice their communication and written skills regularly, and enjoy doing so, as part of the programme.
- A broad range of good information and advice is readily available in centres. Sessions offer information and advice about employment options and tutors facilitate sharing of information between learners. Some centres use resources and links with employers well to provide learners with the opportunity to obtain work experience and employment. This covers a range of industries including retail, security, warehousing and catering.
- Learners from a wide range of age and backgrounds enjoy working together, treat each other with respect and support one another well. Bright and colourful displays in the centres are inspirational, promote equality and diversity and celebrate learners' success well. However, tutors do not always extend learners' awareness or properly challenge inappropriate behaviour.

## Administration

Good

## Apprenticeships

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, which is reflected in the high number of apprentices who make good progress. They successfully develop good knowledge and skills and improve their performance at work very effectively. Although the overall success rates for apprentices are slightly below national rates, they are improving and most complete their programmes by their target end dates.
- Assessors have high expectations of apprentices, which motivates them very effectively. Apprentices benefit from consistent levels of support and encouragement through frequent assessment visits, emails and telephone conversations. They quickly gain in confidence, increase their levels of independence and improve their communication skills.
- Apprentices benefit from good training in the workplace in topics such as bespoke software packages and how to handle sensitive information. As a result they soon extend the range of tasks they are able to carry out confidently and they quickly take on extra responsibility. Assessors do not always take enough account of the workplace training when planning learning programmes. Good coaching makes good use of assessors' expertise and encourages learners' independent thinking skills.
- Assessment is well-planned and assessors prepare well for the workplace visits. The recent introduction of the electronic portfolio system is having a positive impact. The good tracking ensures that apprentices are clear about their progress. Assessment plans do not consistently provide apprentices with enough detail on the actions they need to take. Poor connectivity to the internet often impedes the pace of the sessions.
- Initial assessment is routinely carried out for all apprentices and is effective in identifying their literacy, numeracy and ICT levels. The results are used well by the majority of assessors to plan appropriate support and effectively personalise learning.
- The choice of a good range of units for the qualification reflects apprentices' work roles very well and provides sufficient challenge. However, targets often focus too much on unit completion, functional skills or technical certificate tests and not sufficiently on the learning or personal development needed to achieve their short-term goals.
- Apprentices review their progress regularly and engage well in discussing what they have achieved. They receive constructive oral feedback. Although the large majority of employers

meet assessors regularly and review apprentices’ progress thoroughly, a few do not. Apprentices are clear about their progress and know precisely what they need to do to improve.

- Apprentices develop effectively their functional skills for the frameworks and a few are encouraged to extend their levels of English and mathematics beyond what is required. Assessors provide effective support to develop their skills; however, resources used to teach functional skills generally lack imagination and some tutors over-use practise tests to prepare learners for the exams. A specialist tutor provides additional support if required and assessors routinely correct errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation in written work.
- ESG offers good work placements and matches apprentices well to the work of the organisation. Induction is effective. Assessors have high aspirations for their apprentices and engage in regular discussions with them about their future careers and further training opportunities.
- Apprentices have a clear understanding of equality and diversity and can explain the relevance to their workplaces. They have a good awareness of their rights and responsibilities and safe working practices. However, the opportunity to promote and discuss wider diversity issues throughout the programme is sometimes missed.

**Business management**

Good

**Apprenticeships**

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good with the majority of current apprentices making good progress towards their qualification. The number of apprentices who complete their qualifications within the time allocated has increased significantly and is now above national averages. However, this improved position is not yet mirrored in apprentices’ overall success rates, which are slightly below national average.
- Well-qualified assessors plan learning activities skilfully to meet the differing needs of apprentices, using their own wide commercial experience to enliven teaching. Apprentices work at their own pace and receive good individual support from their assessors. Most management apprentices demonstrate good managerial skills and successfully apply principles learnt through their vocational qualification to their everyday work activities.
- Assessors are swift to identify opportunities to deliver coaching sessions which are highly effective in overcoming barriers to learning for some apprentices. For example, one team leader apprentice was finding it difficult to prepare for an assessment. The assessor effectively explained and demonstrated one method of how the activity could be completed by the learner. The learner clearly gained new thoughts and ideas and benefited from the session and successfully completed the assignment.
- Apprentices develop good team-leading and management skills which are valued by employers. Assessors are flexible when arranging visits to workplaces and respond well to meet the changing needs of apprentices and employers everyday business demands. Assessors carefully coordinate employer in-house training to the apprenticeship requirements, ensuring that the learning experience is planned well.
- Assessment and verification practices are highly effective. Staff use a wide variety of assessment methods, including probing questioning, professional discussions and witness testimonies to capture apprentices’ achievements. Staff are identifying and supporting apprentices at risk of underachievement much more quickly than previously, which has contributed significantly to their improved progress.
- The use of technology to support both learning and assessment is good. Assessors make good use of digital recorders when conducting professional discussions with apprentices, for example, during speaking and listening activities for functional skills. Most apprentices and assessors enjoy using the newly introduced electronic portfolio to upload work as well as for accessing the many good learning resources.



- Staff use initial assessment of mathematics, English and ICT skills appropriately to inform course choice for each apprentice. In a few cases staff encourage apprentices to undertake a higher level of functional skills than required by their framework to further improve their skill level. Apprentices' work is always marked swiftly and appropriately with spelling mistakes corrected appropriately.
- Most employers provide good support and mentoring for apprentices in the workplace. Many have previously completed work-based learning themselves so are well equipped to help and support apprentices. However, not all assessors involve employers sufficiently in progress reviews; as a consequence a minority of employers are unaware of the progress made by, or support needs of, apprentices.
- Assessors promote equality and diversity satisfactorily. Apprentices understand basic equality and diversity themes and increasingly have the opportunity to discuss topical issues that arise, such as gender equality. However, staff miss opportunities to support apprentices to apply this learning to their workplace; this is especially important for management apprentices as they need to have a good understanding of this important topic.

## The effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Outcomes for learners are improving because leaders, board members and managers have a clear and strategic focus on the quality of provision and have improved leadership and management. Leaders and managers work very well together to set high expectations at all levels, and have an ambitious vision for apprentices and for learners preparing for employment. Leaders, managers and staff are enthusiastic campaigners for learning and development, so that apprentices and learners can reach their full potential. They know how well learners and apprentices are doing and regularly seek feedback from learner representatives. They use this feedback well to influence their strategic planning and performance management.
- After a recent and significant company-wide restructure, ESG has a new leadership and management team that leads well. The vision for ESG is clear and understood by all staff, leading to improved communication with learners and employers and good teaching and learning.
- ESG leaders and managers have learning at the heart of everything they do. They have a clear ambition to enable greater numbers of learners to gain qualifications, get a job or begin higher-level qualifications. There is a clear commitment at board level to provide high-quality resources and training so that learners benefit from increasingly good teaching, learning and assessment and complete their courses successfully.
- The executive board, which includes senior leaders and other representatives, knows ESG well. Board members respond quickly and effectively to ensure that teaching and learning are planned to meet current and future local, regional and national employment, skills development and qualification requirements. Staff and learners have challenging targets that managers monitor robustly. Board members hold senior managers to account well for meeting challenging performance and financial targets.
- Managers have high expectations for achievement and success on preparation for work programmes. Many learners gain employment soon after completing their studies; others begin to work towards qualifications that help them prepare for work in their chosen career.
- Managers use wide-ranging data to make strategic decisions and set targets for improvements in teaching, learning and assessment so that more learners do well in their studies. They use these data well to inform a performance-management process that ensures that the tutors and assessors who work with learners and apprentices are well qualified and experienced.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is rigorous, including specific observations of sub-contracted tutors and assessors. Managers have made good improvements to the process to hold tutors and assessors to account. The system for

appraising staff performance and capability is comprehensive. Managers provide underperforming staff with appropriate support. However, as managers are aware, improvements in teaching, learning and assessment are not consistent in all subject areas.

- Self-assessment is part of a continuous self-critical process that includes all staff. Managers capture judgements and evidence using a well-designed evidence form that encourages discussion and debate. They use this evidence effectively to reach secure judgements and to set challenging targets for improvement and development. Managers review these targets in monthly area team meetings and with senior managers to secure sustained improvement.
- ESG managers use results from learner and employer satisfaction surveys and reports to evaluate rigorously the impact they have on the numbers of learners who successfully complete their training. Learners are highly satisfied with their learning and training experiences. Almost all employers and learners recommend ESG to others.
- Leaders and managers ensure that learners benefit from sound impartial advice and guidance. Managers ensure that learners study on programmes that match their career plans. A minority of employability learners, who are not certain about their career pathway, benefit greatly from 'work-trials' that enable them to make informed decisions about their future studies.
- Managers focus well on promoting equality and diversity. They provide online and face-to-face training for staff, and support their staff well to develop purposeful resources. However, tutors and assessors do not consistently explore with learners and apprentices how the issues they encounter may affect their lives. Incidents of bullying and discrimination occur infrequently. Learners treat each other with respect.
- ESG meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. All staff and learners benefit from regular national and area-based training and updates, and know how to keep themselves safe and show that they work safely. Where learners and staff raise concerns, staff deal with issues rapidly, thoughtfully and appropriately: they understand and apply the ESG code of conduct very well. Learners feel safe and are highly satisfied with the access to support and care that managers make available.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Provider name

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Health and social care</b>	3
<b>Early years and playwork</b>	2
<b>Employability training</b>	2
<b>Administration</b>	2
<b>Business management</b>	2

## Provider details

<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: 14,835							
	Part-time: 8,874							
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Mr Gavin Freed							
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	No previous inspection							
<b>Website address</b>	<a href="http://www.esggroup.co.uk/">http://www.esggroup.co.uk/</a>							
<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>								
<b>Main course or learning programme level</b>	<b>Level 1 or below</b>		<b>Level 2</b>		<b>Level 3</b>		<b>Level 4 and above</b>	
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	42	N/A	20	N/A	N/A
<b>Part-time</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	663	4,145	238	2,807	N/A	N/A		
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>								
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Part-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	812							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors for employability training:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ EOS Works</li> <li>■ Sarina Russo Jobs Access</li> <li>■ Castleview</li> <li>■ Standguide Limited</li> <li>■ The Training Brokers</li> <li>■ Warrington Collegiate</li> <li>■ Manchester International College</li> <li>■ Tailored Recruitment Services</li> </ul>							

## Contextual information

ESG was formed in 2007 following the acquisition and merger of four businesses specialising in skills provision and employment related services. The company provides apprenticeship training across a range of vocational sectors. A separate company called Sencia is wholly owned by ESG and provides employability training for unemployed learners. ESG subcontracts with eight other providers to deliver employability training programmes in different regions of the country. Most learning programmes take place in Yorkshire and Humber, North West, the East and West Midlands, although programmes are provided across all English regions. ESG provides a small amount of private training that accounts for about 1% of the total number of learners.

## Information about this inspection

<b>Lead inspector</b>	John Grimmer HMI
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Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the Operations Performance Director 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 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 most 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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