

# S&B Automotive Academy

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		24–28 February 2014
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good-2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Outstanding-1

## Summary of key findings for learners

### This provider is good because:

- Learners have high success rates for apprenticeship framework completions.
- Learners develop good personal, social and employability skills.
- High numbers of learners progress to advanced level programmes and in to supervisory roles.
- Very detailed and thorough learner progress reviews assist learners to achieve on time.
- Information and learning technology is extensive and widely used.
- Technical English and mathematics are developed well.
- Resources at the S&B academy are excellent.
- Training programmes are exceptionally well planned and managed.
- Outstanding arrangements are in place to safeguard learners.
- Excellent financial strategies are in place to develop the business.
- Networking and partnerships are extensive and influence both local and national initiatives.
- Senior management is highly experienced and committed to securing S&B for the future.

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

- Too many learners aged 16 to 18 leave the programme early without achieving their qualification.
- The planning and delivery of functional skills are not yet fully developed.
- Insufficient checks on learning take place during some taught sessions.
- The promotion and reinforcement of equality and diversity are not consistent.

## Full report

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

- Make better use of the information gathered on 16- to 18-year-old learners through initial assessment to plan teaching strategies which meet learners' individual needs. Identify and analyse the barriers preventing their successful completion.
- Monitor more closely the quality of teaching of functional skills and learners' achievements. Plan functional skills more systematically to ensure all learners are able to improve their English, mathematical and ICT abilities.
- Develop better question and answer techniques that include all learners. Enhance the lecturers' knowledge of the effectiveness of teaching and learning and determine what each individual learner requires to maintain a good rate of progress.
- Raise staff confidence and awareness with regard to equality and diversity. Use a range of techniques, including naturally-occurring opportunities, detailed and thorough questioning, and local and national issues, to determine the learners' depth of knowledge and understanding and to aid reinforcement.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- In 2012/13, learners on the majority of programmes achieved their framework qualification at a rate well above the national average. This represents a significant improvement over the previous year where success rates for learners were below the national average for similar providers. Retention for learners over the age of 19 is good; however, too many learners aged 16 to 18 leave the programme without achieving the qualification.
- Current learners are making good progress and in-year data strongly indicate outcomes to be at least to the level of 2012/13. The recently-introduced business and administration programme for the transport operations and maintenance industry is progressing well, with high retention at both intermediate and advanced levels.
- Learners enjoy their training programme in the workplace and at the S&B academy. Attendance is high and learners develop good vocational skills using an excellent range of industry-standard tools and equipment in the many workshops which are equipped to the standard of independent garages and above.
- In the workplace, learners demonstrate good industry-standard skills. They use hand tools and other equipment correctly, and with confidence, referring to vehicle components and repair procedures using the correct terminology. Learners respond well to coaching from colleagues in the workplace and are motivated to complete tasks to a high standard.
- S&B closely monitors and analyses the performance of all learners and no significant differences exist in the achievements of male or female learners, or those learners from different minority ethnic backgrounds and those requiring additional support.
- Learners develop good interpersonal and social skills that help to increase their self-confidence in dealing effectively with customers' needs. They collaborate well with fellow learners in training, their colleagues in the workplace and in their involvement with customers. Employers comment positively on the social skills of learners.
- Learners have a good understanding of career progression, with a significant majority progressing to higher-level programmes. Following completion of their programme, several learners have progressed to supervisory and management positions, started their own businesses or gone into teaching and training.

**The quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good; this is reflected in the good outcomes. Learners benefit from the knowledgeable and occupationally-experienced staff and, through their engagement and collaboration, develop good working relationships. Staff have high expectations of their learners and encourage and support them to achieve their frameworks to a high standard. Learners are motivated and enjoy their learning. Health and safety, and safe working practices are promoted effectively during training in employers' workshops and at the S&B academy. E-safety is particularly well promoted and monitored.
- The well-planned and managed training programmes, with their frequent observations of on-the-job learning, provide immediate and accurate feedback to learners on the standard of their performance and quickly identify any support needs they may require. The standard of coaching is very good. For example, one learner was instructed in how to record the completion of a pre-delivery inspection on a heavy goods vehicle and the responsibility and liabilities attached in ensuring that this was carried out accurately, effectively and to a high standard. Programmes are flexible, with additional training designed specifically to meet the needs of the learners and the requirements of their employers. Learners access additional national accreditations at the end of their training programmes related to their specialism.
- In the well-planned theory sessions, lecturers with good industrial experience promote best commercial practice. Learners remain engaged and focused on their class work. The very good use of information and learning technology (ILT) adds interest and enhances learners' understanding. Good use of quizzes stimulates interest and promotes the correct use of vehicle technology. The use of interactive technology to promote learning is excellent. However, in some formal learning sessions, there are insufficient checks on learning, with questioning techniques failing to engage all learners and allowing a minority of confident learners to dominate the session.
- Learners receive frequent and very thorough progress reviews that provide a clear summary of the short-term targets set at the previous review, and receive relevant targets to complete by the next review. Consultants provide very good advice and guidance on how learners can improve their performance and their progress. Health and safety are given a high priority and the well-being of learners is discussed in depth. Clear advice is given to learners on how to link their theoretical knowledge, gained at the academy, with their practical activities in the workshop, so that they fully understand the relevance of their practical training. Exceptionally good use is made of the computerised tracking and monitoring system, e-portfolios and video cameras to ensure learners record and understand what they have achieved, and to provide focused guidance on the next steps in their training.
- Although employers are not always present at the review and involved in the learner target setting, they receive detailed and accurate feedback from S&B staff on the progress and standard of their individual learners. Employers know their learners well and are fully involved in planning the learning and support that learners receive in the workshops. Employers are appreciative of the use of video recording in the workplace to provide evidence and demonstrate the learners' standard of performance.
- A high priority is placed on the observation of learners during their on-the-job training. Learners are prepared well for the assessment and good use is made throughout of questions to the learner to judge their depth of knowledge and understanding of their activities. At the end of the assessment they are given accurate and detailed feedback on the standard of their performance. Employers are fully involved in developing an action plan to support the learners to develop their skills and raise their performance. During the on-the-job assessment, very good use is made of the recent introduction of video technology to record the learner at work and to provide evidence for their e-portfolio. S&B makes exceptionally good use of the integration of advanced technology in the motor vehicle industry, particularly through the workplace assessment by remote internet access.
- Learners use mathematics with confidence during lessons and in the workplace. In one

intermediate apprentice lesson on engine combustion, learners effectively used volume formulae to calculate compression ratios. In practical sessions in vehicle body repair, learners routinely use colour ratios and proportions for paint mixing to match specific colour matches. One learner, when asked what the conversion was between one bar and pounds per square inch when inflating heavy goods vehicle tyres, was able to give a clear and accurate answer.

- All learners are required to carry out activities to develop their skills in English for their job and to meet the requirements of their qualification. In lessons and during workplace reviews lecturers and assessors encourage correct spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, the delivery of functional skills and the scheduling of assessments for English, mathematics and ICT require improvement. Assessors routinely check learners' written work and provide verbal feedback on the quality of their spelling, stressing the importance of good English when writing up reports for employers and customers on the work carried out on their vehicles.
- Learners receive valuable advice and guidance at the start of their qualification, which prepares them well for the programme. Learners benefit from very good support and advice they receive during recruitment, application, interview, selection and from the on-line testing systems. Advice, guidance and support are a high priority during training. Consultants provide relevant and effective support to learners to ensure that they maintain their progress. Outdoor development activity is an integral part of the learner induction process and is valued by learners for its team-building qualities.
- The promotion and reinforcement of equality and diversity during the regular progress reviews are inconsistent. Some consultants very effectively use naturally-occurring opportunities to reinforce equality and diversity; but, in some reviews, there are missed opportunities to develop learners' awareness. During theory sessions, equality and diversity are not always planned into the learning activities.

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

Outstanding

- S&B has a very proactive and enthusiastic approach to business development. Strategic direction is focused particularly well and the organisation has a strong environmental agenda. Particularly innovative use of information technology targets and promotes apprenticeships with both large national and small local employers and with potential learners. The introduction of highly-developed camera technology has led to very significant cost savings in terms of staff resourcing, fuel and staff subsistence. It has also led to an improvement in the performance of the training programmes due to the ability to assess and observe more frequently using remote technology. Quality systems have been particularly enhanced with the opportunity to observe activities more regularly, without additional cost implications. This initiative has also enabled the organisation to meet its environmental objectives by reducing its carbon emissions. A key strategy and business development initiative has resulted in each department having the opportunity to promote apprenticeships and sell commercial courses with an opportunity to reinvest a percentage of the profits in departmental resources. Staff very much welcome the opportunity to have financial control of their own cost centre and strive to maximise use of their departments to take advantage of the financial incentives on offer.
- Performance at all levels is particularly well managed and monitored by S&B directors and senior management. A highly-committed and experienced management board works closely with the senior management team to ensure business targets are closely monitored and being regularly met. Both financial data and learner performance data are well understood and managed, and used to produce regular financial updates which drive the organisation forward and influence any necessary change. Staff performance is closely linked to the organisation's business plan ensuring staff fully understand the aims and objectives of the business and their role in achieving them. All staff are regularly observed where appropriate and appraised formally to measure performance. Teaching and learning are a key part of the observation process and are extremely developmental, with a clear focus on the learner experience. External partners assist with the review of performance and use is made of local peer group activity to help assure and

develop quality. Internal verification activity is particularly rigorous and frequent and is a key tool for ensuring learners progress well. Staff development is comprehensive, encouraged by senior management and fully supported. Training programmes are particularly well planned and managed. Communication between the organisation and employers is good and employers are appreciative of the use of video recording to demonstrate the learner's standard of performance.

- Self-assessment is comprehensive, inclusive and accurately judges the quality of provision. Targets are ambitious and realistic and the monitoring of improvement is very effective. Areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been effectively developed and managed. The self-assessment report, which is succinct and focused on the S&B government-funded provision, accurately identifies most of the key strengths and areas for improvement. Employer, learner and staff feedback are regularly gathered and inform both the self-assessment process and ongoing improvements to the training programmes. Inspectors identified good examples of feedback leading to the improvement of both the learner and employer experience. The acquisition of new vehicles for the training centre and changes to duration of learner training blocks came about as a result of both learner and employer feedback.
- S&B is particularly influential and responsive in the development of transport operations and maintenance training, both locally and nationally. Senior management influences national policy through a range of networking activity with trade, funding and awarding bodies. Extremely active locally with the regional provider network, the organisation shares good practice and supports information technology development across a range of training activity in the South West. Work with the armed forces and senior government agencies has led to opportunities for apprentices and the opportunity to grow the commercial side of the business. A reciprocal visit arrangement, which allows learners and staff to sample work in Germany, is greatly valued by all participants. The business development function is significant and encompasses recruitment, application, interview, selection and extensive on-line testing of all potential learners. The process is extremely fair and equitable and employers regard the service as essential to them in finding the best candidates for apprenticeships. Engagement with local schools in the Bristol area is extensive and very good use is made of innovative ideas at career fairs.
- Equality and diversity are a key priority for S&B and recruitment particularly focuses on under representation in an effort to widen participation, particularly for females and minority ethnic groups. Business development focuses on deprived areas in Bristol, with a particular focus on learners not in education, employment and training and those with a disability. Good examples of the removal of barriers to learning were identified by inspectors. One particular example involved a wheelchair user who had received additional adjustments to enable him to access a motor vehicle programme. Data are well managed to identify areas of under representation and the performance of other groups in training. However, equality and diversity are not always well reinforced in either the classroom or the workplace. Reinforcement does take place but is not innovative and is not always contextualised.
- S&B meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. A major priority for the organisation is the safety and well-being of all learners, with a particular focus on the learners in residential accommodation whilst on block release from their employers. A dedicated team assures the welfare of learners outside the training centre and outside normal working hours. Home-stay has proved to be extremely successful for S&B, with a number of closely-regulated and monitored establishments providing a safe and secure environment for learners. The excellent quality of care provided has proved a valuable foundation on which to ensure the continued attendance of learners, particularly during their residential blocks. All S&B staff and accommodation providers are DBS registered and aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. Regular updates and awareness training, with formal qualifications, ensure S&B is in a position to identify and deal quickly with safeguarding issues. E-safety is a particular priority for S&B and is very well managed and monitored. Inspectors identified good examples of safeguarding issues being sensitively dealt with and being well recorded. Health and safety are also a priority for the organisation, with the services of an external specialist agency supporting in-house health and safety monitoring and providing regular update training. All activities are thoroughly risk assessed and safe working methods employed.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### S&B Automotive Academy

<b>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</b>  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	<b>Overall</b>	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Outcomes for learners	<b>2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
The effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>1</b>	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

<b>Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Transportation operations and maintenance	<b>2</b>

Type of provider	Independent learning provider								
Age range of learners	16+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 554								
	Part-time: 31								
CEO	Mr John Winter								
Date of previous inspection	November 2009								
Website address	www.sandbaa.com								
<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>									
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	53	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Part-time	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total				
	7		1		8				
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+			
	216	65	38	51	N/A	N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16									
Full-time	N/A								
Part-time	33								
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>None</li> </ul>								

## Contextual information

S&B Automotive Academy is a work-based learning provider based in Bristol. Originally two group-training associations under the Road Transport Industry Training Board, it has been operating for over 40 years. S&B is a not-for-profit organisation and surplus funds are invested in improving facilities and services. Government-funded training accounts for 70% of total income.

Employing 51 staff, and being run by a management board and a senior management team, S&B serves the needs of the transport industry, and its client base includes a wide range of vehicle manufacturers and importers, including truck, bus, car dealerships, repair centres, and auto-electrical and transport distribution companies. S&B manages and operates traineeships, apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships for local, regional and national companies.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Tim Hanson AI

Six additional inspectors, assisted by the quality executive 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 relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject area 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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