

S.W.Durham Training Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		14–18 July 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Outstanding-1
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
Outcomes for learners		Outstanding-1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding-1
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Outstanding-1

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is outstanding because:

- S.W. Durham Training Limited (SWDT) has made considerable progress since the last inspection and outcomes for learners are consistently high.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is now outstanding and learners receive particularly helpful guidance and support from vocational tutor assessors.
- Leaders and managers place learners at the heart of all that they do so that all learners can reach their full potential.
- Learners have very positive attitudes to their work.
- Learners develop excellent skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology.
- The tracking and monitoring of the work that learners complete is exemplary and ensures that most learners make rapid progress and complete their studies well within planned timescales.
- Leaders, managers and executive council members use data extremely well to lead a culture of continuous improvement.
- Very good development plans are in place to sustain and improve provision further.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Share best practice between staff in formal and informal professional development, including coaching and mentoring, so that all staff can further develop:
 - the effective techniques for checking learning to ensure that all learners have understood and have made good progress
 - their use of different teaching strategies, including discussions about local and national issues and detailed and thorough questioning, to reinforce learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity.
- Encourage more employer involvement in progress reviews, to assist in target setting to meet individual learner's needs and further improve their progress.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In 2012/13, learners on most programmes achieved their framework qualification at a rate well above the national average. Learners and apprentices aged 19 and above did not do so as well as younger learners. ▪ For 2013/14, in-year data shows that success rates for all apprentices and classroom-based learners have increased markedly as a result of significant improvements in teaching, learning and assessment, and are now consistently outstanding. A very large majority of apprentices achieve well and make very good progress, completing their studies within planned timescales. Target setting, tracking and monitoring are outstanding and have ensured there is no longer a difference in the progress and achievement of older apprentices and learners preparing for work. Success rates for learners aged 19 and above are now very good, and are considerably above the national rate. ▪ Many older learners achieve qualifications for the first time and increase their confidence and skills in English and mathematics. They benefit greatly from clear targets, based on the outcomes of comprehensive initial assessments. Those learners and apprentices who take level 2 qualifications in English and mathematics do particularly well. Apprentices have a good understanding of how developing skills in English and mathematics helps them to deal with communication and problem solving at work and in their everyday lives. ▪ Learners have very positive attitudes to their work. They are attentive in classroom settings, and work well with their tutor-assessors to demonstrate what they have learned. Learners show good knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques they need to work in engineering and manufacturing environments. Consequently, they contribute well in their workplaces, and deal effectively with the demands of their work. ▪ There are no significant variations in achievement of different groups of apprentices. The small numbers of apprentices who need additional learning support do as well as their peers. ▪ Enrichment activities, such as visits to other workplaces in the United Kingdom and Europe, enable all learners to identify how they can apply their developing skills in other contexts. As a result, learners recognise their potential and are able to set themselves clear targets for further skills development. ▪ Engineering and manufacturing apprentices and learners follow training programmes that prepare them particularly well for their work and they confirm that their studies have increased their personal confidence and motivation. They enjoy their training, develop effective personal and social skills, and recognise that they are improving their employment opportunities. 	

- Tutor-assessors and administrators monitor attendance and timekeeping effectively. For example, if learners at risk of falling behind in their studies are absent or consistently late, staff contact those learners, and their parents or carers, very quickly to resolve potential problems and encourage a return to better working practices. As a result, attendance and punctuality are very good. Progression into employment is also very good: employers speak highly of their apprentices. They value the skills and expertise that learners develop in the training centre. Many apprentices gain posts with responsibility quickly after completing their training.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
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- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment reflects the outcomes for learners, which are outstanding. Tutor-assessors plan engaging teaching and learning sessions very well, and use a variety of carefully selected resources, including appropriate and well-judged use of information learning technology, to motivate their learners. Lesson plans regularly contain extension tasks for more able learners. Learners are attentive and confident to offer answers when questioned; they enjoy their learning and make very good progress. Tutor-assessors use group-work to very good effect and there is clear evidence of peer learning. In better sessions, tutor-assessors use a wide variety of activities such as directed questions, quiz and card activities effectively to check learning. In a very small minority of sessions, there are insufficient checks on learning and allows a few confident apprentices to dominate.
- Workshop sessions are well organised and closely mirror real working environments. Staff promote health and safety well and learners have a good understanding of risk assessment. Apprentices develop good basic hand and machining skills across a wide range of engineering disciplines. They improve their ability to work to deadlines through time-constrained tasks and activities.
- Apprentices receive frequent and useful progress reviews that provide a very clear summary of the short-term targets set during previous reviews. Outcomes for learners have improved dramatically because leaders and managers, tutor-assessors and apprentices make exceptionally good use of the tracking and monitoring system to ensure apprentices know what they have achieved and what they need to do to complete the next steps in their training and improve their work. A very small minority of employers have little involvement in the review process.
- Practical assessment is very good. Tutor-assessors carry out regular and frequent assessments in the workplace, provide good support and keep employers informed about outcomes from progress reviews. Learners benefit from clear and detailed oral feedback, particularly in practical settings, on how to improve their work.
- Tutor-assessors benefit from a comprehensive system of observational support that focuses on learning and improving the learner experience. They receive developmental feedback, and there are several case studies, which demonstrate clearly how standards have improved so that the almost all teaching and learning are good or better.
- The training centre is very well equipped with particularly good resources. There is ample provision of high quality traditional engineering equipment in well-planned workshop areas. There is also specialised technology such as rapid prototyping and flexible manufacturing cell equipment that support and extend the apprentices' learning; motivate school pupils considering engineering as a career, and are used for commercial training courses. Employers' premises that were visited during the inspection also contained state-of-the-art computer numerical control (CNC) machinery, which the apprentices use to produce precision and high value components.
- Tutor-assessors of functional skills use initial and diagnostic assessments very successfully to identify learners' starting points and individual learning support needs. Learners with dyslexia and/or dyscalculia benefit highly from specialist teaching that enables them to achieve their individual targets. Tutor-assessors review and update learners' targets regularly to challenge the learners to keep improving in their practical and academic work.
- Apprentice portfolios at levels 2 and 3 contain very good, descriptive and evaluative written work. Learners have first-rate opportunities to develop their English and mathematics skills.

Engineering tutor-assessors integrate mathematics skills systematically in their lessons by, for example, measuring angles and using geometric principles. In one engineering lesson, the tutor integrated English skills effectively by checking the accuracy of learners' spelling of engineering related terminology, such as 'guillotine' and 'alignment'. However, not all tutor-assessors fully exploit opportunities to embed English skills in engineering lessons. Learners benefit from outstanding discrete English and mathematics lessons and one-to-one support enabling them to achieve their individualised and challenging targets. In a functional skills mathematics lesson, the tutor used a well-placed discussion activity to integrate English skills really well. All tutor-assessors identify and correct errors in learners' written work rigorously and consistently.

- Advice and guidance is very strong. Initial preparation for entry to engineering, through open events and evenings, gives extremely clear advice, guidance and information that enables potential learners to make well-informed decisions. Learners understand clearly the entry requirements for apprenticeship, including English and mathematics. They know what they can expect from SWDT and what is expected of them should they enter into training. Staff direct learners accurately to functional skills programmes at the appropriate level so that learners develop their skills further.
- Staff monitor learners well at the start of their programmes and provide thorough and effective ongoing support. Learners have a detailed and comprehensive learner handbook that identifies key figures in the organisation who can help and support them. SWDT has strong relationships with the engineering sector, including a very productive relationship with an employment agency specialising in engineering recruitment. This means that learners benefit from very good advice and support as they prepare for work.
- The promotion and reinforcement of equality and diversity is good. In the better progress reviews, assessors discuss current equality and diversity issues, such as the role of women in the Church of England, with learners. Tutor-assessors plan to promote equality and diversity in taught sessions and work-based reviews, but do not always carry out these plans as well as they might.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders, managers and staff at SWDT are passionate about what they contribute to the success of their learners and apprentices. They have established a culture of continuous improvement supported by rigorous performance management and an extensive programme of professional development. Teaching, learning and assessment have improved dramatically, and have established a clear trend for outstanding achievement. Through regular and frequent performance management, staff are very much aware of how their actions impact on how well their learners achieve. There is a clear pursuit of excellence evident in innovative relationships with other providers and the local enterprise partnership to develop and extend programmes to meet local, regional and national priorities.
- The executive council has very high expectations of learners and the organisation as a whole; they lead by example and interact regularly and frequently with learners and staff. This means that they understand fully how the decisions they make lead to improvements in teaching, learning and assessment so that more learners achieve their qualifications and gain employment.
- Leaders, managers and executive council members use extensive and robust data to evaluate the provision well; they make accurate judgements about the strengths and areas for improvement. They have focused relentlessly and successfully on what they needed to do in order to ensure that teaching, learning and assessment are never less than good, and that learners make rapid progress. Leaders manage learning programmes very well and provide all learners with opportunities to progress to higher levels of study and employment.

- Executive council members hold leaders and managers to account very effectively for all aspects of the provider's performance. They have supported the leadership team to secure strong partnership arrangements with a local college of further education and restructure SWDT so that it is more financially secure and able to respond quickly and flexibly to the changing and growing local and regional demand for engineers.
- SWDT has extremely strong relationships with local employers. Managers provide relevant and flexible training programmes to meet the specific needs of employers and to prepare learners well both for entry to, and further progression and promotion in, employment.
- The senior management team promote equality and diversity particularly well. They monitor schemes of work and the professional development that staff undertake to check that they know and understand how equality and diversity principles affect the lives and work of learners and apprentices. The impact of this monitoring and evaluation has yet to ensure fully that vocational tutor-assessors apply the principles of equality and diversity consistently in their teaching and assessment.
- Although participation of females is very low, staff promote engineering to young women and girls well, using 'girls into engineering' workshops and activities in partnership with local secondary schools and academies. For example, work with Year 9 pupils in a local school has led to demand for a GCSE in engineering on which a third of the learners are female.
- SWDT, their partners and employers meet their statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. All staff and learners know how to keep themselves safe and display safe working practices. Managers have extensive and robust procedures in place to ensure that learners know that staff will deal with their concerns quickly, sensitively and appropriately. Incidents of bullying and discrimination are very rare.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

S.W. Durham Training Limited

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Engineering	1

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	963							
Principal/CEO	Mr Trevor Alley							
Date of previous inspection	March 2013							
Website address	www.swdt.co.uk							
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+
	N/A	N/A	11	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	11	4	91	71	N/A	N/A		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hartlepool College of Further Education ■ Darlington College ■ Middlesbrough College 							

Contextual information

SWDT offers intermediate and advanced apprenticeships in engineering in Newton Aycliffe and the North-East of England. The percentage of pupils in the local area gaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and mathematics is 6.8% above the national average. Unemployment is just below the rate for the North-East which is 3% above the national average. The proportion of the local population who have no qualifications is 11%, which is 0.4% more than nationally. The proportion of the local population who hold qualifications at advanced level or above is 49.7%, which is 3% below the national average. The main employment in the local area is in public administration, education and health and in distribution, hotels and restaurants.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Christopher Jones HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the Chief Executive Officer 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 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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