

L.I.T.S. Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		22–25 July 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
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:

- Too many learners do not complete their qualifications within the time expected. Managers have been slow to identify this and put actions in place.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are not consistently good. Training advisers do not set learners work that is sufficiently demanding.
- Training advisers do not agree effective targets for learners to achieve their qualifications within expected timeframes. Learners are unclear of what actions they are required to complete between reviews and many take too long to complete their qualifications.
- Quality assurance procedures are in place; however, managers do not use enough of the information obtained to secure improvement in teaching, learning and assessment.

This provider has the following strengths:

- Learners develop good workplace and employability skills throughout their programme including additional qualifications offered by L.I.T.S. and its employers.
- Learners gain knowledge from well-qualified and highly-experienced training advisers who motivate and enable them to apply skills within their workplace.
- Learners benefit from L.I.T.S. partnerships, with a wide range of employers from small businesses to international companies offering specialised training in the lift and other engineering industries.
- Training advisers actively promote health, safety, equality and diversity particularly comprehensively throughout learners' programmes. Learners' knowledge and understanding ensure that learners are able to respond to potential hazards within a high-risk environment and have a good understanding of the needs of others.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Raise the number of learners who achieve their qualifications in a timely manner by:
 - ensuring all staff use data effectively to monitor individual learners' progress so that staff are able to intervene quickly when learners are not progressing as expected
 - setting and monitoring challenging targets for learners that identify detailed actions that are required to complete their qualification. Review and check these regularly to ensure the learners can reach their full potential
 - ensuring that learners have more frequent opportunities for assessment by observation, so that they can achieve their qualifications faster.
- Strengthen the quality assurance and quality improvement processes to ensure teaching, learning and assessment are consistently good throughout the provision by:
 - fostering good communication with colleges to monitor more closely learners' progress while completing technical certificates
 - ensuring that self-assessment is evaluative, self-critical and is supported by the quality improvement plan to secure improvement
 - effectively evaluating teaching and learning so that training advisers are clear about how they need to improve
 - ensuring that training advisers provide written feedback to learners with clear guidance on how to extend their understanding and set them challenging work so that they know how to improve further.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Outcomes for learners require improvement. Over the last three years, the proportion of learners on work-based programmes who complete their course has declined and remains considerably below that of similar providers. The majority of learners obtain high grades in their technical certificates. Managers now work more closely with employers to ensure learners are on the most appropriate programme. This year, more apprentices should complete their qualifications on time. However, the number of learners who achieve success is still too low. ■ Learners from different ethnic groups and those aged over 19 do not achieve as well as White British learners, or those learners who are aged 16 to 18. Managers have recognised that they do not sufficiently monitor the performance of the small number of under-represented groups of learners to identify developing trends. ■ Learners have extensive opportunities to complete additional certificates alongside their main qualification. Training advisers and employers support learners to work towards qualifications that enable them to progress well within the lift and engineering sector. For instance, all lift engineering learners take a British Standard qualification to ensure that they are competent to work safely in lift shafts, although this is not part of their course. ■ The overwhelming majority of learners sustain employment after their qualifications are completed and have good long-term career prospects. Many gain promotion or a pay rise when they have completed. A significant number of learners progress on to higher education where they further their knowledge and skills. Learners gain confidence throughout the qualification and have a good awareness of customer needs. 	

- Training advisers routinely mark work for grammar, spelling and punctuation errors during reviews and learners improve work that is below the expected standard. Training advisers reinforce key aspects of engineering mathematics through questioning and during direct observations.
- Since the previous inspection, learners now develop a thorough understanding of equality and diversity, beginning at induction and continuing through reviews. Training advisers and learners demonstrate mutual respect and support. Learners gain good knowledge of diversity that they use within their job role. For example, a lift engineering learner needed to service two lifts in the same building. He took one lift out of service at a time, to meet the needs of customers with disabilities.
- Learners have a clear understanding of health, safety and safeguarding. Training advisers reinforce this throughout learners' study. Staff ensure learners are fully aware of the expectations concerning health and safety and give particular attention to the high-risk lift engineering environment where learners display safe working practices.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
---	-----------------------------

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. As a result, too many learners still do not achieve their apprenticeship framework or vocational qualification within the expected time. However, L.I.T.S. provides good opportunities for learners to progress onto higher education at the end of their programme and many aspire to do this.
- The quality of learners' practical work is good and learners quickly acquire professional skills as maintenance or lift industry engineers. For example, one apprentice was successfully installing new switchgear to an existing lift, demonstrating a particularly good knowledge of the operating system and safe isolation procedures. Learners are highly valued by their employers for the contribution they make to their businesses.
- Training advisers do not make enough use of naturally-occurring opportunities for assessment. Assessment practice is satisfactory overall, but observations in the workplace are too infrequent, particularly for learners who are studying lift engineering. Training advisers provide good verbal feedback, but written feedback often lacks sufficient detail to enable learners to understand how to improve further.
- Promotion of health and safety practice is good. During reviews and assessments, assessors emphasise the importance of using correct personal protective equipment and strongly promote safe working practices. For example, during one assessment, the assessor effectively intervened to highlight a potential hazard that the learner should have considered.
- Knowledgeable and experienced assessors support learners well. They have high expectations for the quality of work learners should produce. Workplace mentoring and personal support are very good. Learners are highly motivated to succeed and have good long-term career opportunities.
- The majority of learners' written work is of a good standard. Learners' well-structured portfolios include a wide range of diverse evidence. However, training advisers do not use individual learning plans effectively. Learners are unclear of expected completion dates and what work they have left to finish. Employers do not receive sufficient information to plan effectively for assessment opportunities in the workplace.
- Information, advice, and guidance for learners have improved recently and are now good. Training advisers effectively assess learners' prior qualifications before the learners start the programme. Employers now involve training advisers in the learner recruitment process, resulting in improved retention. Induction to the workplace is thorough and enables learners and employers to have a clear understanding of the qualification.

- Learners receive regular reviews of their progress that include comprehensive employer feedback. However, training advisers do not set challenging improvement targets at review meetings to enable learners to improve their speed of progress. Training advisers do not set learners, especially those that are more able, long-, medium- or short-term targets that sufficiently stretch and challenge them.
- The development of English and mathematics is satisfactory. Training advisers support learners to use these skills to make progress in their qualification. For example, training advisers provide support with learners' English skills on writing technical reports that are accurate and succinct. Most learners start the course with high-level mathematical and English skills.
- Learners feel safe at work and have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Training advisers support learners to understand equality and diversity well. Training advisers use current news stories and work-related topics to ensure that learners understand the relevance of equality and diversity to their working environment. Learners demonstrate excellent behaviour and respect their peers, customers, employers and training advisers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Managers are enthusiastic and committed to ensuring that L.I.T.S. provides a good service to learners and employers. However, the changes required have been too slow to improve the provision to good. More learners are completing their qualifications on time, but the rate is still below that of similar providers.
- Managers ensure that all training advisers are well qualified and that they continually update their knowledge to keep them aware of industry standards and expectations. Managers ensure that new members of staff receive a thorough induction and initial training to prepare them to assess learners. Managers have ensured that learners benefit from highly enriched discussions with their training advisers that extend learners' current knowledge beyond that expected of the qualification.
- Communication with the colleges who provide training for the technical certificates is too variable. In the best cases, this information provides training advisers with a comprehensive understanding of the learners' progress. When this is less effective, managers do not receive sufficient information to track learners' progress and attendance at college. Employers and managers have recognised this as an area for improvement. Managers are reviewing their strategies for this aspect of the programme to ensure that monitoring of learners is effective and training advisers can take appropriate action.
- Informal communication about learner performance is effective. Recently, L.I.T.S. has introduced a learner-monitoring tool that is helping to ensure more learners will complete on time. Training advisers communicate informally with some employers to ensure that learners complete work tasks relevant to their qualification. However, this practice is inconsistent.
- Managers do not use quality assurance systems to monitor effectively learners' progress. The recently improved internal quality assurance process is robust and managers have implemented systems to improve the quality of the provision. However, not enough improvements to teaching, learning and assessment have taken place. Managers do not yet have a detailed understanding of why learners are not achieving their qualifications and how to support them to succeed.
- Managers and all staff collaborate to produce the self-assessment report. However, the report is insufficiently self-critical. Learners and employers views are collected, but managers do not use these effectively to inform improvements in the provision. Managers have identified key areas for improvement in the quality improvement plan. However, the plan does not include sufficient detail to enable managers to ensure continuous improvement.

- The managing director has a clear aim for the company in this specialist sector, which he ensures all staff understand. Managers work together effectively on a daily basis and share ideas and ambitions informally. External consultants provide the management team with challenging questions to stretch managers' understanding of what makes good teaching, learning and assessment. However, these questions are not always effective in raising understanding in all managers.
- L.I.T.S. works effectively with a wide range of employers, within the engineering sector, from small businesses to large international companies, ensuring that training is relevant and supports learners to progress within the industry. Managers understand the industry and respond actively to employer requests that ensure that learners are highly skilled and ready to gain employment.
- Performance management is informal and managers deal with known areas of underperformance effectively. Although staff understand procedures for managing underperformance, managers do not provide staff with sufficient feedback or development targets to help them improve their teaching and learning. Managers do not routinely observe all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment and do not have sufficient information to make improvements.
- All training advisers have recently received particularly effective training to ensure that learners are encouraged to explore areas of equality and diversity. Equality and diversity discussions feature strongly at all team meetings. Learners and training advisers discuss relevant scenarios, news reports and television storylines. Managers are working with employers to help with the recruitment of learners, particular those underrepresented groups such as women, within the engineering industry.
- Safeguarding is good. L.I.T.S. meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. Managers have ensured that all staff promote and develop learners' understanding of safeguarding throughout their programme. Managers check that training advisers use the review process to discuss safeguarding, using pertinent topics. Managers at L.I.T.S. have worked successfully with employers to challenge and support their awareness of safeguarding.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

L.I.T.S. 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	3	-	-	-	-	3	3	-	-
Outcomes for learners	3	-	-	-	-	3	3	-	-
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	-	-	-	-	3	3	-	-
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	-	-	-	-	3	3	-	-

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Engineering	3

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	166							
CEO	Mr Bill Orr, Managing Director							
Date of previous inspection	August 2012							
Website address	www.lits.org.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+
	-	-	-	-	-	42	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18		19+	
	-	-	12	27	-		-	
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	NA							
Part-time	NA							
Number of community learners	NA							
Number of employability learners	NA							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	No subcontracted provision							

Contextual information

L.I.T.S. Limited was founded in 1981 and is based in Petts Wood, South East London. It provides training on a national basis in the engineering and manufacturing technologies sector. L.I.T.S. offers specialist training to the lift engineering industry. L.I.T.S. learners are based predominantly in London and the South East. The organisation does not directly recruit learners but works with businesses to ensure that learners are on the correct course to meet the needs of the industry.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Tracey Zimmerman HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the Quality 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 individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed induction 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>

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



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

To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk



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

To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk

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

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

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

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

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

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

