

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DNCC)

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		18 – 22 August 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
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:

- Success rates for the majority of learners are high and considerably higher than those for similar providers
- Learners develop good personal and vocational skills which prepare them well for employment
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and learners are enthusiastic and motivated, they contribute fully with all aspects of the apprenticeship and traineeship programmes
- Learners receive particularly good support from tutors, assessors, training advisers and employers and this makes a significant contribution to their success
- DNCC staff have established very strong and highly effective partnerships with employers, local authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership
- Senior leaders and managers have high expectations of staff and learners and their management of the performance of staff performance is improving provision and raising standards for learners
- Progression between levels of study and into employment is good.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Too few teaching, learning and assessment activities are outstanding
- In a small minority of courses, variations in progress and achievement exist
- Tutors and trainers give insufficient attention to correcting learners' spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors
- Observations of teaching and assessment do not focus sufficiently on learning; subsequent improvement planning for tutors, assessors and training advisers is weak
- Managers and staff do not analyse data sufficiently to determine trends and to inform planning.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of lessons that are outstanding by focusing on the quality of learning and the learners' understanding of subjects they are being taught, providing clearer improvement plans for staff with rigorous monitoring of these by managers and identifying, sharing and implementing outstanding practice in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Make better use of the wide range of data already available to analyse the reasons for any underperformance and ensure that actions taken to resolve them are thoroughly monitored.
- Ensure that tutors, assessors and training advisers are qualified and competent to identify and correct errors in learners' written work, and that all spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in written work are corrected appropriately.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Success rates for apprentices have been high for the past three years. Success rates for advanced apprentices are very high. Most apprentices who complete their qualification framework do so by the planned end date and current learners are making good progress. Success rates have increased alongside a rise in the number of learners, particularly in business administration, accountancy, and customer service. For the few learners on non-apprenticeship programmes, success rates are low and these results require improvement. Although recently introduced, outcomes for traineeships are good.
- No significant gaps exist in achievement between different groups of learners. Managers and staff effectively monitor and support learners who are at risk of not achieving. However, they make insufficient comparative evaluation of the performance of programmes at different levels and between different qualification types.
- Learners' work is good. Employers and work placement providers frequently support learners to go beyond the requirements of the qualification. For example, a learner on a plumbing course extended his general skills by removing and refitting kitchen units to gain access to a water leak. Another learner in engineering worked with her employer every day to help broaden her independent thinking and problem solving skills. On traineeships, learners quickly acquire the skills they need to apply for and obtain employment or an apprenticeship.
- Learners make good progress in developing their personal and employability skills. They gain in confidence and self-esteem, for instances, when dealing with complex tasks and when making recommendations to their supervisors about alternative ways of solving work-related problems. Apprentices successfully develop their communication skills. Managers and staff support learners in adopting a professional approach in all aspects of their work, particularly when apprentices are dealing with customers and service users in retail and health care settings.
- Functional skills success rates are high. Apprentices make good progress in developing and applying their English, mathematics and vocational skills. Staff support learners well and they value the small class sizes and individually focused training sessions. During functional skills lessons in mathematics, tutors encourage learners to work on problems directly related to their work placements. For example, when working with clients and service users, health and childcare learners carefully consider the best method to use for working on ratios and solving complex calculations independently with an appropriate focus on their childcare and health care environments.

- Learners benefit from good workplaces, with motivational and supportive employers. Learners develop vocational skills of a high standard and make good progress in vocational development. Progression to higher-level qualification is good. Progression from study programmes and traineeships is steadily increasing and most learners who successfully complete the apprenticeship continue in employment with their existing employers. Staff encourage learners to practise their skills prior to progressing to courses at level 3. As a result, most learners succeed in achieving the higher-level qualification.
- Employers appreciate the good and punctual attendance of learners in the workplace and the very low number of days lost through sickness. Attendance is also good at training sessions.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good as reflected in the high success rates for apprentices. However, success rates for the few non-apprenticeship learners are low and require improvement.
- Training and assessment are good overall. Employers provide very good training and experience in the workplace. Off-the-job training is also good. Learners make sound progress and they successfully acquire a range of vocational skills and knowledge which they apply very effectively in their job roles. Learners on the traineeship programme receive good one-to-one coaching and employer support, which helps them to improve their English, mathematics and employability skills. The large majority of assessment planning is good.
- Tutors, assessors and training advisors strongly encourage learners to develop their independent learning skills to improve their ability to work on their own and their performance to benefit them and their employers. Learners make particularly good use of the electronic portfolio for uploading a wide range of evidence for assessment. Tutors, assessors and training advisors for learners on traineeships thoroughly promote the safe use of the internet and its use for independent research, including potential work placements and employers.
- Initial assessment of learners' ability at the start of their training is good. Staff systematically analyse and use learners' job roles to decide the appropriate units from a qualification for learners to follow. This helps learners make the most of the opportunities for collecting evidence and demonstrating occupational competence. All learners complete initial assessments in English and mathematics. Staff make appropriate use of the results of assessments for planning individual programmes of functional skills learning for those learners who requiring tuition in this area.
- Learners receive particularly good support from training advisers, tutors, assessors and employers and this makes a significant contribution to their developing knowledge and skills. Staff provide additional learning support to meet learners' specific needs, for instances for those with dyslexia. When learners require specialist personal support, the use of external organisations is good, such as those dealing with homelessness, money management, and drugs and alcohol misuse.
- Staff carefully match learners to employers according to their occupational preferences and career aspirations. For example, learners, with aspirations of becoming qualified dental nurses, are making particularly good progress with their training. A number have extremely high aspirations for progressing within the dental profession. Tutors provide good guidance to those learners on the traineeship programme who wish to obtain their own work placement in specific vocational sectors.
- Most reviews of learners' progress are good. Staff ensure that specific, measurable and realistic targets are set that are particularly effective for guiding learning and for assessing learners' progress. Employers' involvement is good and most are fully engaged in the review of learners'

progress. However, in business administration and customer service a small minority of learners do not have the opportunity to spend time with their assessor or training adviser without the employer being present. Although completed progress review reports are detailed and comprehensive, too many contain spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.

- Good oral feedback enables learners to improve and progress. Most written feedback to apprentices is adequate and provided through assessors' notes, which are uploaded into electronic portfolios. However, staff pay insufficient attention to learners' spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, which they do not routinely identify and correct.
- Staff provide good off-the-job training for learners who require additional tuition in English and mathematics. Trainers and assessors frequently monitor and review learners' progress in English and mathematics. Most learners are working at an appropriate level. However, apprentices who are capable of progressing to higher levels in English and mathematics, than required by their apprenticeship frameworks, are not always encouraged by staff to work towards a more advanced qualification.
- Learners receive good information, advice and guidance when they join a learning programme. This helps to ensure that learners enrol onto the correct programme to meet their needs, and that they receive full details about the programme and their rights and responsibilities while learning. Learners on traineeship programmes receive good continuing advice and guidance, which helps to raise their self-esteem and keep them motivated. Staff provide learners with detailed information about progression opportunities, which enables them to decide upon the most appropriate progression route to follow. Induction is comprehensive. It is also very effective in helping learners on the traineeship programme to work together as a group.
- Trainers and assessors adequately promote equality and diversity. The vast majority of learners have a reasonable understanding of equality and diversity. However, on the traineeship programme, tutors do not clearly embed equality into lessons. Assessors, tutors and training advisers have a good knowledge of learners' individual learning needs. They develop good relationships with learners and do not tolerate any discrimination, harassment or bullying, including cyber bullying.

Employability training

Employability Traineeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, as reflected in the good outcomes for learners. Learners make good progress in developing confidence, self-esteem and improved communication skills and in showing respect for their peers and tutors. Learners enjoy their traineeship. They appreciate the good opportunities they have for workplace learning which helps them to develop new knowledge and fulfil their personal aspirations and career goals.
- Learners make swift progress from the DNCC work programme into their traineeship, gaining qualifications in employability at level 1 and functional English and mathematics. The majority of learners successfully progress from the traineeship programme into a wide range of apprenticeships including, health and social care, construction, and catering. Of those progressing into employment, one learner has successfully acquired a position with the local district council in the administration department and another has gone into a motor vehicle business. Other learners are considering progression into further education as a route to higher education.

- Experienced and well-qualified tutors support learners effectively through one-to-one coaching and technical advice. Staff provide learners with a good foundation to develop new vocational and employment skills and knowledge through studying for the employability award at level 1. Learners improve their curriculum vitae writing, compose letters of application and locate new employment opportunities through their job-search activities.
- Learners benefit from appropriate learning and work placements, during which they learn to work independently at their own pace and level. Tutors are effective in encouraging and supporting learners who have difficulty in communicating and in maintaining concentration.
- Learners often find their own work placement, guided by their tutor. They develop good industrial skills in warehousing and in working in the distribution sector. Learners often successfully gain interviews with employers to secure an apprenticeship. Employers provide good support to learners who, as a result of their on-the-job training, make a good contribution to their employers' business.
- Learners make good use of information and communication technology, readily accessible during sessions, to improve their English and mathematics and to work independently on functional skills practice tests. Learners design and develop electronic presentations of a high technical standard using independent research skills and safe websites to obtain the required information. Trainers and assessors over-reliance on awarding organisations' workbooks narrows the potential sources of evidence for the employability qualification.
- Learners make good progress in the timely completion of tasks set against clearly defined learning aims and targets, with frequent reviews taking place with their tutor to ensure they are making the required progress. Individual learning records show routine written assessed work and feedback, which helps learners understand where they need to improve.
- Initial assessment is thorough in identifying existing skill levels, prior learning experiences, qualifications, career preferences and support needs. The use of the results for planning individual learning by staff is good. They deal with learners' specific additional learning and support needs effectively through providing individual coaching or specialist external partners.
- Assessors provide detailed and regular oral and written feedback to help learners make good progress. However, staff do not always check and correct spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in learners' written work. Tutors make the development of English and mathematical skills priority to help learners achieve their functional skills qualifications, but a minority of learners do not have sufficient opportunities to improve their writing, spelling and grammar.
- Learners receive good information, advice and guidance throughout their course and this is helping to raise their self-esteem and keep them motivated. Induction is comprehensive and very effective in helping learners to work with each other and as a team.
- Staff do not adequately promote equality and diversity. They do not challenge learners' understanding of equality and diversity sufficiently to extend their knowledge and to reflect on their work placement experience. Tutors carry out risk assessments and health and safety checks in employers' premises to ensure that learners work in safe environments.

Administration and customer service

Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and this is reflected in the high success rates. Most learners achieve within the expected timeframe. Current learners are making good progress. Most learners progress into employment or to an advanced apprenticeship.
- DNCC staff are highly motivated and caring. They work very successfully with learners to develop their occupational and social skills. Learners develop good vocational skills and take on additional responsibilities, for instances providing information and communication technology services and answering car insurance queries with increased confidence. Learners' work in their electronic portfolios is good.
- Support for learners from both DNCC staff and employers is good, especially when they have home or work problems. Tutors, training advisers, assessors and employers work very effectively to support learners to achieve their learning outcomes, both in the workplace and at learning centres. When identified as needed, effective additional support for achieving both technical certificates and functional skills is available.
- Employers are very involved, committed and supportive of their learners. Employers are aware of learners' progress and actively encourage learners' ambitions and progression by setting high standards. Employers expect learners to carry out responsible roles that often exceed framework requirements, with a strong focus on developing learners' employability skills. This enables learners to take on additional responsibilities and progress from the apprenticeship to the advanced apprenticeship. Employers' enthusiasm greatly motivates learners who show a strong commitment to progressing in their careers and qualifications.
- Employers' resources and those in DNCC centres are good. They facilitate the completion of apprenticeship frameworks, enabling learners to find evidence easily in order to build up their electronic portfolios. Employers provide safe and stimulating learning environments and the majority of learners benefit from access to employer training such as health and safety, first aid and quality assurance auditing.
- Assessment and training are good, with occupationally competent assessors using their skills successfully to promote learning. Good planning of assessment and review sessions enables learners to demonstrate their competence and identify their areas for development. Action plans set timely and specific short-term targets, which assessors and employers monitor frequently. Observation and related questioning are good and assessors record in detail. Assessors make the most of observation and assessment opportunities, ensuring learners meet occupational standards. Staff have a very good knowledge of employers' needs and expectations.
- Induction is thorough and prepares learners well for the workplace. Tutors and assessors effectively screen all potential learners to assess their suitability for the apprenticeship programme. Staff make good use of occupational skills assessments to ensure that learners are precisely matched to their employers. Learners receive good support from trainers, assessors and advisers to prepare them for their interviews with potential or prospective employers. Learners' induction is comprehensive and very effective. It ensures learners know what is expected of them and what they can expect from trainers, assessors and employers.
- Reviews of learners' progress are good. Training advisers in conjunction with employers set clear and specific short, medium, and long-term targets. Detailed feedback from staff and employers clearly identifies what learners have to do to progress. However, in a minority of

cases, learners cannot meet with their assessor without the employer being present and this may prevent the learner raising confidential and personal issues.

- The development of English, mathematics and functional skills is adequate. However, because not all intermediate apprentices have the opportunity to take functional skills at level 2 it restricts their opportunity to progress. A minority of assessors, correct learners' poor punctuation, spelling and grammar, but this is not the consistent practice of all assessors. In a few cases, results from learners' initial assessments for English and mathematics are potentially unreliable because the assessment takes place outside of a controlled environment.
- Information, advice and guidance are good. Learners have a thorough understanding of the structure and demands of their apprenticeship and of their rights and responsibilities. All learners have a very comprehensive exit review to identify future development opportunities, usually with their current employer. New and challenging learning goals are often set during these reviews.
- Staff promote equality and diversity and health and safety adequately. Safeguarding training is included in learners' induction, which tutors, training advisers and assessors reinforce during routine monitoring and progress reviews. Learners feel safe and know whom to contact should problems arise. They have a good understanding of the importance of respect, which they show to work colleagues and staff.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Managers have successfully brought about increases in apprentices' success rates over the last three years. Senior managers set high expectations for learners to achieve within planned-time periods. Directors recent re-structuring of provision is improving teaching, learning and assessment and expanding apprenticeships. A development plan, influenced by local partnerships, is in place to provide training of a high standard that meets local business and learners' needs across a wider area. The high level of commitment by members of the DNCC's board is improving learners' experiences and ensuring that managers and staff respond successfully to new challenges and opportunities. Staff have a good understanding of DNCC's objectives and by use of effective performance management systems, the contribution they make in achieving greater success for learners.
- The well-developed links between DNCC, employers, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the local authority effectively inform strategic developments. Senior managers, in partnership with employers, help to provide individualised programmes that are very successful in meeting learners and employers' needs. The directors receive key performance data including retention, achievement and success data which they use to challenge the head of training. However, directors do not use self-assessment rigorously enough to hold senior staff to account for the quality of the training.
- The management of the performance of tutors and assessors is good. Managers systematically and rigorously monitor staff performance. Staff development helps those underperforming to improve. Managers make good use of key performance indicators as starting points for discussions with staff on their performance. They agree targets and provide challenging development programmes for staff.
- Managers acknowledge that the process for observing teaching, learning and assessment needs to be improved. Observations do not focus on learning and the subjects learners are studying, and plans of actions resulting from observations are weak. Comments from observers are not clear enough for tutors to understand how they can improve. Tutors and assessors make good use of peer observation and share best practice frequently and effectively. Managers use

external partners to moderate observation grades, but this has not had a significant impact on practice.

- Quality improvement arrangements are effective in securing high success rates. Staff use the quality assurance processes to identify and monitor key elements of the apprenticeship programme to improve provision. Managers monitor sub-contracted provision frequently. Leaders and managers monitor contracts and challenge underperformance. However, they over-rely on subcontractors' own quality improvement processes and have insufficient measures to identify and apply to judge independently the quality of the provision.
- Assessors use their industrial experience well to help learners progress and complete their assessments on time. They provide good support to their learners and have a strong working relationship with employers. Assessors meet frequently to ensure that they have a consistent approach to assessment and are fully aware of changes to qualification requirements.
- Senior managers are successfully investing time and resources in further developing a virtual learning environment to enable learners to access vocationally appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding within and outside the workplace. Learners value the opportunities they have for flexible independent learning, as a result are able to pursue subject matter that is of specific interest to them, and complete their programmes early. Staff and learners make good use of the electronic portfolio.
- Self-assessment requires improvement. The self-assessment report is detailed, but its use of analysis of trends in data to support critical judgements is not sufficient. Managers and staff make good use of key performance indicators, data, surveys and other information to evaluate, improve and plan provision.
- At induction and through frequent progress reviews, the coverage of equality and diversity by tutors, assessors and training advisers is adequate. Learners have a reasonable understanding of the issues they might face in the workplace. A good level of respect between tutors, assessors, training advisers and learners creates and supports a positive learning environment. Appropriate policies cover equality and diversity, bullying and harassment.
- Managers, have developed and are implementing a strategy for the development of staff skills in English and mathematics. Staff training is taking place to improve their confidence in teaching these subjects and assessment. However, it is too early to judge the impact of these actions.
- DNCC meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. All tutors, assessors, training advisers and key staff have had Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Learners receive useful information on safeguarding, and health and safety at induction and are clear about whom they should contact if they have any concerns. Managers deal sensitively and appropriately with incidents. They carefully record the details of incidents and how they are resolved.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Employability Training	2
Administration	2
Customer service	2

Type of provider	Independent learning provider								
Age range of learners	16+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	632								
Principal/CEO	Mrs Sarah Temperton								
Date of previous inspection	March 2011								
Website address	www.chambertraining.org								
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	N/A	N/A	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+		
	111	58	28	53	2		6		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total				
	23		7		30				
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">■ Tameside College■ Babington Business College■ Chesterfield College■ Stockport College■ One to One Support Services■ DBC Limited								

Contextual information

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DNCC) merged with Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce in December 2013 and it is now the second largest chamber in the country. The service has 3,800 members and has its head office in Chesterfield. The training department employs 80 staff and represents just under half the organisation's income. Learners attend off-the-job training at eight centres throughout Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and most receive further training in their workplace. DNCC offers a variety of training courses, which reflects the employer needs, and skills shortages in the areas in which they are located. In addition to government-funded training, DNCC provides commercial specialist training for a variety of employers.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Shane Langthorne HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the Head of Training 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 past 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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[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
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T: 0300 123 4234

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