

TQ Workforce Development Ltd

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		29 September – 3 October 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
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 learners on most programmes are high
- learners generally make good progress in the classroom and in the workplace and staff are fully supportive of their learners and working relationships are very good
- assessors have good industrial knowledge to broaden learners' awareness of their subject, provide them with detailed verbal feedback and keep employers well informed at progress reviews
- assessors and tutors skilfully link English and mathematics to vocational subjects and, as a consequence, learners use these very effectively in their daily work
- trainers and assessors integrate equality and diversity well into lessons to develop successfully learners' knowledge and understanding
- the company's well-established performance management procedures ensure that teaching and learning are of the highest quality
- managers have made exceptionally good use of the self-assessment and quality improvement planning processes to achieve rapid improvements in the overall quality of provision since the previous inspection
- the extent to which senior managers have planned, established and managed curriculum and learning programmes to meet local and regional needs is outstanding.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- too few apprentices complete their learning programmes within agreed timescales
- not enough teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding and the written feedback on learners' work is not always clear in identifying improvement actions
- targets do not always stretch and challenge the more able learners to reach their full potential.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all learners, particularly apprentices, achieve their qualification within the planned period by carefully monitoring their progress and taking corrective action where learners are falling behind.
- Help all learners realise their full potential by setting them challenging and stretching targets. Take action to improve the effectiveness of current procedures for recording and monitoring learners' progress and attainment and for providing written feedback.
- Ensure that trainers consider sufficiently possible language barriers when planning lessons for learners for whom English is their second language in order to help them to progress more effectively.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- TQ Workforce Development (TQWD) has 2,190 learners, the large majority of whom follow classroom-based programmes in employability and functional skills. Most of these learners are aged over 19 and studying at level 1. A significant minority of learners are following apprenticeship programmes in administration, business management and customer service. A very few learners are on workplace learning programmes, mostly in functional skills English and mathematics.
- Outcomes for learners are good. Despite an increasing number of enrolments over the last year, the success rate for classroom-based learning programmes remains high. The proportion of learners on these programmes who achieve within the planned period has increased significantly in the current year and is high. Apprenticeship success rates have increased over the last three years and are now above the national rate, though the proportion who complete on time remains low. The number of learners training in the workplace has fallen since the previous inspection, but the success rate remains high.
- The majority of learners and apprentices make good progress in learning sessions in the classroom and workplace, a significant proportion progress to higher-level qualifications. Learners enjoy their learning and value the support they receive from assessors and tutors. A minority of learners report that the experience of their training programme has changed their life for the better. For example, one mature customer service apprentice is now able to write complete sentences for the first time, which has opened up many more workplace and social opportunities. The majority of management apprentices are in responsible positions or have gained promotion in the workplace. However, apprentices on security courses do not always get the support in the workplace to make the progress expected of them.
- Managers monitor learner achievement regularly and have a good understanding of the performance of different groups of learners. They have successfully narrowed gaps in achievement between males and females and different ethnic groups. The achievement of apprentices with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is better than those without.
- The work produced by learners and apprentices is of a high standard. Tutors and assessors integrate English and mathematics skills well with classroom and workplace activities. Learners and apprentices make valuable contributions in their job roles. For example, customer service apprentices learn how to deal effectively with a diverse range of customers and apprentices on management programmes gain additional supervisory and managerial responsibilities and are trusted with important projects. Most learners and apprentices have a good understanding of

career and progression opportunities and are on learning programmes that meet both local and national priorities.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, as reflected in overall success rates. Functional skills tutors and assessors have high expectations of apprentices and learners, successfully raising their aspirations to achieve well in the workplace and in the classroom. Trainers and assessors fully support their learners and the working relationships with them are very good. They use their expertise well to motivate apprentices and learners, enabling them to gain a thorough understanding of the world of work.
- Assessors provide good instruction and support for learners and apprentices. In most sessions, they support learning well and use questioning effectively to establish and extend understanding. Drawing on their good industrial knowledge, assessors and tutors broaden the awareness of apprentices and learners by providing relevant examples and scenarios from the workplace. For example, assessors support apprentices in the armed forces to develop their knowledge and application in both military and civilian contexts.
- Tutors and assessors benefit from a comprehensive system of observational support that focuses on learning and improving the experience for the learner. They receive good developmental feedback as recorded in several case studies that highlight how tutors and assessors have improved their professional practice because of the support they have received.
- Resources to support learning are good and they have improved since the previous inspection. Assessors use laptop computers and mobile communication devices effectively in the workplace. For example, by using mobile phones to create a 'hotspot' so that learners can access the internet and complete online assessments or carryout research. Apprentices make good use of electronic internet resources, such as mobile phone applications, to support their independent learning and skills development.
- The initial assessment of the starting points of apprentices and learners accurately identifies their understanding and previous attainment, including English, mathematics and computer skills. Assessment focuses well on evaluating the skills and knowledge apprentices have in order to identify the most suitable optional units they should take to support their job roles and career aspirations. When job roles change during the apprentice's programme, the assessor reviews the choice of optional units and, where appropriate, revises them to support the development of skills that support the apprentice's new role.
- Practical assessment is very good. Assessors carry out regular and frequent assessments in the workplace. They provide good support and keep employers well informed about outcomes from progress reviews. Learners and apprentices benefit from clear and detailed verbal feedback, particularly in practical settings, on how to improve their work. However, written feedback, mainly relating to the setting of short-term targets, is not precise or detailed enough. Apprentices and learners do not always understand what the next stage of their learning is or how they can improve their work further.
- The recording of progress is good, especially on learning and assessment plans. This supports well the timely development of vocational knowledge and skills. However, the recording by tutors of the progress of apprentices and learners towards shorter-term personalised targets is often superficial.
- Apprentices and learners' development of English, mathematical and information and communication technology skills (ICT) is good. The majority of learners develop and improve their functional skills through well-planned sessions. Assessors and functional skills tutors skilfully link English and mathematics topics to the subject area and, as a result, apprentices and learners use these very well in their daily work. Assessors provide good support to develop

functional skills to a high level. For example, learners and apprentices write reports of a high standard with accurate use of grammar, spelling and communication and they develop well their confidence in public speaking.

- Initial advice and guidance are good. The selection of learning modules matches well the requirements of job roles and workplaces. Learners and apprentices receive timely initial and diagnostic assessment to identify their needs and the most suitable level of study in English, mathematics and ICT. Apprentices have a thorough understanding of the structure and demands of their apprenticeship and relevant rights and responsibilities. Assessors effectively integrate guidance throughout the programme, providing information on progression and career options available to them.
- Trainers and assessors integrate equality and diversity into lessons very effectively using the company's equality, diversity and inclusion toolkit. Tutors adeptly use the well-developed range of resources to develop knowledge and understanding. Topics include religious festivals and Black history month, which assessors' link well with workplace practice and further learning and development within speaking and listening. Trainers and assessors do not tolerate discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying and learners and staff show commendable respect for each other.

Public Services

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement and this correlates with the outcomes for apprentices that also require improvement. Success rates are low and too many apprentices do not complete their training within the planned time. Most develop adequate workplace skills and increased self-confidence. In the last year, a minority of apprentices experienced a slow start and disruption to their learning because of assessors leaving the company.
- Current assessors have good relevant experience that they use effectively to engage and motivate apprentices. However, too many apprentices find it difficult to attend all of the learning activities staff provide, particularly group learning sessions, which delays their progress. Assessors are well organised and provide well-planned and interesting activities to ensure apprentices develop their security and guarding skills such as controlling traffic flow at military establishments.
- Assessors provide good instruction that ensures apprentice security guards understand the importance of their role, particularly on military bases where they work in close partnership with military and civilian police. Apprentices have a good understanding of legislation and the powers available to them such as those used to arrest and detain suspects. This ensures that they are confident and effective in their job roles.
- Assessors provide good support to develop apprentices' English and mathematics skills. Apprentices improve their writing skills well through routine correction of spelling, punctuation and grammar on written work. Assessors provide encouragement and create opportunities for apprentices to develop and increase these skills and abilities to a higher level. They ensure that all apprentices are supported effectively for the duration of the programme.
- Assessors make effective use of interactive learning technologies to support learning. They ensure apprentices' follow safe working practices and that they understand what to do if they have concerns about their safety or well-being. Assessors promote equality and diversity effectively during workplace visits. They encourage learners to treat each other with respect and to acknowledge people's differences. Learners are effectively encouraged to explore these aspects through use of their course and workbooks.

- Initial assessment arrangements are thorough, but assessors do not always use the results effectively to identify learners' starting points and to plan their programmes. Pre-enrolment advice and guidance are good. Assessors ensure that apprentices have a good understanding of what their training programme involves. They assess individual learning styles adequately and the best assessors use this information to provide effective individual support.
- Assessors ensure that apprentices understand their long-term targets, which they record clearly on individual learning plans. However, almost all of these targets relate to completion of aspects of the programme and assessors give insufficient attention to the setting of individual targets to help apprentices' personal progress and development.
- The best assessors record apprentices' progress and achievement effectively, but too often long periods between visits slows the rate of progress because momentum and motivation are reduced. Feedback to apprentices and their employers provides a clear picture of what the apprentice has achieved and still needs to be completed. This helps apprentices to understand how they can improve their skills and make progress.

Foundation English and mathematics

19+ Learning programmes Apprenticeships Employability

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, as reflected in the high success rates and the good progress that learners and apprentices are making in developing their English and mathematics skills. They significantly grow in confidence and are able to use their newly acquired skills at home with their children and in the workplace.
- Learning and coaching sessions are good. Functional skills tutors and assessors teach interesting and engaging lessons that develop a wide range of skills. For example, in an ICT lesson on the use of spreadsheets, learners significantly improved their understanding of their use and interpretation of data. In an English lesson, the teacher skilfully helped learners to understand that some words have different meanings even though they have the same sound. The teacher went on to explain that learners should exercise caution when using electronic spelling software to check their work.
- Functional skills tutors and assessors are well qualified and experienced. Workplace assessors successfully develop apprentices' English and mathematics skills and integrate it well within vocational subjects. Tutors and assessors provide detailed written feedback on the work of learners and apprentices to help them improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar. They set homework regularly to facilitate progress.
- Assessment of the English and mathematics needs of learners and apprentices is comprehensive and assessors and tutors record their skills development needs well. Assessors and tutors use visit records well to plan learning. However, plans to develop these skills to ensure learners and apprentices meet their learning targets or improve the pace of learning have insufficient detail. In a small minority of courses, tutors do not plan lessons and resources with sufficient consideration of the language barriers of learners for whom English is their second language.
- Learners and apprentices have a good understanding of equality and diversity. In one lesson designed to improve ICT skills, the functional skills tutor made good use of a text on the dangers of on-line grooming to develop further understanding of safeguarding and equality. In another lesson, learners developed speaking and listening skills while participating in discussions about different religious festivals.
- Personal support for learners and apprentices is good. Assessors work flexibly to ensure that planned sessions meet personal needs and work pressures. Communication between assessors,

learners and apprentices is good. Assessors monitor progress regularly to ensure that they are managing their learning well. Functional skills tutors and assessors provide particularly effective support to help learners and apprentices overcome their barriers to learning

- TQWD managers and assessors work closely with employers to ensure that learners and apprentices receive support to help them achieve. Many employer managers and supervisors attend learning programmes provided by TQWD. Assessors work flexibly to accommodate apprentices' shift patterns and employers' commercial pressures.
- Functional skills tutors and assessors use ICT well in the majority of lessons and coaching sessions in the work place to improve learning. Learners and apprentices benefit from practising their English and mathematics skills using online resources. They further improve their skills through a wide range of paper-based resources.
- Learners and apprentices receive a thorough induction that covers course content, assessment arrangements, health and safety, safeguarding and equality and diversity. Assessors reinforce this learning at every visit to develop knowledge and understanding.
- Learners and apprentices feel safe and enjoy their learning. The provision of free crèche facilities at TQWD courses taught in children's centres enables learners and apprentices with childcare commitments to attend English and mathematics courses close to where they live.

Business management and administration

Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, as reflected in increasing success rates that are above national rates. However, the proportion of apprentices who complete within planned timescales is low, as acknowledged in the company's self-assessment report. Managers have appointed additional staff to provide extra assessor visits, but it is too soon to judge their impact. Apprentices make good progress and gain a wide range of transferable business administration and management skills. In a few instances, employers have promoted apprentices to more responsible job roles.
- Care and support are good. Apprentices benefit from experienced assessors who communicate their industry knowledge and expertise well. Assessors provide good individual support through well-planned learning and assessment sessions that successfully engage and motivate apprentices. They also provide good additional support through planned email exchanges and telephone calls. Apprentices particularly appreciate their flexible response to problems that may arise through changes to shift patterns.
- Apprentices are enthusiastic, make good progress in their learning, work to industry standards and produce work of a high standard. Apprentices work effectively with internal and external customers and learn to deal confidently with conflict and difficult situations in the workplace. Some apprentices lead and manage teams and demonstrate the ability to delegate tasks effectively.
- Assessment for learning is good. They are frequent, well planned and improve learning through effective professional discussions, practical tasks and observations. Assessors use opportunities in the workplace, such as warehouse deliveries or interactions with customers, to assess learning and to ensure safe working practices. In classroom sessions, tutors use targeted questioning techniques skilfully to capture interest and check understanding and progress. Most of these sessions are well paced, lively and effective in linking learning to the workplace. However, in a minority of lessons, tutors do not sufficiently challenge the more able with deeper questioning and extension activities.
- Staff set frequent homework assignments to reinforce and build apprentices' employability skills and to develop professional work practices. Apprentices make good use of well-produced

learning materials, worksheets and online resources and websites that provide a wide range of opportunities outside of lessons and promote independent learning. Verbal feedback on learners' work is frequent, timely and constructive, which enables learners to make good progress and work independently. However, written feedback on learners' work does not always clearly identify improvement actions.

- Apprentices receive good initial and diagnostic assessment in English, mathematics and ICT to identify appropriate levels of study and support needs. They find induction useful, enabling them to understand the qualification structure and components of the framework well. Information, advice and guidance are good.
- Apprentices develop good English and mathematics skills. Assessors routinely develop mathematics and English skills at each workplace visit. Tutors and assessors strongly encourage apprentices to develop reading, speaking and listening skills linked to their job role. Management apprentices apply newly acquired skills to calculate accurately basic percentages to work out staff targets. They develop their communication skills through client and customer interaction well. The systematic development of apprentices' literacy in their assessed work is good.
- Apprentices' understanding of equality and diversity is good. Tutors use relevant examples in learning sessions to promote understanding of equality and diversity in the workplace. Management apprentices learn how to incorporate different religious holidays and festivals into their company's annual leave systems. Apprentices feel safe and know who to speak to if they have concerns about their safety. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities for workplace health and safety and the appropriate use of personal protective equipment.
- Target setting in reviews is effective. Targets are clear and cover all elements of the apprenticeship framework to enable learners to make good progress and work towards their planned completion date.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers provide an exceptionally clear strategic vision for the company. Staff at all levels understand the company's key aims and objectives and they have a keen understanding of what the company needs to do to improve further. Leaders and managers are passionate in their commitment to adult vocational training and have the highest expectations of learners and staff. As a consequence, the company has made significant and rapid improvements in the overall quality of provision since the previous inspection.
- Board members are valuable contributors to strategic debates about the challenges, opportunities and strengths facing the company's directors and senior managers. They scrutinise business plans, performance data and self-assessment judgements thoroughly and do not shirk their responsibility for posing robust and challenging questions about all aspects of the company's performance. For example, feedback from security staff employers led to the decision to provide the customer service apprenticeship as a more suitable alternative for their staff.
- Senior managers have been exceptionally diligent in applying the company's well-established performance management procedures to ensure that teaching and learning are of the highest quality. The company's challenging expectations of the very high standards expected from trainers and assessors have led, in the last year, to the resignation or dismissal of around 10 staff for reasons related to performance and capability. In addition, new appointments of particularly experienced and well-qualified senior staff have further contributed to the company's capacity to make rapid and effective progress. However, the full impact of these appointments is yet to be realised.
- The use of observations is effective in improving teaching and learning sessions. Observers receive good training and provide trainers and assessors with detailed and honest feedback. A

comprehensive programme of continuous professional development over the last year for all teaching and training staff has helped the company to reach a position where most learning sessions are now good or better. The very best trainers and assessors receive effective additional opportunities to develop further their skills to become consistently outstanding.

- Self-assessment is an inclusive, rigorous and accurate process. Staff at all levels contribute to the self-assessment and quality improvement planning process each month at regular meetings. Board members carefully scrutinise self-assessment judgements and grades. The self-assessment report is clear and provides a concise and accurate analysis of key strengths and areas for improvement. Managers have made exceptionally good use of the combined self-assessment and quality improvement planning processes to achieve rapid improvements in the overall quality of provision since the previous inspection.
- The extent to which senior managers have planned, established and managed curriculum and learning programmes to meet local and regional needs is outstanding. The managing director has carried out detailed work with 15 Local Enterprise Partnerships based in those areas where the company works to establish their key priorities and objectives. Because of this, the company's strategic plan links closely to the needs of the Local Employer Partnerships. The company has good relations with 18 large national employers and a very wide range of small and medium sized employers who employ the large number of apprentices and workplace learners. Employers comment very favourably on the company's flexibility and responsiveness in meeting their needs.
- Senior managers take effective action to promote equality and diversity. Staff and learners receive clear information about the company's commitment to diversity during induction. Managers have targeted provision at areas with high concentrations of learners from minority ethnic groups and consequently the proportion of learners from these groups on apprenticeship programmes and in classroom-based learning are well above average. Managers and staff have largely eradicated under-performance by learners from minority ethnic groups and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Few differences exist in the performance of males and females.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are good and the provider meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. All staff receive an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check before they begin employment. Staff receive relevant training in safeguarding and a senior member of staff acts as the company's safeguarding officer. One of the board members has direct oversight of the company's safeguarding policy and procedures. Learners receive clear advice and guidance about what they should do if they feel unsafe or vulnerable.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

TQ Workforce Development 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	2					2	2	2	
Outcomes for learners	2					2	2	2	
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2					2	2	2	
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2					2	2	2	

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Public Services	3
Foundation English	2
Foundation mathematics	2
Business Management	2
Administration	2

Type of provider	Independent learning provider								
Age range of learners	16+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	5,587								
Nominee	Ms Melanie Murdock								
Date of previous inspection	June 2013								
Website address	www.tqtraining.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+	
	0	1,288	0	85	0	0	0	0	
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+			
	7	545	1	236	0	0			
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total				
	N/A		N/A		N/A				
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A								
Full-time	N/A								
Part-time	N/A								
Number of community learners	N/A								
Number of employability learners	28								
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"> N/A. 								

Contextual information

Based in Daventry, TQ Workforce Development Ltd is a national provider of work-based and classroom-based learning programmes for adults and young people. The company is privately owned with a board of directors and a senior management team consisting of a managing director and three senior colleagues. Learners are based in several large employers and a wide range of small and medium sized enterprises across the country, with the large majority in London, the South East, North West and the Midlands. The company holds a contract with the Skills Funding Agency to provide intermediate and advanced apprenticeships, functional English and mathematics and employability programmes. Teams of area managers, assessors and functional skills tutors have day-to-day operational responsibility for managing and delivering programmes.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Robert Hamp HMI
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Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the Director of Operations and Quality 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 undertook 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.

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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