

# Nuneaton Training Centre Limited

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		<b>10 – 12 February 2015</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
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 few learners achieve their intended qualifications in English, mathematics and employability skills
- learners' attendance is too low
- too little teaching and learning are effective in challenging learners fully
- staff do not set and monitor sufficiently challenging targets for learners
- the development of English and mathematics skills does not routinely and systematically form part of the learners' experience outside specific English and mathematics lessons
- board members and staff do not use management information fully to monitor learners' attendance, progress and achievements and to bring about improvement
- managers do not use well information gained through observations of tutors to identify themes and priorities for staff development
- the study programmes do not include vocational training to meet the specific needs of local employers, and too few learners have access to external work experience.

### This provider has the following strengths:

- a high proportion of learners progress to further education or employment
- staff provide very good personal support for learners, including initial advice and guidance, which is effective in keeping learners on their study programme
- learners develop valuable work-related and personal skills to support their progression into employment, such as communication and interview skills
- self-assessment and development planning are good and have led well-conceived steps to improve the quality of provision
- Nuneaton Training Centre Limited (NTC) has an inclusive culture in which staff and learners are mutually respectful.

## Full report

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

- Improve learners' success in gaining qualifications by increasing their attendance, improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and setting learners stretching individual targets.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by
  - providing staff development that is carefully targeted to address the areas for development identified through the observation of tutors
  - ensuring that tutors plan lessons so that all learners are challenged to meet their potential
  - making better use of information and learning technology (ILT) to motivate and involve learners
  - ensuring that tutors develop and reinforce English and mathematics skills in all lessons.
- Develop the study programmes more fully to incorporate vocational training to meet the specific needs of local employers, and ensure an external work experience component for all learners.
- Use information on learners' attendance, progress, achievements and destinations more effectively so that board members and managers can monitor, evaluate and improve the provision.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Requires improvement
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- Learners on the study programme are working towards functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics at entry level through to level 2, and an accredited employability course. They also attend personal development lessons. Five learners attend a work placement.
- The proportion of learners who achieve their intended qualifications requires improvement; it has declined over the last three years, and in 2013/14 was low. Where learners stayed on until the end of their programme, they achieved their qualifications, but too many left their programmes early. Functional skills success rates were low in 2013/14 with around half of learners achieving their qualifications. The proportion of learners who achieve their employability qualifications is also low.
- Managers compare carefully the performance of different groups of learners. In 2013/14, they identified that female learners were less successful than males. Upon investigation, they found that this was due to more female learners leaving the programme early.
- This year staff have focused well on ensuring learners stay on programme and so far, none have left early. Those identified as at risk of leaving early due to difficult personal circumstances, including pregnancy, health problems and outstanding court cases, are monitored and receive very good support to maximise their chances of success.
- Staff develop learners' employability skills well through the accredited programme that includes lessons on job-search skills and promoting appropriate workplace behaviour. For example, learners develop their job interview skills very effectively using role-play activities to explore issues such as appropriate dress, language, body language and attitudes. Learners also develop good personal skills during their time in the training centre. They learn to communicate with others effectively, become confident, and develop positive attitudes towards learning and work.
- The availability of work experience requires improvement. Where learners attend work experience, it contributes very well to improving their employability, personal and social skills.

Staff link placements closely to their career aspirations and venues include a care home, a school, two retailers and the local council office. In recent weeks, an additional member of staff has been recruited with specific responsibility for securing and co-ordinating work placements. Staff have identified a further eight learners who are ready to undertake a work placement and are waiting for suitable placements.

- A high proportion of learners progressed into jobs or further learning upon leaving the programme in 2013/14. In the previous year data indicate a lower progression rate but the accuracy of this figure is uncertain due to weaknesses in following up and recording the destinations of leavers. Managers did not follow up and record more than half of the leavers' destinations in 2012/13. In the previous year the progression rate, validated through inspection, was high.
- Learners' attendance is too low. Managers have recently put processes in place to ensure that staff follow up non-attendance rigorously, involve parents or carers in discussions around absences and celebrate improvements in attendance.

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

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement, reflecting the low success rates in functional skills and employability qualifications in the previous year and the decline in success rates over the past three years. However, in the current year the majority of learners are making good progress. They rapidly develop appropriate employability skills such as interview techniques, communication skills and teamwork. Learners also acquire a high level of confidence and skills in their English and mathematics.
- Too often, tutors fail to set sufficiently challenging tasks to match the prior learning and potential of all learners. Learners complete activities which do not link clearly to individual learning objectives. In a minority of instances, tutors rely too much on paper-based resources such as worksheets, and learners become bored as a result. Tutors do not use ILT sufficiently well to enhance learning effectively. For example, in one lesson the tutor introduced a discussion by displaying information on an interactive whiteboard but did not go on to use the resource interactively to enliven the lesson. Tutors' use of questions is not always probing enough to develop learning, and they do not assess learning sufficiently well.
- Where teaching and learning are stronger, learners benefit from engaging activities that they find motivating and interesting. For example, in a listening and speaking class, the tutor used the topic of bullying to stimulate a lively discussion in which learners expressed their views skilfully and enthusiastically. In a mathematics class, the tutor carefully crafted an interactive game that allowed learners to practise using formulae in a very practical and enjoyable way. Tutors link theory to practical examples from the learners' own experience, which helps clarify complex ideas. For example, in a session on personal development the tutor encouraged learners to reflect upon their own behaviour in certain circumstances to enhance their understanding of assertive, passive and aggressive behaviour. Tutors prepare learners well for their assessments by reinforcing assessment requirements throughout the lessons and, as a consequence, most pass their assessments.
- Tutors provide very good personal support to help learners cope with difficulties in their personal lives. Tutors are approachable and learners feel that they can confide in them well. Staff work closely with external support agencies and attend multi-agency case conferences when necessary. This ensures that staff are aware of the broader issues learners are facing, which may affect their behaviour or attitudes towards learning. Staff adjust programmes to accommodate individual circumstances well, such as changing their timetables or hours of attendance to fit with medical appointments and health conditions.
- Tutors' support for learners in lessons is good. As a result, learners feel confident to ask questions freely to help their understanding of key topics. This creates a positive and mature

learning environment, which motivates learners well. The small class sizes and provision of an additional support worker also enhance support in lessons.

- Tutors' use of target setting requires improvement. Staff carry out initial assessment to identify learners' starting points but they do not use this information to develop useful individual targets for planning or reviewing learning.
- Tutors provide good verbal feedback following assessment, which clearly tells learners what they need to do to improve. Tutors' written feedback on learners' assessed written work routinely indicates the specific areas requiring development. However, tutors often do not correct spelling mistakes on learners' work, resulting in learners continuing to make the same errors.
- Tutors do not reinforce sufficiently English and mathematics in employability or personal development lessons, although learners make good progress in discrete lessons in these subjects.
- Initial advice and guidance (IAG) are good. Learners receive timely advice and guidance both at the start of, and during, their studies. Tutors provide on-going information and advice about further training and employment opportunities that helps learners to formulate realistic plans for the future.
- The promotion of equality of opportunity is good and is an integral feature of the study programme that improves the life chances of learners from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds. However, tutors do not promote diversity sufficiently well in lessons.

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

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. NTC has undergone several changes to the small staff team recently, including the appointment of a new chief executive five weeks ago. The chief executive has clearly explained to staff the higher expectations for learners, with a greater emphasis on challenging learners more fully to achieve all elements of their study programme, as well as supporting them extensively. Managers are making good progress in implementing the study programmes, ensuring that learners have individual programmes that enable them to progress. However, the availability of work placements requires improvement.
- The company's mission, values and strategic aims are clearly set out in the operational plan, and all staff support and understand these. Managers' ethos of supporting disadvantaged learners is very strong. The executive board has recently allocated a large financial investment for the purchase of resources, including ILT, confirming its commitment to support disadvantaged young people. Additional staffing resource has resulted in more in-class support for learners and the provision of more work placements.
- Managers and board members' use of management information requires improvement. In the last year, the executive board has not received sufficiently detailed information to enable it to oversee and monitor the study programme effectively. As a result, board members were not aware previously of the areas for development identified through the recent self-assessment process. However, board members have already agreed with the new chief executive a comprehensive and appropriate range of management reports. These include data on learners' achievements, progression and attendance, as well as a range of other measures relating to the quality of teaching and learning.
- In 2013/14, observations of teaching and learning sessions did not generate sufficient information to enable managers to gauge accurately the overall quality of the provision. The observations identified individual strengths and weaknesses, but did not provide a summative judgement on the quality of lessons. Managers revised the observation process and record for the current year; observations now provide more objective and helpful information on the overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

- Managers monitor the performance of staff well and provide appropriate support to help them develop their skills. Staff undertake a range of good professional development activities linked to their roles. For example, several staff have attended training in how to deliver functional skills and the two specialist English and mathematics staff undertook advanced qualifications to develop their skills further. Current learners are making good progress in English and mathematics. New staff have received support and mentoring to help them become established in their roles. However, staff development activities are not targeted carefully enough towards improving the areas for development identified through observations.
- Self-assessment is good. The self-assessment report written in December 2014 accurately identifies many of the strengths and areas for development of the provision. A summary report presented to the board by the chief executive in January 2015 went further to provide a more succinct and incisive set of judgements and grades that acknowledge the decline in the quality of provision since the last inspection.
- Development plans from self-assessment have led to recent, tangible improvements to the provision. These include more work placements, additional time allocated to English and mathematics lessons, the provision of independent learning sessions, increased contact with parents to address concerns regarding learners' attendance, and the division of the large group of learners into two which provides the opportunity for teachers to focus more effectively on meeting individual needs.
- The range of programmes offered requires improvement to meet the needs of local employers more closely. Learners develop general skills that employers value, but NTC does not provide specific vocational training to meet local priorities.
- Managers and staff create an inclusive culture. Staff create a very welcoming atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance. They adhere to equality and diversity policies and procedures, and work to a detailed action plan that includes clear objectives and actions to move the agenda forward. Staff promote equality well and ensure that learners are protected from harassment, bullying and discrimination. However, staff do not promote diversity consistently well in lessons.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good and learners feel safe. Staff and learners have a clear understanding of safeguarding and the processes to follow should concerns arise. All staff have undertaken mandatory safeguarding training and the designated senior staff responsible for safeguarding have achieved appropriate advanced qualifications. NTC maintains a central record of staff checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service and follows rigorous staff recruitment processes. The safeguarding policy and procedures were updated recently and include reference to protecting learners who are vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism. Staff deal with and record safeguarding concerns appropriately.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Nuneaton Training Centre 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					
Outcomes for learners	3			3					
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3			3					
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3			3					

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

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	16-18							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	39							
Principal/CEO	Mr John Shuter							
Date of previous inspection	October 2012							
Website address	www.ntcl.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+
	20	N/A	5	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+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
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	N/A							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	■ N/A							

## Contextual information

NTC's training premises are in the centre of Nuneaton. Learners come from the surrounding Nuneaton and Bedworth areas. The proportion of school leavers achieving five or more GCSEs including mathematics and English at A\*- C in Nuneaton and Bedworth is considerably lower than the county average of 63% and the national average of 59%. In addition to study programmes, NTC delivers apprenticeships under contract from other providers. Therefore, the apprenticeship provision was not within the scope of this inspection.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Patricia Hornsby AI

Two additional inspectors, assisted by the chief executive as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions 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:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012)

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