

The Training and Recruitment Partnership

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		23–27 February 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	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 many apprenticeships taught by subcontractors' staff make slow progress and too few achieve their qualifications in the planned time
- assessors do not adequately support learners to develop their skills in English and mathematics and not enough learners in subcontracted provision achieve their qualifications in these subjects
- learners do not receive adequate assessment of their skills and knowledge at the start of their programmes to enable assessors to plan learning to meet their individual needs and aspirations
- assessors do not adequately record learners' progress and use this information to plan the next stage of their learning
- managers do not use quality improvement processes well enough, including appraisals and observations of teaching, learning and assessment, to raise standards on all programmes
- managers do not have a sufficient overview of the performance of subcontractors and quality assurance arrangements are not robust enough.

This provider has the following strengths:

- learners have a positive attitude to learning and enjoy their programmes; their conduct and behaviour are good
- learners on programmes taught directly by The Training and Recruitment Partnership Limited (TRP) make good progress and a high proportion achieve their qualifications within the planned time
- most learners produce work of a good standard, gain confidence in their abilities and improve their team-working and customer service skills
- assessors provide good encouragement to learners through their frequent visits to them in the workplace and most learners complete their training programmes
- managers liaise effectively with employers and local authorities to develop a range of training programmes that is well matched to the needs of businesses and the local community.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications in the planned time by closer recording and monitoring of learners' progress. Ensure that learners receive timely help to improve their English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) skills and to gain qualifications in these subjects.
- Assess learners' starting points more thoroughly in order to plan learning and support to meet the different needs of all learners.
- Ensure learners receive good written feedback following assessments that shows clearly what they need to do to improve their work and skills, so that they know how to achieve their goals.
- Implement staff training to bring about rapid improvement in the quality of provision across all of TRP's own programmes and those of its subcontractors. Strengthen the observation of teaching, learning and assessment and the appraisal process to ensure all staff improve their skills.
- Strengthen the arrangements to manage the performance of subcontractors by ensuring that managers have a regular overview of the performance of learners and the quality of provision, so that improvement actions can be implemented in a timely manner.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TRP offers intermediate and advanced apprenticeships in a wide range of subjects, with the highest numbers in health and social care, early years and playwork, construction, supporting teaching and learning, and business and administration. TRP delivers higher apprenticeships in management, traineeships and a small amount of classroom-based learning to prepare adults for employment. The large majority of learners are adult apprentices. Around a quarter of the provision is taught and assessed by TRP, and three quarters by subcontractors. The subject areas selected for this inspection cover the programmes of around two thirds of learners. ▪ For the past three years a very high proportion of learners have successfully completed their qualifications in apprenticeships and classroom-based learning. Learners who complete training delivered directly by TRP make good progress and the proportion that achieves their qualifications in the planned time is high, particularly on programmes to provide teaching support and on management courses. ▪ Learners trained by subcontractors make slow progress, and while most achieve their qualifications and gain the skills needed for employment, only a few do so in the planned time. ▪ A good proportion of apprentices and trainees progress to the next level of learning. Almost all of TRP's own apprentices remain in secure employment on completing their apprenticeships. The proportion of subcontractors' apprentices who remain in secure employment on completion of their programmes is lower than for TRP's own provision and requires improvement. ▪ Managers have put in place actions to reverse the downward trend in timely success rates and in-year data show an improving picture, but subcontractor performance remains below that of TRP's own provision. The difference in the proportion of learners who gain their qualifications with subcontractors and with TRP is too high. Gaps in achievement rates for learners from different backgrounds are small and male and female learners achieve at the same rate. ▪ Learners in most subjects gain good vocational skills, enjoy their learning, are competent employees and work to high standards. Employers value the skills learners gain, including their increased confidence, team-working and customer service skills. In a small minority of subjects, 	

including health and social care, the standard of learners' work is less good and assessors do not challenge learners sufficiently to produce work of high quality.

- Learners' development of skills in the use of mathematics is too varied and requires improvement, for example construction apprentices use their mathematical skills well in tasks such as calculating angles for mitred joints, but health and social care apprentices do not improve their mathematical skills sufficiently. Too often the standard of learners' written English requires improvement.
- Poor planning of functional skills assessments in English, mathematics and ICT contributed to the decline in learners' completion of their apprenticeship within the planned timescale and not enough learners achieved their qualifications in these subjects. Managers' strategies to rectify this are showing improvement in the current year.
- Learners on a newly established traineeship programme are acquiring good skills and gaining personal confidence to help them to move into an apprenticeship with a large employer. Unemployed people learn how to improve their personal capacity to gain employment by acquiring skills in curriculum vitae writing and interview techniques.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Learners studying with subcontractors make slow progress and not enough gain their qualifications in the planned timescales. However, learners on all programmes welcome the training they receive, value the support of their assessors and the vast majority acquire the desire to study further and improve their job prospects.
- Learners do not receive a sufficiently comprehensive assessment of their skills and learning requirements at the start of their programmes. As a result they do not have learning goals that are matched closely enough to their prior attainment and career ambitions. Assessors do not adequately evaluate all learners' progress and help learners to improve, and they do not use learning plans routinely to give direction to learners' study.
- Learners do not receive sufficient support and guidance to enable them to achieve functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. This results in low achievement rates and delays to learners achieving their apprenticeship frameworks. Actions taken by managers and assessors in the current year are having a positive impact.
- Assessors do not adequately check and correct learners' use of English in written assignments. Too few assessors teach learners strategies to identify and correct spelling and grammatical errors in their own work. Assessors rely too much on the use of functional skills practice tests to give learners confidence in the use of numeracy skills; they do not place enough emphasis on teaching mathematics to help learners improve their skills, for example in converting weights and measures.
- On all programmes, assessors provide valuable and flexible support and help to learners when needed; for example, they give extra time and prepare dedicated resources. However, managers have not put in place well-defined mechanisms to assess and provide for learners' additional support needs to ensure this is provided consistently across all provision.
- Learners on all programmes receive effective guidance to place them on appropriate programmes and the proportion of learners who stay to the end of their course is high. Learners also receive good information about their options on completing their programmes, and in many subjects a good proportion move on to the next level of learning.
- Assessors on all programmes visit learners frequently in the workplace and are assiduous in ensuring that learners stay on their programmes. The majority of TRP's learners receive effective guidance to gain their qualifications in the planned time. However, subcontractors' assessors do not monitor the pace of learners' progress adequately, resulting in too many of their learners making slow progress and achieving qualifications after the planned end date.
- Assessors' monitoring and recording of learners' individual progress are sound and thorough. Learners receive positive and encouraging verbal feedback from assessors. In their written

feedback, assessors do not raise learners' aspirations sufficiently to do more than they need to in order to pass the assignment. Learners therefore do not benefit from higher level and more insightful expertise and detailed professional comment from their experienced and knowledgeable assessors.

- Learners often do not acquire good in-depth understanding of what equality of opportunity means, beyond learning about legislation and employment rights. Assessors do not pay enough attention to ensure that learners have a more detailed and sensitive appreciation of diversity and preparation for life in modern Britain.
- The majority of learners have good information and learning technology (ILT) skills. However, the extent to which assessors use ILT to maintain learners' interest in, and understanding of, topics taught requires improvement. Learners have insufficient access to on-line resources to help them study on their own at home or in the work place.

Health and social care, early years and playwork

19+ learning programmes Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in health and social care, early years and playwork require improvement because:

- too many learners make slow progress and do not gain their qualifications within the planned timescales; however, the proportion of learners who eventually complete their training is high on apprenticeships and classroom-based learning programmes
- assessors do not plan learning with enough consideration for individual learners' prior attainment and aspirations; they do not provide sufficient support or guidance to learners who aspire to achieve higher level qualifications, resulting in a minority of learners being insufficiently challenged to complete more complex work
- assessors provide useful and encouraging verbal feedback, but their feedback on learners' written work does not contain enough detail to help them to improve; subsequently, too many learners make slow progress
- assessors do not focus sufficiently on the development of learners' English skills; too often learners make errors in their written and spoken English which remain uncorrected and, therefore, they are not adequately aware how to make improvements
- while the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics lessons is good, learners do not learn to use mathematics skills sufficiently during their health and social care training, for example when measuring medication or calculating weights in order to move clients safely; they do not apply their mathematical skills well enough in work situations
- assessors do not provide sufficient guidance to learners on topics related to social equality and celebrating diversity; learners do not have a comprehensive enough understanding of how they can adapt their services to meet the needs of different clients.

In health and social care, early years and playwork, the provider has the following strengths:

- learners enjoy their programmes and develop a good understanding of their role in the workplace and how to care for their service users with respect for their dignity
- learners receive frequent and good support from their assessors and most of them eventually achieve their qualifications; they have a good understanding of the technical language associated with their vocational work
- all assessors use their excellent vocational expertise and knowledge effectively to prepare learners well for the variety of situations they will face in work; for example, learners have a

good understanding of how to safeguard vulnerable people in a wide range of different circumstances

- assessors work closely with employers to ensure assessments fit in well with the demands of the workplace and its customers and to ensure that learners develop good skills that are relevant to employers' needs.

Building and construction

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Teaching learning and assessment in building and construction require improvement because:

- the proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications in the planned time is low; assessors do not use a wide enough range of strategies to maintain learners' interest and too many make slow progress
- learners do not develop their English skills quickly enough to meet fully the needs of the qualification and the demands of their jobs; assessors are not yet confident in advising learners how to improve grammar and punctuation when producing technical site reports
- assessors do not plan learning that is challenging for more able learners and seldom set tasks that go beyond the requirements of achieving the qualification
- learners do not have access to sufficient learning resources in order to consolidate their learning; assessors do not fully explain new technical terminology, resulting in gaps in learners' knowledge
- assessors do not assess learners' progress and plan further training well enough; they do not record assessments of their knowledge and understanding well; for example, they do not indicate clearly which learning outcomes they have achieved on photographic evidence of learners' work
- learners receive insufficiently detailed written feedback on their assessed work to help them improve their technical knowledge and understanding further; too few learners revisit their written work to make improvements following assessment
- assessors do not set sufficiently challenging targets at progress reviews to help learners make rapid progress and achieve their qualifications in the planned time; assessors place insufficient emphasis on the personal development of a small minority of less experienced learners.

In building and construction, the provider has the following strengths:

- the majority of learners gain in confidence and self-esteem and improve their communication skills, particularly when dealing with customers; employers report an increase in customer satisfaction and a reduction in customer complaints, leading to greater efficiency
- most learners starting at level 2 progress to level 3 and have secure jobs; employers benefit by improving the skills of their current workforce and learners gain skills and qualifications to enhance their job prospects
- assessors are quick to respond to learners' and employers' needs; assessors' observations of learners in the workplace are frequent and fit in well with learners' work patterns and the employers' planned schedule of activities
- learners improve their site skills, experience and independence as they work on increasingly complex tasks in a range of industrial and domestic settings; learners gain valuable team skills within high quality work environments by working alongside other trades, such as plumbers and electricians, on sites managed by prestigious construction companies
- learners apply mathematical skills well in their work; fenestration learners calculate complex angles precisely when installing bay windows and plumbing learners accurately interpret manufacturers' data for domestic appliances when installing heating systems.

Business

Requires improvement

Apprenticeships**Teaching, learning and assessment in business require improvement because:**

- too many learners make slow progress and the proportion of learners who complete their qualifications within the planned timescales is low for subcontracted provision
- although assessors give learners adequate verbal feedback following assessments so that they know what they have achieved, their written feedback on learners' work does not always set out clearly what learners need to do to improve their skills and knowledge further
- apprentices do not receive enough support to reinforce their skills in the use of English within a business environment; for example, assessors do not always develop apprentices' skills in the use of formal language in letter writing or the correct spelling of key vocabulary
- assessors do not use information about learners' prior knowledge and skills adequately to plan learning that meets learners' individual needs, and do not set learners sufficiently challenging targets, resulting in a minority making slow progress.

In business, the provider has the following strengths:

- the proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications is high, particularly on programmes delivered by TRP and on the higher apprenticeship in management; the majority of learners progress to further training or receive promotions, and the standard of learners' industry-specific work is often good
- the majority of learners, particularly those on the higher apprenticeship in management, develop good personal, social and business skills; for example, learners make good gains in confidence and develop skills in dealing with difficult situations, self-reflection, conflict management, team-working, chairing meetings and managing colleagues
- assessors plan sessions well with activities that interest and motivate learners; learners develop good skills to work on their own and to think through complex issues and solve problems
- learners demonstrate a good knowledge of health and safety practices which they use to good effect in the workplace; for example, they design and use well-considered questionnaires to assess health and safety risks in different work settings
- learners have a good appreciation of the diverse needs of customers and colleagues they encounter at work as a result of informative guidance from assessors.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have been slow to implement fully the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. They have not ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of its subcontracted provision has improved; the proportion of learners that achieve their qualifications in the planned time has declined and is low.
- Managers have successfully increased the number of apprenticeship programmes and traineeships, but have not been as effective in monitoring the quality of their subcontracted provision. They have not overseen closely enough the training of all assessors and the sharing of good practice to ensure all subcontractors perform to the same high standards.
- Managers meet national and local employment and social needs effectively through the design of the curriculum. They work well with reputable construction companies, the chamber of commerce and local stakeholders to provide good training opportunities. For example, through their work with one subcontractor, they are supporting the fenestration industry to improve the skills of its workforce.

- Managers work closely and effectively with local authorities and employers in order plan courses to encourage those who are not in education, employment or training back into learning and to lower local unemployment rates. They initiate specific programmes with employers to improve local circumstances, such as the 'Troubled Families Initiative'.
- Managers' evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. Managers do not plan their observations of assessors well enough. Their records of observations focus too much on the strategies used by assessors and trainers and lack a sufficient evaluation of the learning that takes place and the progress individual learners make. Actions to improve teaching and learning are not robust enough and managers are insufficiently aware of whether standards have improved.
- The process of managing quality improvement requires improvement. In the self-assessment report, managers do not analyse well enough the key strengths and areas for improvement of teaching, learning and assessment. Although they identify weaknesses within the quality improvement plan, they do not set precise enough actions and targets to eradicate the differences in the performance of TRP's own, and its subcontracted, provision.
- Managers pay insufficient attention to the development of learners' English and mathematics skills and, last year, poor planning of functional skills assessments contributed to low success rates within the planned timescale. Managers identified this as an area for improvement and, consequently, they improved the timing and monitoring of learners' assessments of functional skills. The provider's own in-year data indicate these actions are having a positive impact on learners' achievements.
- Managers focus carefully on providing equality of opportunity for different groups of learners. They participate effectively in initiatives such as 'Women in Construction', and learners benefit from positive and professional female role models in construction and other areas of work.
- Arrangements for safeguarding require improvement. Managers now keep up-to-date records. Managers ensure that learners work in a safe environment; learners know who to contact and how to ensure their own safety. TRP's own assessors receive regular and suitable safeguarding training and pay attention to the welfare of their learners. A few policies, such as those relating to forced marriages and ensuring learners are kept safe from extremist influences, have not yet been fully introduced across all subcontractors.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

The Training and Recruitment Partnership

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
Health and social care	3
Early years and playwork	3
Building and construction	3
Business	3

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	1,902							
Principal/CEO	Mr Glyn Smith and Mrs Carole Cook							
Date of previous inspection	November 2010							
Website address	trpltd.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+
	19	50	-	19	-	73	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	42	519	21	277	-	100		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
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	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Aim Skills ■ Boldly Equip ■ Centre for Leadership & Management Development ■ Funding ■ Connect Ltd ■ LD Training ■ MRG Services ■ Need to Succeed 							

Contextual information

The Training and Recruitment Partnership Ltd is an independent learning provider based in Mitcham. It delivers mostly apprenticeships, and a small amount of classroom-based learning and traineeships, in London and the south east of England, and some nationally. Most learners are adults, with the highest numbers on business, administration and management, construction and health and social care programmes. Around three quarters of the provision is taught by subcontractors.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Rieks Drijver HMI
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Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), one associate inspector and four additional inspectors, assisted by the Centre Director as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012

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