

Kwik-Fit (GB) Limited

Employer

Inspection dates		20–24 April 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Outstanding-1
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
Outcomes for learners		Outstanding-1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding-1
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Outstanding-1

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is outstanding because:

- managers and practitioners have secured considerable improvements for the outcomes for learners since the last inspection, leading to a demonstrable impact on apprentices' future career prospects
- apprentices develop an excellent range of personal, social and employability skills which prepare them particularly well for their work and personal lives
- exceptional leadership and strong management have set a clear strategic direction supported by dedicated staff, which offers an excellent platform for further improvement
- arrangements for safeguarding are outstanding
- outstanding and very productive partnerships with industry bodies meet the needs of the automotive repair sector locally, regionally and nationally
- the information and guidance apprentices receive about their training and career progression are outstanding
- apprentices benefit from high but realistic expectations and are well challenged by tutors and assessors to produce work to high levels of accuracy and quality, with a strong focus on customer needs and safe working practices
- very knowledgeable and experienced tutors and assessors plan very good training that involves centre managers well, with particularly good links between theory and practice
- resources to support learning are exceptional both in the training centres and in the workplaces
- tutors and assessors use initial assessment particularly well to provide well-targeted support
- arrangements to improve teaching and learning are highly effective and lead to a positive impact on apprentices' experience and success
- managers have developed an open and approachable management style; communication between the training team and operational team is highly effective
- improvement processes following lesson observations are of a high standard and result in highly effective action plans which promote further development.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Focus quality assurance arrangements on success rates to sustain the rapid improvement of achievement for apprentices.
- Further develop the confidence of assessors to ensure they are able to provide support to all apprentices in the correct use of spelling and the meaning of technical language.
- Ensure that assessors provide effective written feedback to reinforce the existing high quality oral feedback to support apprentices' to improve further.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Outstanding
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- Kwik-Fit provides apprenticeships in transport and operations maintenance throughout the United Kingdom at their nationwide network of automotive parts and repair centres. More than 90% of all apprentices are aged 16 to 18, with the vast majority undertaking intermediate apprenticeships. A very small minority of apprenticeships are at advanced level.
- The achievements of apprentices are good. The proportion of apprentices who successfully completed their programme within the planned timescale in 2013/14 is above similar providers nationally. In-year validated data demonstrate that achievement rates have improved significantly and are now high.
- Managers comprehensively monitor the engagement and achievement of different groups of apprentices and set highly effective action plans where they identify gaps. Leaders demonstrate a concerted ambition to improve participation from under-represented groups. For example, leaders have identified under-representation of female apprentices; innovative engagement activities are now in place to increase applications. Managers have reduced historic gaps in achievement between 16 to 18 year olds and adult apprentices, and male and female achievement. There are now no discernible gaps in achievement between different groups of apprentices.
- Apprentices' progress on their programme is exceptional. All apprentices are achieving twice as many vocational credits as required by the apprenticeship framework, with many making much better progress than expected compared to their entry points. They demonstrate a high level of competence and customer care when assisting different customers with diverse needs. For example, an apprentice demonstrated excellent practical, technical and communication skills when testing a vehicle's wheel alignment, following replacement of a set of tyres. The standard of customer service was very high, exhibiting the high expectations highlighted in the 'Kwik-Fit Way'.
- Apprentices develop a very good range of vocational, personal and employability skills, which systematically prepare them for the challenges that they will face at work and in their personal lives. Managers and tutors skilfully promote and develop apprentices' budgeting and saving skills throughout their programme. For example, apprentices agree to contribute to the purchase of tools required to complete their apprenticeship through a saving scheme. After graduation, apprentices receive all monies saved as a reward for their achievements.
- All apprentices rapidly acquire highly relevant English and mathematical skills, resulting in exceptional pass rates in English and good pass rates in mathematics, with most apprentices passing their qualification on their first attempt. Many apprentices develop these skills at a higher-level than is required for the apprenticeship. Apprentices quickly improve their communication skills and acquire a high level of confidence. This provides apprentices with the

self-assurance to undertake significant additional responsibilities such as stock control, ordering of parts and specialist training on advanced tools and instrumentation. In one centre, more experienced members of staff consult the apprentice when using tyre pressure monitoring system technology.

- Leaders have created outstanding opportunities for apprentices to develop and progress their skills and career within the organisation. Apprentices make excellent progress in developing their skills; they rapidly acquire higher-level skills to enhance the service customers receive. A number of apprentices talk confidently about their career path and the qualifications and skills that they need to acquire to become, for example, a master technician or centre manager. Many rapidly move into more senior roles in the organisation.
- Collection and analysis of destination data are exceptional. Managers have a very good understanding of the impact that the apprenticeship programme has on the organisation in achieving their strategic targets. The proportion of apprentices who have progressed to permanent employment has improved significantly over the past three years and is outstanding. The business retains almost nine out of ten apprentices, compared to fewer than half in 2012.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding. This is as a result of sustained efforts, reinforced through self-assessment and quality improvement, to address shortcomings identified in the previous inspection. Consequently, outcomes for learners have improved significantly and are now outstanding.
- Apprentices benefit from very good training and individual guidance that increases their confidence and supports the development of excellent employability, personal and social skills that echo the 'Kwik-Fit Way'. Apprentices quickly take on additional responsibility and make good contributions in the workplace providing for example, excellent customer service for customers within the service centres; others take budgeting responsibility for consumables, further developing their financial literacy.
- Apprentices are highly motivated and readily take part in their learning because of the high expectations of tutors and assessors. They benefit from exceptionally good care and support, which helps them make very good progress; many are significantly ahead of their planned deadlines. Apprentices develop high levels of practical skills in the training centres and workplaces where assessors and centre managers also provide particularly good training and support. They work confidently, respond well to challenges, pay a high regard to health and safety, work with accuracy and develop a customer-facing approach to tasks.
- Knowledgeable and enthusiastic tutors plan engaging learning sessions very well. The well-judged use of a variety of high quality learning resources, including handbooks and information learning technologies, motivates apprentices and as a result they make very good progress. Tutors regularly plan the use of extension tasks for the most able apprentices and support those who need more in-depth explanation. Apprentices are attentive in learning and confidently answer questions. They enjoy their learning and take part in group work to notable effect. Tutors use a wide variety of teaching strategies particularly well such as directed questions, quizzes and card activities to check and consolidate learning.
- Assessment is good; assessors make frequent and regular visits to the workplace, observing and confirming competence for all aspects of vocational training. Centre and regional managers remain informed and involved in the development of progress review targets. These targets are frequently displayed in the workplace 'crew room' ensuring all centre staff are clear about what apprentices need to complete; consequently they are able to provide highly effective support. This results in tutors and assessors promoting the development of independent learning skills particularly well. Apprentices competently access e-learning materials both in the workplace and

at home, leading to rapid completion of learning targets for English, mathematics and vocational tasks.

- Tutors and assessors provide thorough, detailed and constructive oral feedback that ensures apprentices are clear about what they do well and where they can improve. However, recorded feedback is less effective, often being cursory and not supporting improvement beyond complying with the assessment criteria.
- The resources to support learning are outstanding, including for example ample provision of high quality vehicles, specialist state-of-the-art wheel alignment rigs, spacious workshops and specialist tooling. Very high quality learning materials, accommodation, and interactive learning resources support classroom-based learning exceptionally well. Apprentices highly value these resources and comment positively about how valued they make them feel.
- Assessment of apprentices' prior knowledge and experience is timely and highly effective. Tutors and assessors give very good support to apprentices, providing appropriate challenges for their identified range of abilities. Apprentices have clear, appropriately challenging targets, which assessors and managers monitor closely. Managers and staff throughout Kwik-Fit are highly adept at supporting apprentices who experience a range of unexpected and challenging obstacles to the continuation of their study. Sympathetic and supportive arrangements result in these apprentices being able to acknowledge and resolve the issue and complete their programme.
- Skilful early assessments accurately identify apprentices' English and mathematical skills at the start of the programme. Tutors and assessors skilfully identify any support required and build it into apprentices' programmes. All apprentices complete English and mathematics modules throughout their study with most completing activities above the level required by their apprenticeship. All attend training sessions in training centres appropriate to their needs. Vocational assessors support apprentices to complete additional independent study in the workplace. However, the quality of the support assessors provide is variable. A few are able to identify and correct inaccuracies in the use of English, but many are less confident resulting in apprentices not getting the help they need. Assessors are receiving training to improve their own English and mathematics.
- Information, advice and guidance are outstanding. Initial preparation and induction gives extremely clear advice, guidance and information that enable apprentices to understand the requirements of the apprenticeship, what Kwik-Fit expects of them and what they can expect from Kwik-Fit. They receive an accessible and clear route map and schedule for each stage of their apprenticeship along with the topics they will study. From an early stage, staff inform them well about career options and progression opportunities after completion of the apprenticeship. Many apprentices are ambitious and talk confidently about their aspirations to become a master technician or centre manager within Kwik-Fit.
- The promotion of equality and diversity has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Apprentices develop a strong understanding of diversity during induction. Tutors and assessors continually reinforce it during their training and it is implicit in the customer service mantra the 'Kwik-Fit Way', emphasising high expectations for customer care. Apprentices in the workplace demonstrate exemplary behaviour and understanding when dealing with a diverse range of individuals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding. Leaders have given a clear strategic direction, which aligns well with the values and expectations of the company to be the global number one in their sector. Staff at all levels and positions in the company share the

expectation for their apprentices to succeed, progress into sustainable employment and become the managers of the future. This reflects the improving outcomes for apprentices.

- A comprehensive recent restructure, highly effective recruitment and continuous high quality staff training have developed the capacity of the organisation to improve particularly well. Strong management and a positive culture of putting the apprentice first offer an excellent platform for further improvement.
- The board and the apprentice programme management committee offer particularly effective and knowledgeable governance and set challenging targets for progress and improvement throughout the organisation. High levels of expectation from leaders and managers have inspired staff across the organisation, individually and collectively, to make a significant impact on raising apprentices' achievement.
- Learning resources and equipment in the training academies and centres are outstanding. The use of electronic automotive technology learning material is highly effective in enhancing apprentices' understanding of the advanced technology in the automotive sector. Apprentices and tutors use high quality electronic learning aids well during their training and assessment sessions. The further use of electronic portfolios is developing extremely well.
- Managers have established an open and approachable management style, which staff across the company value highly. Communication is particularly good. Frequent, decisive and highly effective meetings lead to rapid improvements to the provision for apprentices. Managers encourage staff and apprentices to challenge decisions and contribute their own ideas to proposed improvements.
- Kwik-Fit has a well-planned and rigorous performance management process, with very effective support for staff to improve the quality of their teaching, learning and assessment sessions. Lesson observations and records are of a high standard and result in effective developmental action plans. Kwik-Fit has recruited significant expertise to help staff improve their performance and become skilled and competent tutors. Frequent, good quality staff development time enables tutors and assessors to improve their teaching and technical understanding. Managers tackle underperformance well, leading to significant improvements in teaching, learning and assessment, which are now consistently good or better.
- The training team has worked hard and very successfully to ensure that the provision closely matches the needs of the business and apprentices. A strong drive to increase the engagement of operational managers and staff has resulted in a high level of involvement and improved understanding of their apprentices' programmes. Kwik-Fit managers are an integral part of the automotive sector skills council's initiative to develop national occupational standards which meet the needs of the sector locally, regionally and nationally.
- The arrangements to deliver English and mathematics are now highly effective. Skilled tutors provide excellent support, integrating these functional skills into programmes well, resulting in high pass rates. However, a few assessors are still developing the skills required to support apprentices.
- Tutors, assessors and operational managers give high quality and timely support for those apprentices who require any additional guidance. Managers and staff listen carefully to apprentices' opinions and use these well to ensure provision best meets their needs and expectations.
- The self-assessment and quality improvement processes are very effective and inclusive. Managers make very good use of feedback from apprentices and centre managers, and fully engage stakeholders from across the organisation. All managers and staff are fully involved in developing an accurate and evaluative report, which leads to particularly effective quality development at both team and organisational level. The quality improvement plan closely reflects those areas for improvement identified by inspectors at the previous inspection. All recommendations from the previous inspection have been actioned successfully. Managers have implemented strong quality assurance systems, which demand high compliance to which all staff meticulously adhere. Internal quality assurance is very effective and well planned.

- Kwik-Fit promotes equality and diversity very well, resulting in a work environment where staff and apprentices do not tolerate bullying, discrimination or inappropriate behaviour. Apprentices develop good customer service skills and are proud to be involved in the 'Kwik-Fit Way' as a matter of course. Managers and staff work hard to increase numbers from under-represented groups, for example by encouraging more females to apply for the apprenticeship programme. Apprentices' understanding of equality and diversity in the workplace and the wider context is very good.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are outstanding. Managers and staff promote safeguarding, including the safe use of the internet particularly well at induction and through comprehensive support during the apprenticeship programme. This results in a high level of understanding by both apprentices and operational staff. Apprentices feel very safe and specialist staff in each region manage safeguarding concerns very effectively. Kwik-Fit gives particular care to arrangements for young apprentices in temporary residential accommodation when attending the training academy.
- Managers underpin safeguarding by careful recruitment and rigorous safeguarding and health and safety practices. Kwik-Fit manages risk very well, with appropriate assessment and regular training both for staff and apprentices, who adopt good safe working practices.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Kwik-Fit (GB) Ltd									
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	1						1		
Outcomes for learners	1						1		
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	1						1		
The effectiveness of leadership and management	1						1		

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Transportation operations and maintenance	1

Type of provider	Employer								
Age range of learners	16+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	537								
Head of Learning and Development	Mr Paul Binks								
Date of previous inspection	28 October 2013								
Website address	www.kwik-fit.com								
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+			
	232	0	2	3	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	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

Kwik-Fit (GB) Ltd is a privately owned company that specialises in automotive parts and repair centres. The company operates across a network of 520 service centres nationally and employs over 5,000 staff in a range of engineering, administrative and managerial roles. The company started in Edinburgh in 1971 and has gone through a significant number of changes in the last few years. The most recent change of ownership occurred in 2011, when Itochu Corporation of Japan purchased the business. The company contracts directly with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) to provide apprenticeships for new recruits.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Paul Cocker HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and 5 additional inspectors, assisted by the Head of Learning and Development 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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