

# Veolia Environnement Development Centre Limited (Veolia)

## Employer

<b>Inspection dates</b>		20–24 April 2015
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
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 adult apprentices complete their qualifications and the proportion who achieve within planned timescales is too low
- the results of initial assessments are not used well enough by trainers to plan personalised learning that meet the needs of individual learners
- trainers do not set adequately challenging targets to ensure all learners make the best progress possible and achieve their potential
- too few learners are challenged to develop their skills in English and mathematics beyond the minimum expectations of the apprenticeship qualification
- trainers do not extend learners' understanding of equality and diversity during the programme
- self-assessment and quality assurance arrangements have not brought about improvement in the quality of provision since the previous inspection.

### This provider has the following strengths:

- learners develop good vocational skills, knowledge and understanding that significantly enhance their employability skills
- learners receive good personal support from skilled and experienced staff
- facilities in the workplace and the training centre are of a high standard
- performance management of subcontractors is good
- leaders contribute well to meeting regional and national skills priorities through strong and highly effective partnerships with a range of local, regional and national organisations; these promote career opportunities through apprenticeships to the waste and recycling sector.

## Full report

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

- Increase the number of apprentices who complete all parts of their framework within the planned time through better planning of learning and assessment opportunities in the workplace.
- Ensure trainers utilise all the information held about each learner when planning learning and that they provide learners with challenging goals that ensure learners have a precise understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- Further develop and extend the use of the new training manuals, the online learning resources and the online assessment tool so that all learners benefit from a good learning experience.
- Prioritise the development of both staff and learners' skills in English and mathematics and work at a faster pace on the implementation of strategies to improve learners' work-related English and mathematics skills beyond the level required by their apprenticeship.
- Enhance the promotion of equality and diversity within teaching, learning and assessment by providing trainers with additional development and support so that they can confidently extend learners' knowledge and understanding of these themes in their work and in their personal lives.
- Further develop and refine existing self-assessment and quality improvement processes so that judgements are evaluative, supported by sufficient evidence, and result in an increased pace of improvement. Ensure all improvement actions are subject to frequent evaluation and close monitoring by the board of directors.

### Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Veolia Environnement Development Centre Limited (Veolia) provides apprenticeship training to around 780 learners, the very large majority being adult apprentices. Just under half are following programmes in street cleaning and sustainable waste management, the majority at level 2. The remaining learners are working towards apprenticeships in driving heavy goods vehicles and business administration, and a few are studying for advanced apprenticeships in engineering, manufacturing and transport operations.</li> <li>▪ Since the previous inspection, the proportion of learners who successfully complete their qualifications has declined from high to now being below the performance of other similar providers. In addition, the proportion of apprentices and learners on work-based courses who complete within the planned timescales has also declined to below the relevant national rates.</li> <li>▪ Outcomes for learners aged 25 and over, particularly those on apprenticeships in driving heavy goods vehicles, declined sharply in 2013/14 and are poor. The programme was closed to new entrants from January 2015. Success rates for the small minority of learners aged 24 and below who are studying across a range of other vocational areas are high; however, the proportion that achieves their qualifications within planned timescales is only around the national rate and requires improvement. The few engineering learners who undertake their training with subcontractors achieve particularly well.</li> <li>▪ The majority of learners make at least the progress expected of them, but a small minority do not because they do not receive enough challenge from trainers to achieve their full potential. Learners' achievement of qualifications in both English and mathematics is high, but too few improve their skills beyond the minimum level required for their apprenticeship framework.</li> <li>▪ The small minority of female learners perform much better than their male counterparts at all course levels, and the gap has increased over time. The few learners identified with additional support needs achieve well.</li> </ul>	

- Most learners develop good vocational and technical skills relevant to their job roles and take on more responsibilities as their confidence and skills increase. They quickly develop positive attitudes to their work, contribute well as employees, and respond effectively to the demands of their job role. For example, learners in street cleaning develop good listening and speaking skills when providing advice on recycling and waste disposal matters during their daily interactions with members of the general public.
- Most learners benefit from acquiring additional industry-recognised qualifications that enhance the content of their apprenticeship course; this contributes to them becoming more effective in their job roles, and hence more employable. Virtually all learners subsequently gain permanent employment within Veolia and a few have progressed into supervisory and managerial roles.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, which reflects the decline in the proportion of learners who successfully complete their qualifications and the slow progress of too many learners.
- The quality of workplace learning, coaching and assessment sessions varies too widely and requires improvement. Trainers at Veolia are improving their skills in providing effective off-the-job training and bespoke training and development, but these are not yet of a high standard across all programmes.
- Staff have extensive occupational experience that they use to good effect in helping the majority of apprentices to develop good vocational and employability skills; for example, learners in driving heavy goods vehicles recognise the importance of carrying out daily vehicle checks and driving refuse vehicles in a safe manner. Learners in engineering confidently complete complex maintenance operations to realistic commercial timescales, while learners in sustainable waste management correctly identify materials that can be recycled and those that need to go to landfill.
- All learners receive good care and flexible support from tutors. This helps them quickly gain confidence and develop vocational, personal and social skills. Learners enjoy their work and appreciate the individual support they get from staff. However, delays in starting training after they sign up to an apprenticeship, and variations in the frequency of assessment visits, have contributed to the slow progress of a minority of learners.
- Tutors do not use the results of initial assessment sufficiently well to plan learning activities that meet the full range of learners' abilities. They fail to provide sufficient challenge and to develop higher level skills for more able learners.
- Assessment of learners' work is generally good. In waste and recycling, and driving goods vehicles programmes, assessors prepare learners well for assessment. These apprentices are able to produce appropriate evidence of their skills and knowledge. In other areas, particularly in administration, assessment methods lack variety. Most learners receive adequate oral feedback following assessment, but written feedback does always not provide sufficient detail on what they need to do to improve.
- Facilities in the workplace and the training centre are of a high standard. Since the previous inspection, trainers have improved significantly the quality of the theory workbooks that learners use. Extensive online learning resources and an online assessment tool are also now in place for use by trainers and learners. These are all still relatively new and their use by learners is not yet sufficiently widespread. Specialist off-the-job training for engineering apprentices who attend at subcontracted provision with a range of colleges is good.
- Development of learners' English and mathematics skills requires improvement; trainers do not make adequate use of information on learners' starting points to place more able learners on the most appropriate level of functional skills qualification. Spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in learners' written work are not routinely corrected by a few trainers.

- The quality of information, advice and guidance provided to learners requires improvement. Learners in engineering and waste management are clear about the programme requirements at the start of their apprenticeships, but this is not the case in warehousing and distribution. All learners receive helpful information on their career and progression opportunities towards the end of their learning, and virtually all secure permanent employment with Veolia.
- Apprentices receive appropriate information about equality and diversity during their induction at the beginning of programmes, but do not find this memorable. At subsequent progress review meetings, trainers tend to ask apprentices very narrowly defined questions on equality, inclusion and safeguarding that do not broaden their knowledge sufficiently. Trainers promote safe working practices in all that they do, learners respond well and replicate these behaviours in the workplace.

## Warehousing and distribution

### Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

#### **Teaching, learning and assessment in warehousing and distribution require improvement because:**

- too many learners make slow progress towards their qualifications, particularly at the start of the apprenticeship; this is because trainers do not visit frequently enough or ensure that learners have a sufficient understanding of what they need to do
- action planning for learners is weak; for example, short-term targets are too general and lack timely completion dates for learners to plan and take ownership for their own learning between assessor visits
- the planning and reviewing of learning are ineffective; trainers do not use the results of initial assessment to plan learning that meets individual needs, and learners are given the same programme completion dates for all parts of their qualification
- the majority of learners make insufficient progress in developing their functional skills; English and mathematics learning materials are introduced too late into the programme, trainers do not correct grammar errors to improve the standard of learners' work
- initial information, advice and guidance do not ensure that all learners have a sufficiently well-developed understanding of their training programme; not all learners receive an effective induction
- trainers do not promote equality and diversity to a good standard; for example, during progress reviews, trainers do not encourage learners to think more deeply about the wider aspects of diversity.

#### **In warehousing and distribution the provider has the following strengths:**

- learners quickly develop competency in driving goods vehicles, they are able to plan their route and timings for the collection of refuse and waste materials in a fuel efficient manner
- trainers have good industry knowledge and use this well when delivering learning sessions; they use coaching skills effectively to improve learners' knowledge, for example when teaching the skills needed to complete daily vehicle defect checks
- learners receive good job-related training; the use of 'toolbox' talks are particularly effective in developing their understanding of health and safety, for example they are able to anticipate potential road hazards when loading and unloading refuse vehicles on busy public roads
- trainers use technology well to promote learning and develop learners' skills, and trainers make good use of photographic evidence of learners' vehicle operating skills; learners make good use of an 'app' on their mobile phones to access appropriate interactive learning materials on hazard perception

- success rates are slowly improving; provider data for the current year indicate that more learners are now achieving their qualifications, in line with other similar providers.

## Administration

Requires improvement

## Apprenticeships

### Teaching, learning and assessment in administration require improvement because:

- too few learners complete their course within the expected time, with too many learners making slow progress; insufficient learning or assessment activity in the first few months of the course adversely impacts upon learners' progress
- initial assessment requires improvement as not all learners complete initial screening in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) which is essential in an office environment; trainers use generic lesson plans that fail to meet the individual needs of learners
- more able learners are not encouraged to work towards ambitious targets; too few learners are encouraged to study for a functional skill at a level above the requirements of their framework; a few intermediate learners, who are capable of working towards an advanced level qualification in administration, are not doing so
- learner reviews are poor and often not fully completed; trainers do not set specific targets or monitor learners in sufficient detail to ensure they make good progress
- too many learners have a weak understanding of equality and diversity; it is appropriately covered at induction, but not sufficiently reinforced by trainers in subsequent visits or during reviews.

### In administration the provider has the following strengths:

- learners make good progress in developing occupational and vocational skills; they develop increased levels of confidence and undertake more responsible administrative roles at work, becoming more self-reliant when working with colleagues
- learners develop increased skills in English and ensure that correct spelling and grammar are used in written work such as letters, invoices and in emails; learners also make good progress in developing their mathematical skills, for example in advising customers on volume capacities when ordering waste skips
- learners develop their ICT skills and receive additional bespoke training beyond that expected of the apprenticeship, such as using specialist accounting and customer management software; this enables them to become more employable and progress in the workplace
- trainers have very good occupational knowledge which they use to good effect to illustrate key learning points and extend learners' knowledge based on their professional practice; they are very supportive and are readily contactable by phone or email
- all offices operate a rigorous health and safety regime and learners demonstrate a good understanding of safe working practices; a few learners have received additional training as fire marshals or first aiders.

## The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement as the quality of provision has not improved since the previous inspection. Board members are ambitious and actively champion the benefits of the apprenticeship programme across Veolia. They rightly acknowledge that a company restructure undertaken following the previous inspection has not yet resulted in the improvements required of the apprenticeship programme.

- Performance management is good. The managing director has good informal arrangements to meet all employees bi-annually to discuss strengths and areas for improvement. Clear, aspirational strategic targets set as part of the annual business plan ensure that employees' contribution to the achievement of Veolia's business priorities are well understood and managed effectively.
- Arrangements to monitor and improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. Since the previous inspection, trainers have received some external support to improve their skills in providing effective off-the-job training, but this has not yet brought about improvements across all programmes.
- The system for observing teaching and learning is not yet effective in promoting high standards; for example, it does not focus enough on learning over time. Managers do not have clear guidance on when a trainer needs to be re-observed following an observation that was less than good; the process is not accurate enough to inform staff appraisals.
- Managers work effectively with subcontractors to ensure learners receive good training. Managers hold subcontractors to good account through detailed service level agreements and visit them frequently to assess quality and monitor compliance with contracts. Outcomes for learners attending specialist engineering training delivered by these partners are very high.
- Existing quality improvement arrangements do not support robust self-assessment. A number of key areas for improvement, noted at the last inspection, have not been addressed. The views of apprentices and employers are collected and analysed; however, the self-assessment report is over generous in its evaluation and does not include sufficient information on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Partnership working is very strong. Senior managers work very effectively with a wide range of national and local networks, including collaborating with other employers to develop new apprenticeship standards for the industry through representation on trailblazers, Sector Skills Councils and local skills and education boards. Apprentices, pupils from local primary schools and other learners from a range of post-16 establishments benefit from access to a number of purpose-built education and visitor learning centres. Managers use these centres well to develop the skills of their own workforce, as well as to encourage young people's interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and possible career opportunities in the waste and recycling industry.
- Leaders promote a strong ethos of respect and inclusion across the organisation; managers and trainers ensure they treat learners with respect. However, managers do not routinely analyse data on the performance of different groups of learners, such as those over the age of 24 years compared with younger learners or differences in outcomes between male and female learners.
- The board of directors make good use of wider equality and diversity indicators, such as the makeup of their staff population, to ensure that the workforce is representative of local communities. Senior managers and board members are active in a range of national initiatives aimed at encouraging more women and under-represented groups into the waste and recycling industry.
- Safeguarding arrangements for learners require improvement. Appropriate policies and processes for safeguarding apprentices are in place, but not all managers fully understand the actions they need to take if a disclosure is made. Learners have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in their workplace and whilst online. Managers ensure that health and safety, particularly safe working practices at material recycling centres and waste transfer stations, are a high priority. All employees wear appropriate personal protective equipment and receive regular health and safety updates through 'toolbox' talks.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Veolia Environnement Development Centre Limited

<b>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</b>  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	<b>Overall</b>	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Outcomes for learners	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
The effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-

<b>Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Warehousing and distribution</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Administration</b>	<b>3</b>

## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Employer							
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16+							
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	771							
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Mr Roy Fairweather							
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	November 2013							
<b>Website address</b>	<a href="http://www.veolia.co.uk">www.veolia.co.uk</a>							
<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>								
<b>Main course or learning programme level</b>	<b>Level 1 or below</b>		<b>Level 2</b>		<b>Level 3</b>		<b>Level 4 and above</b>	
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	-	-	-	2	-	4	2	6
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	24	612	14	132	-	1		
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	2		18		20			
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>								
<b>Full-time</b>	-							
<b>Part-time</b>	-							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	-							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	-							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Stephenson College</li> <li>■ City College Norwich</li> <li>■ Central Sussex College</li> <li>■ Barnsley College</li> <li>■ St Helens College</li> <li>■ Havering College of Further and Higher Education</li> <li>■ Walsall College</li> <li>■ Barnfield College</li> <li>■ Chesterfield College</li> </ul>							



## Contextual information

Veolia Environnement UK encompasses the United Kingdom (UK) operations of the large international company, Veolia Environnement. In 2014, the four operating divisions of Veolia Environnement UK were merged into a single entity called One Veolia. Veolia Environnement UK employs 14,000 people providing waste and environmental services to industrial customers and local authorities throughout the UK. Since the previous inspection, the company has been awarded The Queen’s Award for Enterprise in Sustainable Development. Veolia contracts directly with the National Apprenticeship Service to provide apprenticeships for new recruits and as development opportunities for existing employees. Most learners are on apprenticeships in sustainable waste management, street cleansing, heavy goods vehicle driving, and business administration. Learning programmes are managed from a training centre in Wolverhampton and largely delivered in the workplace. Engineering apprenticeships are delivered by a range of further education colleges.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Victor Reid HMI

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

## What inspection judgements mean

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

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

[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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