

L.I.T.S. Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates

21–23 October 2015

Overall effectiveness**Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outcomes for learners

Apprenticeships

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Good

Good

Good

Good

Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Leaders and managers have successfully resolved the majority of areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.
- Learners build their confidence very well, adopt a very professional approach to their work and produce a good standard of work in their portfolios.
- On-the-job training is well planned; workplace mentors and experienced colleagues provide very effective coaching and supervision for learners.
- Training advisers draw on their industry experiences effectively to ensure learners make rapid progress and that their practical work is of the standard expected in employment.
- Employers value the training that learners receive highly because it increases learners' skill levels and improves the standard of service they provide for customers.
- Actions taken by managers and leaders have resulted in significant improvements in learners' achievements and in the proportion who complete within the planned timescales.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective, learners meticulously follow site-specific health and safety practices while at work and safeguarding practices protect learners well at all times.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because

- More-able learners do not always benefit from assessment and training to develop their skills in English and mathematics beyond the expected requirements of the apprenticeship.
- The self-assessment report does not include a broad enough range of evidence to support key judgements about the quality of provision, and in particular the quality of off-the-job training provided by partner colleges.
- Communications and quality assurance arrangements with a small number of partner colleges, which provide off-the-job-training, are weak, and as a result the training received by some learners does not fully meet their needs.

Full report

Information about the provider

- L.I.T.S. Limited (L.I.T.S.) was founded in 1981 and is based in Petts Wood, south-east London. Providing training on a national basis in the engineering and manufacturing technologies sector, L.I.T.S. offers specialist training to the engineering industry and currently has 25 apprentices aged 16 to 18 and 19 apprentices aged over 19. In addition 10 learners aged over 19 are on work-based learning programmes, based predominantly in London and the South East.
- In 2013 the Indices of Multiple Deprivation placed Bromley 208th out of 326 local authorities. Unemployment in the borough is much lower than both London and the national rate. The major employment sectors in the borough are professional, technical and administrative, and a higher proportion of residents work in each of these sectors than seen nationally. The proportion of adults in the borough with intermediate- and advanced-level qualifications is higher than nationally.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that managers and training advisers challenge and support more-able learners to develop their English and mathematical skills to levels above that required for their apprenticeship qualification to enhance their career prospects.
- Ensure that leaders and managers quickly develop and implement a detailed service-level agreement that clearly sets out L.I.T.S.' expectations about the quality of training for all of its learners whose off-the-job training takes place at partner colleges; ensure that partner colleges are held to good account through regular communications, and take robust and timely action where expectations about the quality of training provided are not being met.
- Ensure that judgements in the self-assessment report are more evaluative, report on the standards of teaching and learning provided by college partners and include the views of both learners and employers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

is good

- Since the previous inspection, 15 months ago, improved leadership and management have resulted in more learners achieving their apprenticeships. Internal communication is much improved and managers now give increasing priority to the development of learners' skills in English, mathematics and information and communications technology (ICT). Leaders and managers now meet regularly both formally and informally to share information, plan actions for improvement and develop the provision. Leaders now have high aspirations for learners and staff, and provide good support to help learners achieve their ambitions.
- Performance management is good. Leaders have strengthened the arrangements for observing and quality assuring the standard of assessments, and evaluating the effectiveness and quality of learner reviews carried out by training advisers. Assessment is now more accurate, detailed and frequent, while learning reviews ensure that learners are aware of their progress to date, what they do well, and what they could do better. Line managers use regular monthly one-to-one meetings well to review training advisers' performance. Managers identify underperformance quickly and act swiftly to bring about improvement.
- Managers have implemented a successful approach to staff development that has led to training advisers being more confident in supporting and helping learners to make good progress and in developing their knowledge of fundamental British values. For example, all staff attended a two-day training event that focused on assessment quality and standards, essential skills including English, mathematics and ICT, the sharing of good practice and the completion of an online 'Prevent' duty training course.
- Quality assurance arrangements are good. Self-assessment provides a broadly accurate picture of the quality of the provision. The self-assessment report is detailed and staff make a good contribution to its judgements. However, the quality of off-the-job training provided by partner colleges is not evaluated sufficiently and leaders and managers do not make enough use of feedback from employers and learners to contribute to key judgements. Quality improvement planning is clear and relevant, and actions taken are monitored well by leaders and managers. Leaders have made good progress in securing rapid improvement against most of the key areas of improvement identified at the previous inspection. However, less progress has been made in the application of quality assurance arrangements for all stages of learning, particularly for off-the-job training provided by partner colleges. Managers acknowledge this is an area of improvement.
- Managers have successfully developed a specialist engineering curriculum that meets the need of learners and of the engineering and lift industry well. For example, the majority of learners complete an industry approved health and safety qualification in either lifts or escalators, a minority complete additional units from the performing engineering operations qualification and a small minority work towards a higher level technical certificate. As a result of managers' close involvement with the Lift and Escalator Industry Association (LEIA) and training advisers' involvement in contributing towards the development of new trailblazer occupational standards, managers and staff have a good level of understanding of the needs of the industry. However, managers have too little understanding of the local skills priorities, particularly those aligned to the local enterprise partnership covering the London Region.
- Managers and staff promote equality and diversity well to learners. The overall culture is one of tolerance and inclusion. Learners' understanding of, and respect for, the differences in society and within their workplace are promoted well by training advisers at induction, during visits to the workplace and while in training, through an informative safeguarding, equality and diversity self-study booklet. Learners are respectful to each other and their work colleagues in a range of settings. Appropriate policies and procedures ensure that there is zero tolerance of bullying, harassment, discrimination and unfair treatment; as a result learners and staff are suitably protected.
- **The governance of the provider**
 - The managing director has successfully established an open and collaborative culture across the organisation that has resulted in a rapid improvement in both the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and in learners' achievements.
 - As a result of the very good partnership arrangements with key engineering employers and through the close links with the LEIA, the managing director has ensured that L.I.T.S. responds very well to meet the training needs of the sector.
 - Leaders recognise that while business and strategic planning supports the company's day-to-day operations, further work is required to improve the use of management information systems to monitor and review operational and strategic performance against company targets.

■ The arrangements for safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Appropriate policies are in place covering safer recruitment practices. The single central register is up to date and contains appropriate information including the accurate recording of all Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks carried out. Incidents of safeguarding are rare but where a disclosure has been made, the matter is swiftly and carefully investigated by the trained and experienced safeguarding officers. The designated safeguarding officer maintains suitable links with external agencies including the local safeguarding children boards.
- Training advisers provide learners with an effective induction that raises their awareness of safeguarding, including bullying and harassment, and as a result learners say they feel safe and know how to report any concerns they may have. However, training advisers do not develop learners' understanding of e-safety beyond that required for employment. Learners have a clear understanding of safe practices at work; employers and training advisers rigorously enforce the strict adherence to 'permits to work' when working on lifts and escalators.
- Leaders and managers have acted swiftly in introducing an appropriately detailed anti-radicalisation policy that ensures learners are well protected from the dangers associated with terrorism, extremism and radicalisation. All staff have recently completed a range of approved 'Prevent' duty training courses to ensure they have the confidence to discuss the importance of fundamental British values with learners, and that they are alert to any changes in behaviour that may give early cause for concern.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

is good

- Learners receive very effective on-the-job training from experienced workplace mentors and colleagues at their employers. Mentors and colleagues explain tasks very clearly and closely supervise the quality of learners' work, providing clear feedback on how they can improve. Employers work well with L.I.T.S. staff to plan on-the-job learning, ensuring learners work in a variety of departments to gain the relevant skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of the qualification.
- The majority of partner colleges provide well-planned good-quality teaching. However, learners at a minority of partner colleges receive insufficiently well-planned, and occasionally ineffective, teaching due to shortfalls in available teachers. Employers and L.I.T.S. staff engage with the relevant colleges to try and resolve these issues, but with only partial success to date.
- Training advisers provide good coaching and support at regular, well-planned visits, and ensure all learners make at least the expected progress. Assessment is thorough and learners produce plenty of good-quality portfolio evidence to demonstrate their competence. Training advisers use observations and discussions well to enable assessment decisions. Learners receive good verbal feedback that encourages and motivates them well, including helpful and informative guidance on how they can improve the standard of their work further. However, a few learners struggle to complete the large amount of written work that training advisers request, and written feedback is sometimes too brief and lacks enough detail to help learners do better.
- Learners receive regular reviews of their progress that include comprehensive feedback from their employers. Employers participate in planned reviews well to ensure they understand any issues that may affect learners' progress and identify where, and how they can assist their learners to develop wider technical skills. Training advisers set effective short-, medium- and long-term targets that are well understood by learners. However, a small minority of planned actions are too generic and lack specific detail to ensure learners know what they need to do.
- Initial information, advice and guidance are effective in ensuring that learners are placed on suitable courses. L.I.T.S. staff support employers in identifying an appropriate partner college for off-the-job training.
- Training advisers promote learners' understanding of equality and diversity well, using discussions based on scenarios to explore their awareness of issues such as how to encourage more applicants from underrepresented groups into engineering. Learners benefit from an informative safeguarding and equality and diversity self-study guide that contains useful information about the practical application of equality legislation in their everyday work. For example, learners need to be aware of the accessibility requirements for users with restricted visibility or limited mobility when installing and positioning lift controls.
- Learners receive good support from training advisers to improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, initial assessment does not ensure that learners' weaker areas of English and mathematics are accurately identified, and staff do not plan to further develop these skills, particularly for those learners exempt from functional skills tests.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

- Learners make very good progress in the development of their job skills, whether working in lift engineering or general engineering maintenance. They demonstrate a good professional approach to learning and work.
- Learners enjoy their apprenticeships, and are very motivated and committed to learning and progressing in their job roles and careers. Learners attend well, show high standards of behaviour at work and become valued employees.
- Current learners are making at least the expected progress in their qualifications. Those attending college successfully achieve their vocational diplomas on time and all are on target for their vocational qualification. However, for most learners there is no clear plan to ensure they develop the high level of numeracy, language and punctuation skills required for progression into more demanding roles.
- Learners produce a good standard of work, both in their job roles and in their portfolio work. They produce very good technical reports on a wide variety of job tasks, supported by their drawings and other evidence that demonstrates their knowledge very well. They present their portfolios of work well, and many value this opportunity to build a very detailed record of their competence in various job tasks to use for future reference, and to show to any future employers.
- Due to the good planning of on-the-job training, learners become much more confident, both personally and in their job roles. They take the opportunities to work in different departments and with different experienced colleagues to broaden their skills and knowledge. As they gain more experience, they take on more responsibility, but always under the close supervision of more senior staff to ensure work is completed to an appropriate standard. Learners develop good teamwork skills and build good working relationships with colleagues.
- Learners feel very safe at work and develop a good understanding of safe working practices. Employers have robust health and safety policies, carry out regular reviews of safety that involve employees, and ensure all learners wear appropriate personal protective equipment as required. Learners have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and harassment and know what to do should they have any concerns. Training advisers have very recently started to develop learners' understanding of fundamental British values and to raise their awareness of how cultural values and differences must be respected and considered in their workplaces.
- Although learners receive some information regarding the dangers of using electronic media, arrangements to develop their understanding of e-safety including cyber bullying, online grooming and internet fraud are less well developed and require improvement.
- Training advisers promote learners' general understanding of their rights and responsibilities very effectively. However, a small minority of learners are unsure of the arrangements for overtime working, including whether they will be paid or be given time off in lieu.

Outcomes for learners

are good

- The majority of learners make at least the progress expected given their existing skills and qualifications. All learners gain relevant and valuable personal and social skills that help them to grow in confidence and deal effectively with their colleagues and the clients with whom they work.
- L.I.T.S.'s own data for 2014/15 indicate that the proportion of advanced apprentices who now successfully achieve their apprenticeship, and within the planned time, has risen significantly and is now high. Although achievements for the few adult learners on work-based programmes have also improved they still require improvement. However, L.I.T.S. no longer offers these programmes to new learners.
- Learners develop good vocational skills and knowledge through very effective planning of on-the-job training and as a result they make good progress, become more able to evaluate their own performance accurately, and are aware of how they can improve the quality of their work and their working practices. Learners show excellent behaviour and respect their peers, customers, employers and training advisers. Learners develop appropriate skills in English, mathematics and ICT. In most cases, training advisers provide good support that helps learners who need to gain intermediate-level qualifications in English and mathematics to develop their skills and confidence. However, training advisers do not routinely plan to develop these skills further for those learners who are exempt from functional skills tests due to their existing qualifications.

- All advanced apprentices follow an individual training programme that meets their needs and aspirations and prepares them well for employment. Almost all learners gain permanent employment including increases in pay and levels of responsibility. A small minority of learners progress on to higher levels of learning, such as a higher national certificate in engineering, and a few secure early promotion.
- No significant differences exist between the achievements of different groups of learners.

Provider details

| | |
|---|--|
| Type of provider | Independent learning provider |
| Age range of learners | 16+ |
| Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year | 96 |
| Principal/CEO | Mr William Orr, Managing Director |
| Website address | www.lits.org.uk |

Provider information at the time of the inspection

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|----------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| Main course or learning programme level Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships) Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age Number of traineeships Number of learners aged 14-16 Funding received from At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors: | Level 1 or below | | Level 2 | | Level 3 | | Level 4 and above | |
| | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ |
| | - | - | - | - | - | 10 | - | - |
| | Intermediate | | Advanced | | Higher | | | |
| | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | | |
| | - | - | 25 | | 19 | | - | - |
| | 16-19 | | 19+ | | Total | | | |
| | - | | - | | - | | | |
| Skills Funding Agency (SFA) ■ No subcontracted provision | | | | | | | | |

Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Victor Reid, lead inspector

Gary Adkins

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the quality manager, as nominee, and carried out the inspection at short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of students and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk



Employer View is a new website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too.

To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2015

