

15–18 March 2016**Overall effectiveness****Inadequate**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for learners	Inadequate
Adult learning programmes	Inadequate
Apprenticeships	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings**This is an inadequate provider**

- Safeguarding arrangements to ensure that all learners are protected and safe are ineffective.
- Leaders have not utilised quality assurance processes to identify accurately the decline in the quality of the provision.
- Action planning is weak and has not brought about the desired improvements in outcomes for learners.
- Leaders and managers hold low aspirations for their learners which results in insufficient improvement of their English and mathematics skills.
- TIR's systems to provide information on learners' achievements are not fit for purpose and fail to inform managerial decisions.
- Planning of the curriculum has been ineffective and the learning programmes do not meet the contractual requirements.
- Leaders and managers do not select and manage their sub-contractors rigorously to ensure that they deliver good-quality learning on their behalf.
- Arrangements for governance to support and hold senior managers to account are ineffective.
- TIR has insufficient managerial capacity to secure the adequate functioning and improvement of learning programmes.
- The development of learners' understanding of what equality and diversity mean when living in a modern society is insufficient.
- Not enough learners gain their qualifications and increase their skills because much of the teaching, learning and assessment they experience is poor.
- Attendance and punctuality are poor and this does not support the development of a good work ethic by adult employability learners.

The provider has the following strengths

- Adult unemployed learners who attend regularly are well motivated and enjoy their learning.
- Apprentices receive valuable training from their employers and gain useful skills.

Full report

Information about the provider

- TIR Training Services Limited (TIR) is a subsidiary of DEFLOG VQ Trust Limited, which is a registered educational charitable trust set up to offer transportation and logistics qualifications to the Armed Forces. TIR has been involved in work-based learning for almost 10 years and it began delivering adult skills employability programmes in 2013.
- A chief executive holds overall responsibility for TIR. He reports to a board of trustees and is supported by the recently appointed managing director and training manager. At the time of the inspection, there were 107 adult learners undertaking employability programmes and 140 apprentices. TIR sub-contracts part of the provision across both programmes to two sub-contractors. Learners are based in different regions of the country, where the unemployment rates vary. Forty-seven of its apprentices are based in Germany, at Ministry of Defence facilities.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers urgently need to put in place robust arrangements for identifying vulnerable learners across the provision, and for checking that the safeguarding procedures held by sub-contractors are effective to protect all learners. Staff and managers at all levels should ensure that they have received up-to-date training to support them appropriately to promote safeguarding to all sub-contractors.
- Establish suitable arrangements for governance that support the strategic development of the provision and offer sufficient challenge to TIR's leaders to improve rapidly.
- Formalise a clear and agreed development strategy for TIR, reinstating the missing managerial functions ensuring that the provision can function well and focus on improving.
- Improve the quality assurance functions across all provision, including that of the sub-contractors, to ensure that managers at TIR can monitor the effectiveness of the learning programmes delivered.
- Leaders and managers need to evaluate the provision through their self-assessment processes in order to identify accurately the poor performance areas. Ensure that areas for improvement are promptly identified and that action plans challenge staff at all levels to improve.
- Set up a suitable management information system and train staff on how to use it to access timely information that allows for planning and monitoring of learners' progress and achievements, including attendance and punctuality.
- Create a comprehensive action plan to develop TIR's duty to respond to the government's 'Prevent' duty. Ensure that staff receive sufficient training to allow them to plan confidently for the promotion of fundamental British values, and to raise awareness of the dangers of extremist behaviour in their learning activities.
- Ensure that staff use learning activities such as progress reviews to develop well learners' knowledge and understanding of what equality and diversity mean in a modern society.
- Develop links with employers to ensure that all adult learners on employability courses have the appropriate opportunities to develop their employability skills in a work setting.
- Use the existing contractual guidance on apprenticeship programmes to plan and resource apprenticeship provision to meet the requirements for meeting learners' development needs more effectively.
- Increase the support for apprentices, including the frequency of workplace assessments and the better use of online portfolios, so that they make at least expected progress and achieve their qualifications.
- Ensure that the progress made by apprentices is regularly reviewed, setting targets that learners can understand and that will support them to make faster progress with their qualification.
- Use the information obtained on adult learners' starting points to plan programmes to meet individual needs including those in English, mathematics and employability skills.
- Review the arrangements for learners to receive ongoing information, advice and guidance to ensure that learners across both programmes receive adequate information on how to pursue further developments in their careers and employment, fulfilling their aspirations.
- Plan and encourage learners to improve their English and mathematics skills further by enrolling them in a higher-level programme than the one they enter at or the one required by their qualification.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers at TIR have failed to identify accurately the progressive decline in learners' achievements and the deterioration of the quality of the provision delivered.
- Leaders and managers have not been sufficiently ambitious and challenging when setting up or reviewing TIR's learning programmes. As a consequence, leaders and managers have not recognised that the adult employability and apprenticeship programmes do not meet the set requirements nor their intended learning outcomes.
- The lack of employer links has impeded adult unemployed learners accessing work-related activities to prepare them well for rejoining the world of work. The apprenticeship programme offers little additional skill and knowledge development, over and above the competences that learners already demonstrate by doing their current job, and learners are not encouraged and supported to improve their existing English and mathematics skills.
- The use and analysis of data to monitor the effectiveness of the provision are poor. Managers are not able to interpret data with regards to the achievement of qualifications by learners, and therefore do not utilise this information to base their managerial decisions on. Leaders and managers have not developed their data systems to gather the appropriate information to monitor all elements of the apprenticeship programme. Similarly, aspects such as attendance or punctuality are not recorded and analysed properly to identify those learners whose attendance and timekeeping are poor.
- Quality assurance arrangements are insufficiently robust to evaluate the provision. Teaching, learning and assessment observations are infrequent and insufficiently rigorous. The provision has not been self-assessed for over a year. Assessors do not have sufficient opportunities to discuss and share good practice to ensure that the quality of their work improves and reaches a high standard.
- Quality improvement planning is weak and has not led to an improvement in outcomes for learners. The targets set for improving each programme are insufficiently specific and the actions to achieve them are not challenging enough. As a consequence, success rates have continued to decline.
- The provider's recent loss of its main contract has led to a substantial reduction of senior managers in the provision culminating in a decimated management team, and this has further curtailed the provider's capacity to manage the provision well. Key tasks such as contract management and quality assurance have not been carried out in the last seven months. There is no strategy to develop the provision and the provider's capacity to improve is poor.
- The management of the sub-contractors is inadequate. The provider has not placed sufficient strategic importance on ensuring that they develop sub-contracting partnerships with at least good-quality learning providers. Leaders and managers have failed to carry out the necessary checks and to set clear performance expectations before commencing a contract with other providers. As a consequence, and in the last few years, TIR has sub-contracted with inadequate and less than good providers. The provider does not exercise enough scrutiny on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment delivered by its sub-contractors.
- **The governance of the provider**
 - Governance arrangements are ineffective. With a focus on financial matters and contractual compliance, the governance applied by the board of trustees has failed to pose sufficient challenge to TIR to bring about improvement in the learning programmes.
 - Additionally, and since the loss of TIR's main contract, trustees have not supported the provision well to reinstate the critical managerial functions that are now missing and to define TIR's objectives. As a consequence, the provision has continued deteriorating without an agreed development plan for the future.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective**
 - TIR has relinquished its safeguarding accountability towards the learners based at its sub-contractors. It has not carried out a sufficiently robust risk assessment and applied due diligence rigorously with regards to the safeguarding procedures its sub-contractors have.
 - Furthermore, leaders and managers have failed to act and seek assurances that all its learners are safe, after the company one of its sub-contractors operates under was recently judged by Ofsted as not having effective safeguarding arrangements in place.

- Although learners say they feel safe, the identification of possible vulnerable learners such as the long-term unemployed and the learners based in the army facilities in Germany is insufficient to ensure that these learners are protected well.
- Action planning to respond to the government's 'Prevent' duty has not yet been addressed, and staff and most learners do not have a basic understanding of what is meant by fundamental British values.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- TIR does not plan teaching, learning and assessment adequately to meet the needs of all learners. There is too much variability in the quality of TIR's learning programmes and learners do not produce a consistently good standard of work across the programmes. In a sub-contracted provision based abroad, the vast majority of apprentices make very slow progress. In contrast, apprentices in sub-contracted provision in the care sector experience effective learning with most of them progressing as expected.
- TIR fails to provide effective teaching and assessment to learners it supports directly and many progress too slowly. The majority of apprentices receive too little support in the workplace from TIR. Adult learners' starting points are not accurately assessed by staff and many leave without making significant progress in their learning.
- TIR's adult learning and apprenticeship programmes fail to meet their contractual requirements. Adult learners on employability programmes have too few learning opportunities to develop their employability skills further and too few progress into employment or further training. Apprentices receive insufficient teaching and learning to develop their knowledge and skills further.
- TIR does not place sufficient emphasis on teaching; instead, staff focus mostly on assessing learners' existing competence. Learning resources to help learners gain high-quality skills and knowledge at TIR are very limited. Learners rely too heavily on internet-produced analysis to extend their learning and are not developing their research and analytical skills.
- Assessors do not use assessment effectively to secure learners' good progress. TIR's staff do not use the online facility available to them and the sub-contractors to encourage learners to submit completed work or to provide helpful feedback to them. Managers and staff do not meet often enough to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their assessment practice and to plan improvements.
- Learners are better supported by their trainers in developing their English and mathematics knowledge and skills so that they can pass their tests and achieve their functional skills qualifications. Those undertaking information and communication technology do not benefit from similarly good support. Learners who have already attained appropriate English and mathematics qualifications are not encouraged to continue their learning in these subjects.
- Apprentices in business administration, warehousing and storage benefit from good training from their employers and gain useful skills. TIR staff do not integrate this valuable learning into the apprenticeship programmes and do not keep employers sufficiently informed about learners' progress and achievements.
- Staff promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity varies in quality considerably, and this is reflected in the inconsistent levels of learners' knowledge. During apprentices' progress reviews, staff sometimes pose questions to them which marginally reinforce their learning. Learners in one sub-contracted provision in the care sector have a higher level of understanding of these subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is inadequate

- Attendance of learners on adult employability courses, aimed at improving their personal skills and attributes for securing employment, is too variable and, frequently, too low.
- Learners' attitudes towards punctuality are too casual. The consequence is that they do not attend regularly enough and improve attitudes for gaining employment. The majority of adult learners take longer than they should to complete their courses, further delaying their re-entry into employment.
- Learners experience only small gains in their skill development. Apprentices do not further develop their occupational and professional skills above their existing competence. Adult learners do not increase their employability chances by enhancing their personal and vocational attributes such as communicating with colleagues and customers.

- Learners do not improve their skills and understanding in English and mathematics sufficiently during their programmes. Learners who have already achieved the minimum level of English and mathematics required by their programme do not engage in improving these skills further.
- Learners receive comprehensive information, advice and guidance at the start of their programme. However, they do not have the opportunity to revisit their aspirations. Formal arrangements do not exist for learners to continue accessing guidance and support throughout the programme to help them to progress with their careers or to enter employment.
- Learners do not acquire a good understanding of equality and diversity, and are not sufficiently aware of the significance of fundamental British values to their community.
- Tutors and assessors create a harmonious and respectful atmosphere in which learners show courtesy to one another, learning and working well together.
- Learners are aware of how to keep themselves safe and they develop confidence and self-esteem in the absence of bullying and other disrespectful behaviours in their learning sessions.

Outcomes for learners

are inadequate

- The proportion of learners gaining their qualifications has been in decline since the previous inspection and, more specifically, has been too low for the last three years. Over this time, the proportion of learners who have achieved their qualifications has been too far below the national rates.
- Too few apprentices complete their programmes and gain their apprenticeship qualification. In particular, the number of apprentices gaining their qualification within the planned timescales is also low.
- Not enough adult learners taking qualifications in information and communication technology are successful in gaining their qualifications. As a consequence, they do not develop the technology skills that many employers expect them to have.
- The progress learners make on their courses is often too slow and it is not yet possible to assess the effectiveness of recently introduced measures to monitor this.
- The work of adult learners and apprentices is not of a high enough standard overall. They learn how to pass assessments but they do not develop their knowledge beyond the requirements of the qualification.
- Tutors and assessors have an understanding of what some individual learners do after completing their courses but managers do not track destinations systematically when they complete or leave. As a result, they are not able to provide suitable after-course help or advice.
- Too few learners on adult skills courses obtain a job or make good progress into further learning, employment or training.
- Learners taking functional skills in English and mathematics are more successful and they achieve pass rates above national rates. However, learners do not receive sufficient challenge to improve these skills at a higher level than that they are already working at.
- The provider has not identified any gaps in the performance of the smaller groups of learners, such as females, learners with disabilities or those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Types of provision

Adult learning programmes

are inadequate

- At the time of the inspection there were 107 adults enrolled on employability, warehousing and storage, business administration and law courses.
- The adult learning provision does not meet the local and national priorities to help unemployed adults back into work. Managers have not secured effective partnership arrangements with employers in the community to offer work-related experiences to its adult learners to enhance their employment chances.
- Tutors do not use the information from the assessments carried out at the introductory stage of the programme to identify the starting points of learners to plan learning adequately. Learning targets focus solely on meeting the qualification criteria and these targets do not place sufficient emphasis on how learners can develop personal and social skills. Furthermore, tutors do not monitor the progress learners make sufficiently well. As a result, learners do not make the expected progress.

- Tutors do not plan how to support learners to overcome their barriers to employment and, as a result, learners do not develop their employability skills well enough. Attendance and punctuality to learning sessions are too low overall. Tutors do not question the reasons why learners are late and this does not reinforce with learners that attendance is an essential employability attribute.
- Learners do not have enough opportunities to develop the necessary English and mathematics functional skills relevant to the workplace. Tutors' feedback on marked work does not always identify spelling and other errors in practice and preparation work, and learners are not encouraged to make corrections. As a result, work on curriculum vitae contains errors and this jeopardises learners' chances of making a professional impression on prospective employers.
- The majority of tutors do not check whether learners understand the information presented to them. This is particularly prevalent in classes where learners have a wide range of levels of ability. For instance, in a mathematics session when teaching a formula to calculate the area of a circle, the tutor moved on too quickly and the learners were given insufficient time to confirm their understanding. Consequently, least-able learners do not learn as well as expected.
- Learners receive positive encouragement from tutors and this enables them to participate actively and with interest. They are well motivated and enjoy their learning, and their standards of behaviour are good. They demonstrate respect for their tutors and peers and have a good understanding of how to stay safe. Tutors do not plan how to promote equality and diversity and, as a result, learners do not have a good awareness of what modern life in a diverse Britain means.

Apprenticeships

are inadequate

- The large majority of the current 140 apprentices are making insufficient progress towards the completion of their programmes, both within the planned timescales and overall.
- Employer involvement in the planning of learning is insufficient. Assessors and employers do not communicate well enough with regard to the integration of learning by apprentices in the workplace and the other limited learning taking place across their apprenticeship.
- Trainers and assessors focus almost entirely on assessing and accrediting learners' existing skills. This does not support learners to increase their knowledge and skills so that they can start planning their future progression. TIR is failing to provide enough off-the-job training and learning opportunities which enable apprentices to develop new skills and expertise which complement and enhance their workplace learning. Apprentices do not have access to a sufficient range of learning resources.
- Assessment practice that leads to learners making good progress is weak. In too many cases, learners are not meeting with their assessors with enough frequency, with examples of apprentices not receiving visits for several months. Most apprentices do not have access to their electronic portfolios, which their trainers manage and maintain. As a consequence, learners are not sufficiently clear about the work and assessments they need to carry out in order to complete within the planned time frame. The feedback that apprentices receive on their assessed work is minimal and does not help them to improve their work.
- Apprentices do not all benefit from regular and useful reviews of their progress. The targets that learners are working towards are not sufficiently clear to help them to progress well. The planned reinforcement of equality and diversity at their progress reviews does not always take place and, consequently, learners are not developing their understanding of key issues in these areas sufficiently well.
- Learners who are exempted from taking English and mathematics functional skills do not have planned opportunities to develop these skills further or at higher levels. TIR identifies learners' starting points in English and mathematics appropriately and provides adequate support for learners who still need to gain qualifications in functional skills. Apprentices aged 24 and over particularly value their achievement of these qualifications.
- Other than the apprentices in the Armed Forces, learners are not sufficiently clear about the prevention of extremism and the promotion of fundamental British values. The application and reinforcement of health and safety are thorough. Apprentices feel safe in their workplaces and are clear how to report any concerns should the need arise.
- The development of learners' employability skills in their workplaces is good; this enables apprentices to increase the positive contributions that they are able to make to the businesses where they work. For example, apprentices in warehousing and storage develop their levels of expertise in driving forklift trucks and in safely handling and loading goods.

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16-18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	1,522
Principal/CEO	Paul Downey
Website address	www.tirtraining.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	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	0	87	0	20	0	0	0	0
	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	1	24	4	101	0	10		
	16-19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
	n/a							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
	<div><div></div> Pearson TQ</div> <div><div></div> Woodspeen Training</div>							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main sub-contractors:								

Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Maria Navarro, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Peter Green	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stella Owen	Ofsted Inspector
Steven Sharpe	Ofsted Inspector
Kathleen Tyler	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the managing director, as nominee. 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 learners 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.

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