

Charnwood Training Consultants

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Background information

Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Hospitality and catering.

Description of the provider

1. Charnwood Training Consultants (CTC) is based in Nottingham and was established in 1998. It is owned and managed by two partners and has 19 employees. It provides commercial and government funded work-based learning and work force development training within the hospitality and catering industry. Nottinghamshire is the lead Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for the government-funded contract, which makes up approximately 49% of the provider's training. CTC operates across six counties: Cumbria, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Wiltshire and Suffolk. Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire have the highest numbers of CTC learners, at 62% and 14% respectively. The largest employer of CTC learners is Center Parcs, an international leisure operator which has sites in Wiltshire, Cumbria, Suffolk and Nottinghamshire. CTC is part of the Nottinghamshire Training Network (NTN) for Train to Gain (Train to Gain) government-funded provision (previously the Aspire pilot) and offers hospitality and catering awards.
2. Recruitment to all programmes is mainly through employers, who have already recruited their own staff. CTC works with 76 employers in 116 different premises. Induction to CTC programmes takes place over two visits to employers' premises. CTC have 288 learners on work-based learning (WBL) and Train to Gain programmes, of whom 7% have additional learning needs and 11% have a disability. There are 81 advanced apprentices, 151 apprentices, 4 Aspire learners and 52 learners on Train to Gain programmes. On government-funded programmes, 64% of learners are female and 36% male; 9% are from minority ethnic groups.
3. CTC delivers nationally recognised qualifications, apprenticeships, advanced apprenticeships, national vocational qualifications (NVQs) levels 2 and 3, 14 to 19 diplomas and bespoke training in hospitality and catering and key skills awards. All learners are employed full time, mostly in pubs, bars and restaurants. CTC learning and assessment are delivered in their workplaces. The dominant NVQ being taken is in food and drink at Level 2 with 159 learners (55%), while a further 85 learners (30%) are taking the NVQ Level 3 in hospitality supervision. NVQs in each of the following skills have less than 20 learners on each programme: bar service, customer service, food processing and cooking, multi-skilled hospitality and professional cookery.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Sector subject area

Hospitality and catering	Good: Grade 2
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. Achievement and standards, the quality of provision and leadership and management are good. Provision in hospitality and catering is good. Equality of opportunity and social inclusion are good.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

5. CTC has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements. Since it was last inspected, learners' success rates have improved significantly, are high and are well above national averages in 2006/07. Levels of support for learners, the use of resources to support learning and the promotion of equality of opportunity are good. Extensive external links support programme development well. CTC makes good use of the self-assessment process and quality improvement plan to support improvements, although there is insufficient monitoring of some aspects of learners' programmes.
6. The self-assessment process is thorough and appropriately involves staff and learners. The self-assessment report is detailed and accurate. It is a useful working document and supports quality improvement well. Data is used well to support judgements. Inspectors agree with all the grades in the self-assessment process.

Key strengths

- High success rates in 2006-07.
- Particularly effective resources to support learning.
- Good use of qualifications to meet learner and employer needs.
- Good individual learner support.
- Good strategic leadership and management.
- Extensive and productive networking and external links.
- Good promotion of equal opportunities with learners.

Key areas for improvement

- The insufficient management of their own NVQ portfolios by learners.
- The insufficient monitoring of some aspects of learners' programmes.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

7. There are high success rates on all programmes in 2006/07. There has been continuous improvement since 2003/04 in overall success rates on both advanced apprenticeship and apprenticeship programmes. Advanced apprentices' overall success rate in-year is at 62%. Recruitment to this programme has much increased, including greater progression from the CTC apprenticeship programme. Since 2003/04, apprentices at Level 2 have quadrupled in numbers and success rates have improved. In particular, success rates in NVQ Level 2 in food and drink service have increased from 25% to 67% and in NVQ Level 2 in hospitality quick service from 50% to 83%, now significantly above the national success rates. Learners on the new Train to Gain programme in 2006/07 have achieved an 86% success rate.
8. Learners have a good pace of progress on-programme. Many, especially at Level 2, are ahead of their target dates by some two to four months. Good customer service skills are achieved by many learners and skills overall are satisfactory. Standards of learners' work in their portfolios are satisfactory and include a good and diverse range of evidence. There is good use of photographic evidence, witness testimony and a good and wide range of work-based evidence. Good use is made of work-based projects to achieve key skills awards. Achievement of additional qualifications is good. CTC recognises and celebrates learners' achievements by awarding certificates for completion of key skills and additional qualifications, improving their motivation to learn.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

9. There are particularly effective learning resources provided by CTC. The CTC training officers/assessors have good, up-to-date hospitality experience and knowledge and use this well in communicating effectively with learners and employers. This is recognised within the self-assessment report. They use good portable information and communication technology (ICT) equipment when visiting their learners at work. Action plans are devised and printed and learners' progress is recorded and sent on-line to the CTC Nottingham head office. Learners use a good range of ICT learning materials, including the loan of tablet computers and remote internet access (3G) cards to access CTC materials on-line. Creative learning packages on the computers enable learners to work through them at their own pace and achieve additional qualifications. An additional benefit to learners by doing this is their improved ICT skills, such as the use of spreadsheets.
10. Good use is made of photographic records and of voice recorders to store evidence for assessment in learners' portfolios. Learners understand well the flow-diagram which tracks their progress. The 'pint pot', most appropriate for this industry, is filled in as the learner progresses and gives a good visual record of progress. CTC provides an effective glossary of key skills terms, which learners keep in their portfolios. This is particularly effective at identifying new terminology, as it uses both the written word and illustration, so supporting differing learning styles. The CTC learning materials are clear, relevant to NVQ and also include useful internet sites, such as professional hospitality organisations.

11. There is good use of qualifications to meet employer and learner needs. CTC offer a wide range of hospitality and catering NVQs enabling learners and their employers to match their choice of NVQ and optional units to job roles and career progression. In addition, learners are issued with vouchers to exchange for additional qualifications provided by CTC's commercial training. The awards include topics previously included in apprenticeship technical certificates. Awards are highly relevant to current topics in the hospitality industry, for example, responsible alcohol retailing and food safety. In the better employers, learners also benefit from in-house training programmes, which complement their NVQs.
12. Learners receive good individual support. They receive good pre-entry advice and guidance to ensure the appropriate programme is selected. Induction is well planned and managed and takes place over a period of time to promote learner understanding. The initial assessment process indicates any additional learning support required and if a further diagnostic assessment is required. Specific support is provided by CTC and through NTN using external specialist trainers. Individual learning plans are well structured and involve the learner and employer in deciding appropriate NVQ units best suited to learners' jobs and future progression. Good consideration is given to learners' previous experience and learning and achievements when preparing individual learning plans. There is good, clear short-term target-setting for work completion between CTC visits and these are understood well by learners. This was identified in the self-assessment report. CTC training officers thoroughly review unmet targets at the next visit. Training officers make frequent, regular and effective visits to learners' workplaces which are appreciated by learners and employers. Employers provide a good support to their employees during training and identify the benefits to the individual and their business. Despite them not always being present at learners' reviews, employers receive progress information from CTC. The CTC quarterly newsletter is used effectively to provide information to learners and employers, including learner successes.
13. Learners do not manage their own portfolios sufficiently well. Although the portfolios are well organised and to a satisfactory standard, the efficient organising of them is done mostly by the CTC training officer/assessor. In particular, at Level 3, there is a requirement for learners to undertake cross-referencing of materials and have a good understanding of the occupational standards. Learners are unfamiliar with the ways that criteria from different NVQ units relate together to form hospitality tasks that naturally occur during their work. They are unable to easily identify work-based opportunities for assessment and are insufficiently empowered to influence their own progress. The way CTC use the Provider Integrated Claims system (PICS) has added to reducing learners' management of their own learning.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

14. Strategic leadership and management are good. The managing partners have a very good understanding of the training needs in the hospitality industry and set a very clear strategic direction. A detailed business and development plan clearly identifies business and

training objectives, with a strong emphasis on improving the quality of training. CTC have innovative developments in place, working closely with Ashfield School in Nottingham to set-up and run a well-equipped hospitality academy as part of the Ashfield Skills Centre development in 2008. This will usefully broaden the range of provision Charnwood offers to 14 to 16 year olds, as well as maintaining and further developing the apprenticeship and Train to Gain provision. A well thought out 'e-learning' strategy is in place, with good investment in the use of technology for the benefit of staff and learners.

15. Extensive and productive networking and external links support continuous improvements in training for learners. In addition to the innovative partnership with Ashfield School, many staff are actively involved in a wide range of local, regional and national networks, keeping them up-to-date with changes and developments within hospitality training. Staff make useful contributions to the development of qualifications in hospitality, from NVQ Level two to the Postgraduate Certificate in Licensed Retail Training. In addition this supports increased progression opportunities for staff and learners. Links with employers are good, helping to keep Charnwood staff in touch with industry needs and what employers and learners want.
16. The promotion of equality of opportunity with learners is good. There is a strong emphasis on equality and diversity at learners' induction, using informative support materials. Learners have a good awareness of their rights and responsibilities and of the complaints, appeals and bullying and harassment procedures. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is reinforced well at reviews. Individual support for learners with specific learning needs is good. The equality and diversity policy is comprehensive, regularly updated and an appropriate summary is produced for learners. CTC usefully analyses data by gender, ethnicity, disability and age. Staff have good involvement with local provider networks for the development of resources for learners on equality of opportunity. Some staff training and briefing takes place, but there is insufficient systematic planning for staff training in equality of opportunity issues.
17. The analysis of management information is effective and used well to support decision-making, to monitor learner performance and to identify areas for improvement. Useful monthly performance management meetings take place with staff. Staff have good industry experience and qualifications. Staff appraisal is detailed and usefully linked to the identification of staff development needs. CTC actively supports staff to access a wide range of staff development opportunities, particularly for professional updating, which staff greatly value. The organisation recognises the need for more staff to gain teacher training and skills for life qualifications.
18. There is effective management of resources. CTC have bought 40 tablet computers, appropriate software and 3G cards, which staff and learners make good use of in the workplace. Learners participate in additional qualifications provided by CTC commercial work, subsidised by being given generous vouchers to use. Arrangements to meet learners' literacy and numeracy needs are effective, with all learners accessing initial assessment, further diagnostic assessment as required and appropriate support. Internal verification is satisfactory and appropriately meets the requirements of the awarding body.
19. CTC makes good use of the self-assessment process and a detailed quality improvement plan to support improvements. A quality assurance framework is in place, but does not cover all aspects of the training and the monitoring of some aspects of learners'

programmes is insufficient. Management roles and responsibilities for quality assurance are not sufficiently clear following staff changes early in 2007. Procedures to quality assure aspects of the provision, for example learner induction and reviews, are not in place. The use of some learner documentation varies across the provision. Feedback from learners and employers to support quality improvement is insufficient. Managers do not quality assure the observations of work-based learning assessment and training; some feedback is not recorded and some have insufficient action-planning.

What learners like:

- ‘We are able to work at our own pace.’
- ‘The targets given by our training officers to help us work through the qualification.’
- Charnwood staff have good trade experience and knowledge
- Charnwood training officers are friendly – ‘know what they are doing’.
- ‘I think the training is set-out well.’
- ‘Friendly trainers – easy to talk to.’
- ‘The review process is good, with an ‘outsider’ sitting-in.’
- ‘The Charnwood assessor is more like my friend than my teacher.’
- ‘I like being treated like an adult.’
- ‘I like it that my assessor sorts out my portfolio.’
- ‘I’m glad that the qualifications are available to over-25s.’
- ‘Doing the NVQ makes my job easier.’

What learners think could improve:

- ‘Apart from assessing us working, we have to do the NVQ work out-of-work time’.
- ‘I’m keen to get a qualification, but I don’t like reading and writing.’
- ‘I would like to see my assessor more often’ – seen every two weeks.

Annex

Learners' achievements

Table: Charnwood Training Consultants

Success rates on **work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes** managed by the provider 2004 year to 2006 year

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	03-04	overall	13	8%	26%	8%	17%
		timely	15	0%	16%	0%	10%
	04-05	overall	20	25%	26%	25%	19%
		timely	18	22%	18%	22%	13%
	05-06	overall	25	48%		48%	
		timely	27	30%		30%	
Apprenticeships	03-04	overall	39	56%	44%	54%	29%
		timely	41	32%	25%	32%	16%
	04-05	overall	76	55%	45%	55%	34%
		timely	76	37%	31%	37%	24%
	05-06	overall	119	65%		64%	
		timely	126	47%		47%	

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

Success rates on **work-based learning 'Train to Gain' programmes** managed by the provider 2006 year to 2007 year

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**
Train to Gain ***	06/07	overall	6	86%
		timely	6	27%

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

*** Includes 'Train to Gain' long course NVQ provision, but not 'skills for life'