

Orient

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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 inspectorates' monitoring 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:

- Retail and commercial enterprises
- Business, administration and law

Description of the provider

1. Orient, previously known as Orient Gold, is an operating company of the Employability and Skills Group (ESG). The company works from premises in Sheffield and provides work-based learning, across England, mainly in the Midlands and North. The ESG group chief executive officer and the group managing director look after the strategic leadership and management of the provider. The Orient business manager is responsible for the provision of training to learners and reports to the skills operation director of ESG. Orient has 36 assessors who provide assessment and are responsible for training. Eight internal verifiers oversee the assessors' work and two internal verifier co-ordinators look after the internal verifiers. Orient has a specialist manager responsible for literacy, numeracy and language and six administrators.
2. Orient has a contract with the LSC's National Employer Service to provide apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships. Orient provides work-based learning and assessment in butchery, hospitality and catering, retailing and warehousing, business administration, customer service and business management, to employed staff in the workplace. The LSC funds all of Orient's provision. The provider does not use subcontractors.
3. At the time of the inspection, Orient had 663 apprentices and 120 advanced apprentices. Of these, 436 apprentices and 79 advanced apprentices were in retail and commercial enterprises including butchery, retailing and warehousing and hospitality and catering and 227 apprentices and 41 advanced apprentices were in business administration and law.

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 | Satisfactory: Grade 3 |

Sector subject areas

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Retail and commercial enterprises | Good: Grade 2 |
| Business, administration and law | Good: Grade 2 |

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates and standards of learners' work are high. The quality of provision including the effectiveness of teaching, training and learning, the response to the needs of learners and employers and guidance and support are good. Provision is good in retail and commercial enterprises and business, administration and law. Leadership and management are good and equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

5. The capacity to improve is good. Directors, managers and assessors with the support of employers use particularly effective means to improve provision for learners. Overall success rates are high and increasing; learners receive good and improving training, which develops their occupational skills to a high standard. Quality improvement arrangements are good and successfully raise standards.
6. The provider has made good progress in addressing areas for improvement identified at the previous reinspection and developing strengths further. Sector subject areas, leadership and management, quality of provision and quality improvement arrangements are now good. Equality of opportunity remains satisfactory.
7. Self-assessment is thorough and broadly accurate. The process takes account of the views of learners, employers and staff and uses data to analyse learners' achievement and progress. Inspectors agreed with most grades, strengths and areas for improvement in the self-assessment report. Some parts of the report are repetitive and insufficiently judgemental. Self-assessment action plans are thorough, regularly monitored and updated at management and team meetings.

Key strengths

- High success rates in 2007/08
- High standard of learners' occupational skills
- Good training for learners
- Good support for learners from employers
- Particularly effective leadership and management

Key areas for improvement

- Better regular reinforcement of equality of opportunity at review visits

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

8. Achievement and standards are good. The overall framework success rate for work-based learning, including results for the NVQ, technical certificates and key skills increased significantly from below the national average in 2005/06 to a high level for most of 2007/08. The overall framework success rate for apprentices in 2005/06 was around the national average. It increased to a high level for the majority of 2007/08. The overall framework success rate for advanced apprentices for this period increased markedly from well below the national average to a high level. The overall timely framework success rate for work-based learning between 2005/06 and for most of 2007/08 increased significantly to well above the national average. For apprentices, the timely framework success rate for this period increased to well above the national average but for advanced apprentices the number completing by their targeted end date was to just above the average. Framework success rates of male and female learners were similar. Those receiving support for additional learning needs have particularly high success rates. Success rates for learners from minority ethnic groups are the same as those for all groups. Learners make good progress in relation to their prior level of attainment.
9. Learners' work overall is of a high standard, particularly their occupational skills. The self-assessment report records this strength. Learners' customer service and technical skills, including the use of information and communications technology (ICT), are good. Learners' levels of motivation are high; they are confident and manage their work well. Most, during training, gain in maturity. Their understanding of the requirements of the workplace is good. Learners make particularly effective use of their good communication skills with colleagues and customers. Most learners' written work is of a high standard.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

10. The quality of provision is good. Teaching, training and learning are good; a strength recorded in the self-assessment report. The planning of learning is thorough including meaningful learning targets for learners. Most employers are particularly supportive of learners. They work closely with assessors to provide good workplace training to develop learners' occupational skills to a high level. Tuition for technical certificates and theory are good and provides learners with the underpinning knowledge to understand their subject area. The good tuition of key skills links clearly to learners' occupational areas. The use of most resources on Orient's intranet and employers' premises by assessors and learners is particularly effective. Monitoring of learners' progress is very thorough. Assessment overall is fair and accurate.
11. The response to the needs of learners is good. The useful breadth of work-based learning programmes, including a good range of NVQs, meets the requirements of most learners and helps them to progress with their training and careers. Orient works closely with employers to ensure the provision it offers meets their requirements. Many of these employers work in sectors with shortages of skills. The range of provision Orient provides contributes towards resolving this problem.
12. Support, information, advice and guidance for learners are good. At recruitment, learners receive good information, advice and guidance on the most appropriate training programme to meet their individual needs. Induction assists learners to settle into the training effectively. Orient has thorough arrangements to provide information and

guidance on progression for the next stage of learners' careers. Arrangements for identifying those with additional learning needs and occupational skills are effective. The support for those with additional learning needs including literacy, numeracy and language is good with further specialist support for those with high levels of need.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Satisfactory: Grade 3

13. Leadership and management are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. Strategic management is good. Directors of ESG provide a very clear and relevant strategic direction for Orient and have effective oversight of its work. Directors communicate the company's strategic direction and how it is to be achieved particularly effectively through meetings, targets, team and individual responsibilities and the business plan. Directors and managers are successful at monitoring achievement and standards and the quality of provision learners receive, and ensuring action takes place to resolve issues. Under their stewardship, internal verifiers provide good support and management of staff and ensure the provider's arrangements to maintain and raise standards for learners are particularly effective.

-
14. Quality improvement arrangements are good. Managers and internal verifiers regularly assess the standards of key processes including induction, progress reviews, learner support, training and assessment. Staff have clear and measurable targets for their roles. An independent company conducts telephone questionnaires to collect employers and learners' views. Orient has effective arrangements to collect and provide data on assessors and learners' performance, particularly the progress of learners, success rates and the performance of each assessor's group of learners. Managers, internal verifiers and assessors hold regular meetings to monitor and check standards. All staff have annual appraisals. Managers and internal verifiers use the outcomes from these arrangements particularly effectively to remedy issues such as slow progress by learners or underperformance of a group of learners. They also share good practice and provide effective staff development to improve skills and knowledge and the quality of provision learners receive.
 15. The comprehensive self-assessment process takes account of the views of learners, employers and staff and uses data well to analyse learners' achievement and progress. Judgements in the self-assessment report provide a broadly accurate picture of the quality of provision. Inspectors found some text insufficiently evaluative. Thorough action plans support the self-assessment report.
 16. Directors and managers ensure most learners train at premises with good resources. A comprehensive intranet provides learners with a wide range of good learning materials. Directors and managers employ and train assessors that are appropriately qualified and experienced in training and their occupational area.
 17. The procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks all staff. An effective safeguarding policy is in place and Orient provides staff with appropriate guidance and training on keeping learners safe. Assessors provide clear information about learners' rights and responsibilities and anti harassment, discrimination and bullying arrangements.
 18. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Orient places a strong emphasis on equality of opportunity. Managers regularly update policies and procedures for equality of opportunity in line with the latest changes in legislation. Regular training takes place for staff to improve their understanding of equality of opportunity and help them positively promote equality of opportunity to learners. At induction, learners receive useful training for equal opportunities. The provider has reviewed its learning materials on equality and has introduced new materials but not all assessors use them. The number of learners from minority ethnic groups is similar to the areas in which Orient provides work-based learning. Nevertheless in butchery the numbers from minority ethnic groups are low and targets to resolve the under representation have not been set, an area for improvement not recorded in the self-assessment report. At review meetings, assessors do not regularly reinforce the promotion of equality of opportunities.

What learners like:

- Friendly Orient staff
- Regular visits from assessors
- Good training and support from assessors and employers
- High standard of resources
- Good guidance on career progression
- 'Free training in the workplace'
- 'Gaining a qualification while working'
- 'Training is good for my job'
- 'Good advice about interview skills and how to deal with shoplifters'

What learners think could improve:

- Reducing the amount of paperwork
- Increasing the access to ICT
- Less use of jargon
- 'No local assessor'
- 'Not so many written reflective accounts'
- 'Would like to qualify quicker'
- 'More frequent visits from the assessor'
- 'More information about how I get onto the next level qualification'

Sector subject areas

Retail and commercial enterprises

Good: Grade 2

Context

19. Orient has 515 retail and commercial enterprise learners. Of these, 221 apprentices and 58 advanced apprentices are in retail and wholesale, 126 apprentices and 21 advanced apprentices are in hospitality and catering, and 89 are butchery apprentices. All learners are employees and work in a range of retail, hospitality, catering and butchery workplaces. All learning and assessment takes place in the workplace. Assessors visit learners at least monthly.

Strengths

- High success rates in 2007/08, particularly high in butchery
- Good occupational skills of learners
- Good training for learners
- Good support from employers
- Particularly effective reviews of progress
- Good leadership and management of the sector subject area

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient progression opportunities for butchery apprentices
- Insufficient reinforcement of equality opportunity at review visits

Achievement and standards

20. Achievement and standards are good. The self-assessment report notes this strength. Overall framework and timely success rates for butchery apprentices increased from a high level in 2005/06 to a very high level for the majority of 2007/08. The overall success rate for retail and wholesaling and hospitality and catering advanced apprentices increased markedly from a low level in 2005/06 to a high level for most of 2007/08. For apprentices in retail and wholesaling and hospitality and catering, the overall framework success rate improved substantially from around the national average in 2005/06 to a high level for the majority of 2007/08. Timely success rates in 2006/07 for retail and wholesale and hospitality and catering apprentices were all above the national average in 2005/06 and continued to rise for most of 2007/08 to a high level. The number of advanced apprentices that completed by their targeted end date in these areas in 2005/06 were very low but increased to high level for the majority of 2007/08.

21. Learners have good occupational skills. In hospitality and catering and butchery, they have good, safe knife skills. Food service learners show good counter preparation skills. In retail, learners have particularly good product knowledge and customer service skills. Learners have high levels of motivation and manage their work well. Most gain significantly in confidence and maturity during training and improve their ability to work effectively with others. They are particularly good role models for colleagues. Butchery apprentices regularly and successfully take part in regional and national competitions.

Quality of provision

22. The quality of provision is good including teaching, training and learning. This was identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. Employers are particularly supportive of training and, with assessors, provide high quality learning in the workplace. Employers are very effectively involved in the development of the learners' individual learning plans. Employers and assessors provide good individual coaching session for learners to develop occupational skills. The tuition of key skills is good and links effectively to the learners' occupational areas. In butchery, hospitality and catering, assessors use a good range of interactive information learning technology (ILT), which motivates learners particularly well. Training resources in retail are less interactive but are informative and support learners in improving understanding of their subject and achieving qualifications. A particular strength is the workbooks for technical certificates. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced in training and in the retail, hospitality and catering and butchery sectors.
23. The monitoring of learners' progress is very effective. Learners and employers contribute well to progress reviews, which are timely, well recorded and comprehensive. Assessment and verification are satisfactory.
24. The response to the needs of learners is good. The provider offers a good range of programmes which meets the needs of learners to develop the occupational skills and achieve the qualifications they need to progress with their careers. The range of provision is particularly effective at raising levels of expertise for employers in sectors with low levels of skills. However, learners do not have the opportunity to progress to a Level 3 butchery qualification.
25. Support, information, advice and guidance are good. Staff ensure that learners feel safe. At recruitment, learners receive good advice and guidance on the most appropriate NVQ units to meet their needs. The induction process settles learners into their training well. Guidance and advice on progression after training are comprehensive. Initial assessment is good. It very effectively identifies learners' additional learning support needs, preferred learning styles and level of vocational skill. Learners receive good support to meet their additional learning needs including that for literacy, numeracy and language.

Leadership and management

26. Leadership and management are good. Success rates and the quality of provision have continually improved since the previous reinspection and are now high. Managers provide clear direction, supervision and support for staff. Assessors have clear and measurable targets for their work. Quality improvement arrangements are effective in monitoring performance and raising standards for learners. At regular meetings, managers and staff monitor the progress of learners and standards of provision and share good practice. The use of data to monitor learners' performance is particularly effective. Internal verifiers

regularly visit workplaces to observe all assessors and employers providing training to learners. The self-assessment report is accurate at identifying most strengths and areas for improvement. Resources are good. Orient provides staff with good ICT and the intranet system provides a wide variety of good quality learning materials for learners. Most employers provide learners with a high standard of resources in the workplace. Links and relationships with employers are good. Employers have a high regard for Orient's management of learning.

27. Assessors cover the promotion of equality effectively at induction and for the requirements of the different parts of the frameworks. The provider is introducing new learning materials to improve learners' understanding of equality and diversity. However, although assessors regularly check that learners do not suffer from discrimination, bullying or harassment, assessors at review meetings do not reinforce the promotion of equality of opportunities sufficiently, an area for improvement the self-assessment did not record.

Business, administration and law

Good: Grade 2

Context

28. Orient has 268 work-based learners in business, administration and law. Of these 21 apprentices and 16 advanced apprentices are in business administration, 121 apprentices and 19 advanced apprentices are in customer service and 85 apprentices and six advanced apprentices are in business management. The learners are all employees. Training and assessment takes place at a range of appropriate workplaces including the sectors for

sales, office administration and business management. Assessors visit learners at least monthly.

Strengths

- High overall framework success rates in 2007/08
- Good personal and occupational skills of learners
- Good training for learners
- Particularly effective leadership and management of the sector subject area

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient regular reinforcement of equality of opportunity

Achievement and standards

29. Achievement and standards are good. The overall framework success rate increased from a low position in 2005/06 to a high level for most of 2007/08. The timely framework success rate continued to increase from 2005/06 to a satisfactory level for the majority of 2007/08. The overall framework success rate for advanced apprentices increased from a low level in 2005/06 to a high rate for most of 2007/08. The number of advanced apprentices that successfully completed by their targeted end date in 2007/08 was at a satisfactory level. The overall framework success rate for apprentices increased markedly from 2005/06 to a high level for the majority of 2007/08. The timely success rate for apprentices for this period has stayed at a satisfactory level.
30. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report judgement that the personal and occupational skills of learners are good. Most are well motivated, confident and have a high standard of occupational skills. They have a good knowledge and understanding of their workplace. Learners' use of software and specialist equipment is particularly effective. Their communication skills are good, and they use them well to work with colleagues and provide services to customers. Learners are good at using their own initiatives. The standard of written work is good and well presented. Learners make good progress on prior level of attainment.

Quality of provision

31. The quality of provision and teaching, training and learning are good; a strength recognised in the self-assessment report. The planning of training is thorough. Learners and most employers are effectively involved in preparing individual learning plans and setting and monitoring learning targets. Most employers and assessors provide very good occupational training. Employers are particularly effective at providing specific targeted training for learners to develop specialist skills. Much of the training equips learners with the high-level of expertise needed to handle demanding work roles that includes dealing with complex information, personal data and cash and credit card transactions. Assessors and learners make good use of the resources on Orient's intranet and at employers' premises to support learning. The tuition of key skills is good and takes successful account of the learners' area of vocational study. Assessors monitor learners' progress and

achievement thoroughly. Assessment is accurate and takes place regularly. It is particularly effective when employers contribute to the process.

32. The response to the needs of learners is good. Orient provides a range of programmes and qualifications matched well to the needs of learners and employers. Orient works closely with employers to ensure that the provision it offers helps to raise the skills levels in a sector that require an increasingly skilled workforce.
33. Support, information, advice and guidance are good. All learners receive thorough pre entry guidance on the most appropriate course to meet their individual needs. Induction is effective at ensuring learners settle well into their programme of study. Orient provides learners with comprehensive guidance on progression at the end of their programme of learning. The initial assessment and provision of support for additional learning needs including literacy, numeracy and language support is good.

Leadership and management

34. Leadership and management are good. This agrees with the self-assessment report. Managers in 2007/08 have reorganised Orient's management structure to provide more defined roles for staff with clearer targets and measures for success. Internal verifiers assist assessors better by regularly visiting the workplace to assess standards and through providing support that is more thorough. Communications are clear, meetings take place regularly between managers and staff to monitor the performance of learners, and to resolve issues if learners are not succeeding. Quality improvement arrangements are good and in 2007/08 have been particularly effective at improving success rates to a high level and raising standards of provision. The self-assessment report provides mostly accurate judgements on the quality of provision. Assessors have relevant occupational competence and appropriate assessor and verifier awards. The provider and most employers supply learners with good quality resources.
35. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Assessors provide effective tuition on equality of opportunity at induction and for the different aspects of the framework. However, its reinforcement during assessor visits is not consistent. For the majority, it is effective with some learners having a particularly good understanding of this area. However, for a minority, reinforcement is narrow and not sufficiently regular. It does not cover discussion on current and topical equality of opportunity issues, an area for improvement the self-assessment does not record.

Annex

Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning programmes** managed by Orient 2004/05 to 2006/07

| Programme | End Year | Success rate | No. of learners* | Provider NVQ rate** | National NVQ rate** | Provider framework rate** | National framework rate** |
|--------------------------|----------|--------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Advanced Apprenticeships | 04-05 | overall | 240 | 23% | 48% | 15% | 34% |
| | | timely | 232 | 17% | 31% | 13% | 22% |
| | 05-06 | overall | 210 | 37% | 53% | 35% | 44% |
| | | timely | 213 | 33% | 34% | 31% | 27% |
| | 06-07 | overall | 130 | 52% | 64% | 52% | 58% |
| | | timely | 130 | 42% | 43% | 42% | 37% |
| Apprenticeships | 04-05 | overall | 770 | 46% | 51% | 40% | 39% |
| | | timely | 741 | 36% | 29% | 33% | 22% |
| | 05-06 | overall | 613 | 51% | 58% | 51% | 52% |
| | | timely | 615 | 41% | 38% | 40% | 34% |
| | 06-07 | overall | 1004 | 57% | 65% | 57% | 61% |
| | | timely | 1010 | 52% | 47% | 52% | 44% |

* 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

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