

Train'd Up Railway Resourcing Limited

Inspection date

17 October 2008

Inspection number

329875

Contents

Background information	3
Inspection judgements	3
Scope of the inspection.....	3
Description of the provider.....	3
Summary of grades awarded	5
Overall judgement.....	5
Effectiveness of provision	6
Capacity to improve	6
Key strengths	6
Key areas for improvement.....	6
Main findings	6
Achievement and standards	6
Quality of provision.....	7
Leadership and management	8
Equality of opportunity	8
What learners like	10
What learners think could improve.....	10
Sector subject areas.....	10
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	10
Business, administration and law	13

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:

- Engineering and manufacturing technologies
- Business, administration and law

Description of the provider

1. Train'd Up Railway Resourcing Limited (TUP) is a national training organisation with bases in the West Midlands, London and Scotland. It delivers tailored recruitment and training provision to a range of sectors, predominantly transport and engineering. The company was formed in 2004 and began by delivering recruitment programmes and modern apprenticeship provision in Scotland where its head office is based. The company gained contracts in England in 2007 with the West Midlands LSC and London LSC to offer engineering courses and management courses through Train to Gain and advanced apprenticeships. At the time of inspection there were 42 advanced apprentices and 275 Train to Gain learners on various courses. Ten of the advanced apprentices were following engineering maintenance courses, six were on lift installation and commissioning courses, two were on business administration courses and 24 on management courses. Of the 275 Train to Gain learners four were on customer service courses, 117 on engineering maintenance courses, 61 on gas fitting courses and 93 on railway engineering courses. The gas fitting courses are subcontracted to a company called Develop.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision		Good: Grade 2
Work-based learning	Contributory grade:	Good: Grade 2
Train to Gain	Contributory grade:	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve		Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards		Satisfactory: Grade 3
Work-based learning	Contributory grade:	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Train to Gain	Contributory grade:	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Quality of provision		Good: Grade 2
Work-based learning	Contributory grade:	Good: Grade 2
Train to Gain	Contributory grade:	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management		Good: Grade 2
Work-based learning	Contributory grade:	Good: Grade 2
Train to Gain	Contributory grade:	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity		Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject areas

Engineering and manufacturing technologies	Good: Grade 2
Business, administration and law	Satisfactory: Grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

Work-based learning
Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

2. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. The quality of the provision, leadership and management and the engineering and manufacturing technologies provision are all good. Achievements and standards, equality of opportunity and business, administration and law provision are all satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

3. TUP'S capacity to improve is good. TUP produced its first self-assessment report in August 2008. The self-assessment process is satisfactorily inclusive of staff views, current performance data and informal feedback by learners and employers. The report is broadly accurate, but is unnecessarily repetitive. The development plan is a useful tool to improve the provision. It satisfactorily identifies key priorities for the organisation and improvements that are needed. It is reviewed on a monthly basis at the whole team meeting.
4. TUP is well managed and has implemented a good engineering programme in the 12 months of operation of the Train to Gain and advanced apprenticeship programmes. As the organisation has expanded the directors and managers have continued to manage resources well and have established a programme which is very responsive to learner and employer needs. The company is improving quality assurance systems to meet the requirements of the recent expansion. Although many quality assurance systems are in place they are currently insufficiently developed.

Key strengths

- Very effective support for learners
- Comprehensive and memorable induction
- Very effective partnership arrangements
- Very effective communications
- Particularly well supported staff

Key areas for improvement

- Some slow progress
- Insufficiently detailed progress reviews
- Insufficiently developed quality systems

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Work-based learning

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

5. Achievement and standards on advanced apprenticeship and on Train to Gain programmes are satisfactory. The programmes have not been running long enough yet for any significant achievements to be gained. There have been just eight NVQs completed so far by Train to Gain learners who are just coming to the end of the time planned for their qualifications. Most of the Train to Gain learners are on course to complete their programme in the planned time. Advanced apprentices are making satisfactory progress but most have completed one year of their qualification frameworks. Retention on all programmes is good with all of the advanced apprentices retained and only 4% of Train to Gain learners leaving early. The standard of learners work is good. They receive satisfactory initial assessment of their skills and knowledge before any NVQ assessments on the courses. The advanced apprentices satisfactorily complete the key skills and technical certificate requirements of their qualification framework during their first year of training at a college of further education.
6. Although they still have time left on programme, approximately 10% of Train to Gain engineering learners are making slow progress. The self-assessment report correctly identified achievement and standards as satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

Work-based learning

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

7. The quality of the provision overall is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners attend a good initial induction at the start of the training programmes that prepares them well for the courses. Learners find the induction useful as it explains in simple terms the NVQ and assessment requirements. Train to Gain learners in particular found that the induction answered questions or concerns they had about going back into a learning situation after what was often a long period since they had any formal learning.
8. Learners enjoy their courses and value the way they have helped to improve their knowledge and understanding and helped them to perform their work better. Engineering courses provide a good awareness of health and safety and have developed learners' confidence and work competencies.
9. Advanced apprentices on engineering programmes spend their first year at college. The courses are good. The colleges are well equipped. TUP staff and learners' employers visit learners regularly at college to monitor their progress.
10. Learner progress reviews are frequent and targets maintain the momentum of progress. However, progress reviews contain insufficient detail. During the frequent assessment visits assessors take the opportunity to review learners' progress, however, the reviews insufficiently record overall progress nor adequately record equality and diversity monitoring issues. The self-assessment report correctly identified many of the strengths and areas for improvement although some of the claimed strengths were judged to be normal practice.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Work-based learning

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

11. Leadership and management are good. External and internal communications are good. TUP has an informative website where potential learners can apply for a programme on-line. Staff at TUP maintain close contact with employers and keep them informed about the progress of their learners. Assessors are in frequent contact with learners and closely monitor the progress of apprentices while they attend college for the further education element of their programmes. Field based staff have good electronic access to all systems and procedures of TUP.
12. Newly appointed staff have a comprehensive induction which includes mentor support. The new management structure has enabled closer performance monitoring and development of staff. Managers review the work of the assessors on a monthly basis. Assessor caseloads are carefully managed and staff have their training plan reviewed on a monthly basis. All staff meet regularly at the company head office for team meetings and to share best practice. All tutors and trainers are either qualified or working towards awards and are registered with the Institute for Learning. There is good continued professional development which includes familiarisation training of products and services of organisations in which TUP assess.
13. The management of subcontractors is satisfactory. All subcontractors have a written contractual agreement with TUP. Contact is frequent and the performance of subcontractors is closely managed.
14. TUP produced their first self-assessment report in August 2008. The self-assessment process is satisfactorily inclusive of staff views, current performance data and informal feedback by learners and employers. Inspectors agreed with many of the findings within the report however, many of the claimed strengths were considered as normal practice by inspectors. The development plan is used well to improve the provision. It satisfactorily identifies key priorities and improvements that are needed. It is reviewed on a monthly basis at full team meetings.
15. The strategy to support literacy, numeracy and English language is not formalised. Learners on advanced apprenticeship programmes are recruited with good school achievements and have no additional support needs. Learners on Train to Gain programmes are tested for literacy and numeracy and very few have been assessed as requiring additional support. If low literacy or numeracy results are determined a discussion between the learner and assessor decides how this will be best provided. Additional support has been offered to two learners but has been refused so far.
16. Quality assurance systems are under-developed. This is identified in the self-assessment report and actions to be taken incorporated in the quality improvement plan. A new management information system is in the early stages of implementation as TUP has identified that previous systems were insufficient for trend analysis and management reports. Collection and analysis of learner and employer formal feedback are insufficient.

TUP has recently re-designed the collection of learner feedback and information is now sought through telephone surveys. Approximately 20% of learners have completed the current survey. Questions are well devised and linked to the Common Inspection Framework. However, the sample is too small to inform a full analysis. Directors collect and analyse employers' views and maintain close contact with employers. A recent employer survey questionnaire has been added to the TUP website and employers are encouraged to participate. Observation of teaching, learning and assessments takes place. However, not all of the processes that involve learning have been observed and they do not include sufficient action planning to improve staff performance.

17. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. All learners are given information during their initial induction about their rights, responsibilities, grievance procedures and disciplinary policy. The company equal opportunities policy is explained to them and it is made clear that bullying, harassment or any form of discrimination will not be tolerated. Clear information is provided about what to do if they have any complaints. Assessors provide learners with their mobile telephone numbers and are encouraged to call them if they have any issues or concerns. Learner progress reviews are carried out on a regular and frequent basis and their health, welfare and well-being is checked. However, there is insufficient information written onto the review forms to show that equality and diversity issues have been thoroughly explored and discussed.
18. TUP has worked well with large employers to help them to employ under-represented groups and therefore widen the participation of various groups of people. Training courses that TUP have run have specifically targeted groups such as the long term unemployed, young ex-offenders, lone parents and people from socially deprived areas. The courses have been successful in developing the important vocational work skills needed by employers and have resulted in successful job outcomes for many people.
19. The procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. All staff and subcontractors of TUP are required as a matter of company policy to be criminal record bureau checked and this is a contractual requirement of their employment and work. Satisfactory records are kept of checks undertaken.

What learners like:

- The flexible approach to getting assessments done
- The NVQ is a vehicle for reflective practice
- 'Tutors and assessors know what they're talking about, they have been on the tools'
- 'I like the assessments being involved on the job while working with tools'
- 'Not being made to feel stupid'
- 'Got to know a lot about what I didn't know'

What learners think could improve:

- 'Could have benefited from early assessor visit to allow better appreciation of working environment'
- 'The group should meet up to discuss issues and help each other'
- NVQ portfolio could be better organised and simplified

Sector subject areas

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Good: Grade 2

Context

20. TUP has 291 learners on engineering apprenticeships and the Train to Gain programme. There are 16 advanced apprentices and 275 learners on train to gain. Programmes cover a diverse range of engineering maintenance occupations in the rail engineering, lift engineering and gas fitting areas. Gas fitting and maintenance learners' training and assessment is subcontracted to a national training provider called Develop. Learners are located across the whole of England although most are in London and the West Midlands. Training and assessment is mainly carried out in the workplace although advanced apprentices have their first year initial training carried out by local colleges.

Strengths

- Good retention
- Very effective support for learners
- Comprehensive and memorable induction
- Very effective partnership arrangements

Areas for improvement

- Some slow progress
- Insufficiently detailed progress reviews

Achievement and standards

21. The retention of learners is good on both advanced apprenticeships and on Train to Gain programmes. A total of 286 Train to Gain learners started the programme and there are still 275 remaining on programme. The engineering programmes all exceed 12 months duration. On the apprenticeship programme, all 16 learners remain. Qualification achievement for the advanced apprenticeship programmes have been good to date, however, it is too early in the programme for full apprenticeship frameworks to have been achieved. The achievement of learners on the Train to Gain programme is satisfactory with ten learners having obtained their Level 2 qualifications to date. Most of the remaining Train to Gain learners are on schedule to achieve within the programmed timescales. The standard of learners' work and the content of their portfolios are satisfactory with diverse evidence being used. Training and assessment processes are satisfactory and resources for rail monitor engineering are good. The resources for apprentice training are good both at the subcontractor and in the workplace.
22. Key skills qualifications are delivered early in the advanced apprenticeship programme and achievement is satisfactory. There is good integration of key skills into the vocational programmes.
23. The rate of progress for some learners on the Train to Gain programme is slow. In the early stages of the programme learners are not aware of their progress within the programme and qualification. Effective milestones that measure and monitor progression are not set. Assessors rely on the motivation of learners to maintain progression and about 10% of the learners that are nearing the end of their programmes have quite a lot of work still to do.

Quality of provision

24. The quality of provision is good. All learners benefit from a fully participative and comprehensive induction programme. They are given a detailed induction information pack that covers: health and safety guidance, equality and diversity, programme and qualification details and a simplified NVQ explanation brochure. The Train to Gain learners' induction includes a skills scan that checks that they will be exposed to appropriate work to cover the qualification requirements. All learners recall their induction and highly value its content and particular relevance to their programme and workplace. The induction reassures the learners and gives them confidence for the completion of the programme.
25. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is good acquisition of skills and knowledge. Learners develop good vocational and social skills in the workplace with many learners working on safety critical items and systems. Many learners have significant responsibility working independently with minimum supervision on rail track maintenance and on elevator lift installations.
26. Progress reviews are very regular and frequent however, they are not well documented and do not set clear and measurable targets. Insufficient attention is given to the recording of equality of opportunity, health and safety issues and the ways learners are treated at work within the progress reviews. Recorded detail within the progress reviews does not give sufficient detail to record progress and plan future work or inform the learners where they are with their qualification.
27. TUP has established highly flexible working arrangements with employers and learners. Assessors often work unsociable hours to support and assess learners in the workplace. They routinely accommodate the needs of learners working complex twenty four hour shift patterns. Assessment practice is suitably rigorous and robust. Learners benefit from regular and frequent contact with assessors and are encouraged to contact them as opportunities for assessment observations occur. Assessors are highly skilled and very experienced in their vocational area. Employers provide their apprentices with a comprehensive range of working tools, extensive personal protection equipment and good pastoral and administrative support. Apprentices comment favourably on the support and guidance they receive from their employer during off-the-job training and in the workplace.
28. TUP has established very effective partnerships with employers and subcontractors that meet the needs of the learners in developing their work-based knowledge and skills. These positive and productive relationships influence the structure of the programmes and ensure activities that learners undertake are applicable and relevant to the workplace requirements. Employers value the information and guidance they receive from TUP, particularly for unqualified mature staff starting Train to Gain programmes. Many TUP assessors have been on employers training programmes for their products to improve their familiarity with specific products and services.
29. Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support. Additional learning needs are identified at induction and although no formal arrangements are in place additional informal learning support is available to those who require it. Information advice and guidance is satisfactory to promote personal development and to assist career progression.

Leadership and management

30. Leadership and management are good. Staff has appropriate qualifications and experience and are committed to the success of the advanced apprenticeship and Train to Gain programmes. Most members of staff have good vocational experience and qualifications and have been recruited as the company and business has expanded.
31. The self-assessment report, which is the first TUP have produced, is satisfactory in reflecting the provision. Staff were involved in its production and believe it broadly reflects the company.
32. Internal verification is satisfactory and includes regular standardisation meetings. However, forward planning of verification activities needs to be more thorough. TUP has a programme of ongoing assessor training.

Business, administration and law

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

33. The management training programmes delivered by TUP have only recently been introduced. Systems and processes are very new and at an early stage in their implementation. TUP currently delivers work-based learning programmes to 27 management learners of whom 24 are advanced adult apprentices and three are on Train to Gain programmes at Level 2 and 3. All learners are employed. Most learners are located in central London rail transport companies. A team of vocationally experienced assessors and internal verifiers provide support to all programmes. Learning, training and assessment takes place in the workplace.

Strengths

- Very effective support

Areas for improvement

- Insufficiently detailed progress reviews

Achievement and standards

34. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. No final qualifications have yet been achieved. Learners are beginning to successfully achieve their first planned units of competence. Progress is satisfactory and some learners have made a good start with their additional health and safety qualification. Learners have a good understanding of their progress, and assessors use the management information system well to provide useful and clear information. Retention of learners is good to date. All learners that have been recruited onto the programme are still retained.
35. Learners are developing good work-based and personal skills through regular contact with assessors. Learners and employers can clearly demonstrate how learners have developed their skills during their time on the programme. Learners have noticeably improved levels of confidence relative to their management activities and are well motivated by the training and support. Satisfactory provision has been made for additional qualifications. All learners undertake a formally certificated qualification in health and safety.

Quality of provision

36. The quality of the provision is satisfactory. Open learning units in introductory management techniques are distributed to learners. This qualification is to be undertaken in conjunction with their Level 3 NVQ. Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Satisfactory initial assessment procedures enable accurate completion of individual learning plans. On advanced apprenticeship programmes testing and qualification requirements carried out by employers are taken into account. An effective skills scan is carried out to ensure that learners will have adequate opportunities for accessing relevant evidence for their NVQs. Individual learning plans have sufficient detail to enable learners to have a full understanding of the key components of their programme and how they can personally influence their progress. Key individual components however, do not have staggered achievement requirements. All completion dates are aimed at the end-date of the programme. Of the current learners none have been identified as requiring additional support.
37. Satisfactory induction processes are carried out in the workplace by TUP assessors. Learners are given an effective introduction into their planned learning programme and qualifications. Assessors have a checklist of items to be covered to ensure thoroughness and consistency.
38. The management programmes satisfactorily meet the needs and interests of learners. Current satisfactory relationships with employers are becoming particularly effective and productive. Employers have formed strong initial relationships with TUP and contribute well to learners' programmes. There are good formal and informal communications between all parties. Assessors and employers can provide relevant development and also react quickly to learners' needs. The quality of employer workplaces is good. Employers

are actively involved in their learners' programmes and are beginning to provide good opportunities for learning and work based assessment.

39. Learners receive good levels of support and guidance. Assessors provide good support to learners through regular visits to the workplace where all learning and assessment takes place. This strength was recognised in the self-assessment report. Some learners are seen as frequently as every two weeks. Assessors make good use of a wide range of assessment methods to explore learners' knowledge and understanding. Assessors use professional discussions as a particularly effective way of gathering evidence. The use of very effective questioning techniques encourages learners to identify and present a good range of evidence. TUP supports assessors with a comprehensive range of learning materials in a variety of formats. Assessors plan their visits very effectively and learners and employers value the way visits are carried out to meet the requirements of individual learners and employers with extremely demanding work schedules. Assessors carry out some visits to reflect the unsocial hours worked by learners. Assessors also hold drop-in sessions so that learners who wish for a more frequent contact are accommodated.
40. Employers give good support to learners and offer high levels of encouragement for learners to join the learning programme. This has resulted in ongoing recruitment onto the programme. Learners are encouraged by their managers and time away with their assessor from very busy and responsible work schedules is encouraged.
41. Learner progress reviews are insufficiently detailed. Reviews are carried out after each assessment meeting which are typically planned at two weekly intervals. This high frequency of review activity results in an ineffectively detailed review. Review recordings result in brief and non-developmental comments. The

information collected does not enable effective planning or focus on effective development of the learner. Some future targets are set but often these targets lack specific aims and are not time-bound. The current review records do not formally measure learners' progress since the beginning of their programme although this information is available to TUP staff and aspects are recorded on other documents, for example assessment reviews.

Leadership and management

42. Programme management is satisfactory. Staff are supported well through regular monthly meetings and are beginning to work effectively as a team. Staff are all appropriately qualified and resources are satisfactorily managed. Advanced apprenticeship and Train to Gain programmes are planned effectively and very satisfactorily monitored using a newly introduced management information system. Partnerships with employers are beginning to become well established. Overall, equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Most learners have a satisfactory understanding of equal opportunities however, progress reviews do not adequately reinforce learners' understanding of equality and diversity.
43. Internal verification procedures are thorough and currently being implemented. The self-assessment process is inclusive and many of the key findings of the inspection were identified in the self-assessment report.