

MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of Provider: South Yorkshire Training Group Ltd
Date of visit: 10 December 2008

Context

South Yorkshire Training Group (SYTG) was formed in June 1990. It is located in premises near Sheffield city centre. The company has two directors and four members of staff. SYTG has a contract with South Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to deliver an Entry to Employment (E2E) programme. Currently 39 learners are enrolled on the E2E programme. It also offers a programme, funded by Sheffield local authority, for learners aged 14 to 16 who are disengaged from school. Currently 17 learners are on this programme. This monitoring visit follows the inspection in January 2008, at which SYTG's overall effectiveness, capacity to improve, achievement and standards, quality of provision, leadership and management and employability training were all inadequate. Equality of opportunity was satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

What progress has been made to improve progression rates and learners' achievements of objectives?	Reasonable progress
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SYTG has made reasonable progress to improve progression rates and the achievement of key objectives in the E2E programme. At the time of the previous inspection too few learners progressed to employment, further education or training or achieved their key objectives. Data on the achievement of key objectives was unreliable. Few learners gained accredited qualifications.

For the first four months of 2008/09 the progression rate is good at 71%. This has been influenced by 23 progressions to further education in September 2008. Evidence indicates that this progression rate will decline over the remainder of the year. The number of learners who achieve their objectives is now being measured and for 2008/09 to date is 56%.

During 2006/07, two learners entered a national literacy test and one learner was successful. SYTG is now offering learners more opportunities to take accredited qualifications. From April 2008 to date, 10 learners have passed national numeracy tests and seven learners have passed national literacy tests. Three learners have completed English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) tests and many have

achieved ESOL units. SYTG is now offering a qualification in self-development through learning, which seven learners have achieved.

Quality of provision

What progress has been made to improve the management of individual learning?	Reasonable progress
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SYTG has made reasonable progress to improve the management of individual learning which was poor at the time of the previous inspection. Learners' programmes were insufficiently individualised. Learners did not have a weekly timetable. Attendance in training modules was unplanned. Records of learners' attendance at modules were insufficient. Tutors made too little use of targets to plan individual learning or measure progress. Targets set at reviews were often not challenging or specific enough.

SYTG has now introduced a planning and tracking spreadsheet which records information relating to each learner's individual learning programme. The spreadsheet is used to monitor participation and learners' achievement of aims. The information contributes to learner reviews. Learners only repeat modules if they do not pass the module on the first attempt. A weekly attendance sheet has been introduced which clearly shows exactly which sessions learners are scheduled to attend. A timetable for learners is displayed on the notice board each week. This informs learners of their planned activity schedule for the next week.

Learners and staff do not use activity logs to record and reflect on learning. Targets set in individual learning plans and progress reviews are insufficiently detailed.

Leadership and management

What progress has been made to improve the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning?	Insufficient progress
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Progress to improve the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is insufficient. At the time of the previous inspection SYTG had no documented policies or procedures for evaluating and improving teaching and learning. SYTG has an increased focus on improving teaching and learning. Relevant staff have been trained in the observation of teaching and learning. Some staff development has taken place with a focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. SYTG staff are being observed by the staff of the organisation providing their teacher training and an organisation which holds a main contract for 14-16 provision and subcontracts this provision to SYTG.

SYTG has not devised a process for the observation of teaching and learning which specifically meets the needs of the organisation. No collective summary information

on the overall teaching and learning grade profile for the organisation is available. The absence of summary data regarding the quality of teaching and learning means it is difficult to measure the impact of any actions taken to improve teaching and learning. No overall information about the strengths and areas for improvement relating to teaching and learning at SYTG is available.

What progress has been made to improve quality assurance arrangements?	Insufficient progress
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Insufficient progress has been made to improve quality assurance arrangements. At the time of the previous inspection quality assurance procedures were weak. No system was in place to improve quality and SYTG had no documented policies or procedures for evaluating and improving teaching and learning.

The focus on the importance of formalised quality assurance arrangements has improved. A quality policy has been written and a quality manual has been created. Both are yet to be finalised. Work has started on writing some quality assurance procedures. A quality calendar has been drafted, but this is not yet finalised or implemented in its entirety.

At the time of the previous inspection, SYTG did not seek structured feedback from learners on the quality of provision and group discussions and learner forums were not used to collect feedback. The provider has piloted collecting learners' feedback by discussion and the completion of a questionnaire. The results have been used to plan some improvements to the programme, for example, changes to arrangements for breaks. Arrangements for collecting feedback are not yet formalised sufficiently and no written procedure is in place.

What progress has been made in the promotion of equality of opportunity?	Reasonable progress
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SYTG have made reasonable progress in improving the promotion of equality of opportunity. At the time of the previous inspection the promotion of equality of opportunity through teaching and learning was insufficient. Few learning materials and activities helped learners understand the significance of equal opportunities in the workplace and opportunities were missed to reflect the cultural diversity of the learners. SYTG has bought more resources to be used to facilitate learning related to equality of opportunity. Four in-house short courses have been devised and are delivered to all learners. They cover racial issues, sexual harassment, equality and diversity in the workplace and equality legislation. All groups now agree a behaviour contract at the beginning of their programme which reinforces the importance of mutual respect and appropriate behaviour.

Self-assessment and improvement planning

What progress has the provider made in using self-assessment and development planning as a quality improvement tool?	Reasonable progress
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Reasonable progress has been made in improving the use of self-assessment and development planning as a quality improvement tool. At the time of the previous inspection self-assessment was inadequate as a tool to drive improvement. Following the previous inspection a post-inspection action plan was written by SYTG. This clearly identified actions required to resolve areas for improvement identified at inspection indicating who is responsible for the action, the target date and how success can be measured. Many of the identified actions have been completed. However, monitoring of the action plan is insufficient. Records are not kept of when progress has been reviewed or the progress on actions to date. A useful log is maintained in which improvements since the previous inspection are recorded. The 2007/08 self-assessment report is prepared in draft. As at the time of the previous inspection, the process continues to be inclusive and links well to the *Common Inspection Framework*. In addition it now links to the themes of *Every Child Matters*. The quality improvement plan has yet to be completed.