

# Develop-u

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330896

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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](http://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](http://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:

- Business Improvement Techniques

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## Description of the provider

1. Develop-u is a private company based in Rotherham, South Yorkshire which has been trading since October 2005. In July 2007, Develop-u gained LSC Regional Response contracts for Yorkshire & Humberside and the South East. LSC funded provision comprises 90% of Develop-u's revenue. Develop-U has recently gained approval to provide Customer Service NVQs and Call Centre NVQs at Level 2 & Level 3. A team of two directors, 10 employees and 19 associate assessors currently support learners.
2. Develop-u offers NVQs to 134 learners on its' Train to Gain programmes. Some 124 learners are working towards NVQs in Business improvement techniques with 105 at level 2 and 19 at level 3. These are funded by the Yorkshire and Humberside LSC. Ten learners have recently started the programme in the South East. All learners are employed in the manufacturing and process industries. Develop-u staff carry out induction, initial assessment, NVQ assessments and progress reviews in the workplace. Learners follow a 20 week programme. Develop-u staff carry out both on- and off-the-job training in the workplace.
3. Unemployment levels in the area are similar to the National rate of 5.8 %. Earnings in the North East average the lowest in the country. The area has an minority ethnic rate of 6% according to the 2001 census, however, some client companies employ a significant number of European economic immigrants and this is reflected by the higher rate of 12% on the programme.

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## 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: Satisfactory: Grade 3

## Sector subject area

Customer service	Good: Grade 2
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## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

#### Good: Grade 2

4. The overall effectiveness of Develop-u is good. This includes Train to Gain. Achievement and standards are good. Current learners make good progress and develop very good social and work based skills. Teaching and learning are good and assessment practices are appropriate. Courses meet the needs and interests of learners exceptionally well and learners receive good information, advice and guidance. Support for learners is also good as are leadership and management, with good strategic and programme management. Quality processes to improve the provision are effective and the arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory. Develop-u offers good encouragement to those without previous qualifications to complete their qualification.

### Capacity to improve

#### Good: Grade 2

5. Develop-U's capacity to improve is good. Since the previous inspection of the Train to Gain provision, recent changes made have impacted well on the programme. Success rates are very high and Develop-u has developed very effective working relationships with employers. The self-assessment process is good with appropriate involvement of staff and Develop-u uses learner and employer feedback very well to improve the provision. The self-assessment report clearly reflected the judgements in the inspection. The company has developed an appropriate action plan through the self-assessment process. Although some aspects of the quality improvement system are insufficiently developed, much quality improvement activity is effective and Develop-u has clear plans to address those areas identified for improvement.

## Key strengths

- High success rates
- Good development of social and workplace skills
- Very good coaching
- Programmes very carefully matched to learners and employers needs
- Very effective leadership
- Good programme management
- Very good use of learner and employer feedback

## Key areas for improvement

- Insufficiently developed formal quality systems
- Insufficient reinforcement of equality and diversity

## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

#### Good: Grade 2

6. Achievement and standards are good. Learner success rate is high. In 2007/08, 20 learners left the programme and the overall success rate was 90%. Timely success rates are also high at 86%. One learner is still in learning but cannot complete an important part of his work due to the delay of a works-engineering project. Twenty-four learners have left the programme in the 2008/09 year to date, of whom 23 have completed their qualification successfully and within time. This represents an impressive 96%. High success rates were identified in the organisations self-assessment report.
7. There is good development of social and workplace skills. Learners quickly become part of a team. Their listening skills and general awareness of their work environment improve considerably during the course. When project work is underway, learners develop good evaluative and analytical skills. Their general awareness of health and safety issues is improved significantly by the completion of the relevant health and safety units. Learner attitudes gradually change to a positive can-do approach as confidence increases during the programme. Most learners are making good progress. Develop-u offers additional units and courses to a significant number of learners who would otherwise not benefit from the training.
8. The attendance of learners is generally good, but on occasion, learners can not attend a group session because of changes in shift patterns. Although additional coaching is made available this can disrupt their participation in the course, however, some employers temporarily change learner's shifts to match course attendance.

### Quality of provision

#### Good: Grade 2

9. Quality of provision is good. The coaching by Develop-u tutors is very good and enables most learners to meet their programme goals in full. Tutors are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. This is reflected by learners' positive changes in attitudes as their skills develop. Learners quickly undertake practical tasks in their workplace to put into practice their newly gained knowledge of various business improvement techniques. One to one and small group coaching is very appropriate for the learners and produces good results. Learners appreciate this approach more than formal teaching sessions as it enables them to reach their potential quickly and efficiently.
10. During coaching sessions tutors encourage learners to identify new techniques and reinforce concepts well. Good use is made of questions and answers to challenge learner understanding of concepts and proposals. Learners have sufficient confidence to answer questions and when appropriate to challenge the tutor. The standard of formal lessons is at least satisfactory, although with insufficient detail in some lesson plans. Assessment practice is thorough and supports learner progress well.
11. The programme is very carefully matched to learner and employer needs. A good initial assessment enables learners to carry out an accurate self-analysis of their skills. Develop-u designs the course content well to meet learners' aspirations and initial capabilities. The

course is clearly targeted at getting learners to identify and solve problems within their workplace. All employers state that this has had a positive impact on their business, with demonstrable financial savings. This was identified in the organisations self-assessment report. Learners develop close team work with other employees whom they would not normally meet due to shift patterns or because they belong to different work sections. Many learners enjoy their work more because of the course and feel they now belong to a wider team. Learners value their increased confidence and increased self-esteem. Employers have a high regard for Develop-u and value their contribution to the development of their workforce. For example, on completion of the course one company held a presentation evening and invited five staff members of Develop-u to the celebration. This was much appreciated by staff and learners.

12. Learners are well supported by training staff and their employers during the programme. Some employers pay staff overtime when they have to attend training sessions outside normal working hours. All learners identified as needing additional support in literacy and numeracy are offered suitable support but to date there have only been two learners taking up the offer of a 'skills for life' qualification. Teaching styles have in some instances been modified by the tutor to match learner's best learning style. Learners appreciate this approach by the tutor. Formal reviews are held three times during the course. This is much more frequent than contractually required. Formal reviews give learners increased confidence through clear identification of progress made. Target-setting on the progress review form is very general, however, learners get a useful individual plan after every session that gives detailed actions to be completed before the next training session.

## Leadership and management

**Good: Grade 2**

### Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory Grade 3

13. Leadership and management are good. The leadership of Develop-u is very effective. The direction of the organisation is clear and well understood by staff. All staff are well motivated and very focused on improving the service offered to learners and employers. All aspects of strategy are addressed through good planning. Staff value highly the way the company is led. Strategic partnerships are strong and closely match the aims of the company. Develop-u has built an effective network of colleague providers and expertise to support future expansion.
14. Management of the programme is good. Managers have developed a useful initial assessment and a skills scan from which a good individual learning plan is agreed. During the programme, learners and employers get regular feedback on their progress. Records are detailed and progress is formally reviewed frequently. The programme is well run by experienced staff using good written support material. Develop-u measures the improvement in learners' skills effectively. Project work is particularly well managed by tutors. In one project, company members of the senior management team act as negotiators between the learners' project team and other managers to implement project findings.
15. The overall management of the organisation has improved significantly since the Train to Gain contract started. Effective systems are now in place or being developed to meet current and future needs. Careful recruitment has built a strong team with good expertise. Staff development is effective and staff take up a good range of training and development.



However, appraisal, training analysis and evaluation is too informal. This is recognised in the self-assessment and managers have recently introduced an appropriate staff development system. Communication is good. The formal meeting structure is valued by staff. The management information system meets the current needs of the organisation and is used well to produce appropriate reports.

16. Use of learner and employer feedback is very good. Develop-u gathers very informative feedback. The analysis is good and is used well to improve the programme. For example, learner feedback led to improvements in the induction and delivery of the workshops while employer feedback has had a direct impact on the design of the programme to make it more appropriate to business need. Internal verification is thorough with useful feedback from observations of assessors during learner assessment. Much informal quality improvement has been effective in improving the experience of both learners and employers; however, some formal quality systems are insufficiently developed. For example, observation of teaching and learning is still not fully developed and not well recorded and some quality audit processes are yet to be fully implemented. This is recognised in the self-assessment report and appropriate action is being taken to improve the quality system.
17. Develop-u's arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory. A range of policies and procedures are in place which meets the needs of the programme. Develop-u analyses equality and diversity statistics well and has a good awareness of the progress and achievement of different groups of learners. The care and wellbeing of learners is at the heart of all Develop-u's provision. Success of learners is celebrated well at company events and Develop-u promotes learning to under-represented groups through well produced news letters in client companies. Develop-u produces good marketing material which is well designed and contains appropriate non-stereotypical images. The procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adult learners, should they join the programme, do not yet meet current government requirements as staff are not routinely CRB checked, however, arrangements for ensuring the wellbeing of current learners are proportionate to risk. Workplaces are checked appropriately for health and safety and equality policies. Develop-u staff ensure learners' understanding of policy and practice within their companies for dealing with complaints, bullying and harassment. Staff deal with inappropriate behaviour quickly and effectively. Learners receive clear information, advice and guidance about the programme and on the range of learning opportunities available both with Develop-u and in their locality.
18. Reinforcement of equality and diversity is insufficient. Opportunities are missed to reinforce learners understanding of broader equality and diversity issues. Although appropriate information is given out during induction little time is spent to ensure it is understood. Reviews do not routinely record discussions on equality or learners rights and responsibilities although learners' understanding of equality and diversity is generally satisfactory and is covered to some extent during the programme. Health and safety is reinforced well both during progress reviews and during the programme. Equality and diversity received insufficient attention in the self-assessment report.

## What learners like:

- Gaining the ability to look more critically at the job
- Getting a promotion
- The increase in motivation and confidence
- Raised awareness of health and safety
- Getting a qualification
- Helping the company to save money
- The very good tutors - “The tutor is brilliant”
- The choice of projects
- Gaining new skills

## What learners think could improve:

- Shorter course with more study time
- More involvement of managers in projects
- Reduction in the length of the first day