

## MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of provider: Sheffield Independent Film and Television Ltd  
Date of visit: 22 April 2009

### Context

Sheffield Independent Film and Television Ltd (SHIFT) is a registered charity based in Sheffield city centre. It provides Entry to Employment programmes in multimedia, in music technology and in motor vehicle to 39 young people not in education, employment or training. SHIFT employs a chief executive officer, a project manager and a key worker who are full-time, and three part-time freelance tutors. It is overseen by a board of trustees. The programme is funded by South Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

SHIFT provides qualifications at level 1 and 2 in multimedia. Approximately 50% of learners complete their training through a subcontractor partnership arrangement with Darnall Education Centre Associated Training Co-operative Ltd (DECAT). DECAT provides qualifications at level 1 in music technology and in motor vehicle. Both organisations provide qualifications in adult literacy and numeracy at levels 1 and 2. In 2009, SHIFT introduced the key skills qualification, working with others, for a small number of learners.

SHIFT was inspected in June 2008 and all aspects of provision were inadequate.

### Achievement and standards

What progress has been made to improve the progression rate into further training or jobs?	Reasonable progress
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SHIFT has made reasonable progress in improving the progression rate into further training and jobs. At the previous inspection, overall progression rates were low at 31% and had declined from the previous year. In 2008/09, with three months of the contract year to complete, progression rates have improved and are currently at 57%. Of these learners, 87% have progressed to further education and 13% have progressed to employment or training. At the previous inspection, the number of learners recruited on to the programme was declining. SHIFT has made reasonable progress in remedying this downward trend and current learner numbers are in line with LSC contract requirements.

What progress has been made to improve qualification success rates?	Reasonable progress
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The previous inspection identified that qualification success rates were particularly low and declining. In 2007/08, only 24% of SHIFT's own learners, and 8% of learners

training through DECAT, achieved a qualification. Since the inspection, the provider has reviewed its approach to managing learning programmes. The awarding body has been changed to meet learners' needs more closely. Learners' progress is better monitored and managed. At DECAT, 67% of learners are awaiting external verification of their completed qualification. At SHIFT, all the learners who took a vocational qualification have completed it and are also awaiting an external verification visit. Literacy and numeracy success rates have improved significantly and are currently at 80% and 59% respectively. The in-year retention rate of learners is good at 90%.

## Quality of provision

What progress has been made to improve teaching and learning?	Reasonable progress
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At the previous inspection, teaching and learning were inadequate. Since then, reasonable progress has been made to improve teaching and learning. SHIFT has provided continuing professional development for staff on target-setting and the use of learner passports. It has revised the curriculum to place greater emphasis on developing learners' personal and social skills. Staff now have the opportunity to gain appropriate teaching qualifications and one staff member is currently completing their Post Graduate Certificate in Education. Plans are in place for the remaining five part-time teaching staff to take preliminary teaching qualifications in the next few months. SHIFT has introduced team teaching, to provide better opportunities to meet the needs of individual learners and to share good practice.

What progress has been made to improve the initial assessment and support for learners' literacy and numeracy needs?	Reasonable progress
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The previous inspection identified that initial assessment was insufficiently thorough. Reasonable progress has been made in improving initial assessment and supporting learners' literacy and numeracy development needs. Initial assessment is now more thorough and includes an assessment of learners' literacy and numeracy skills, a skills assessment to identify personal and social development needs and a vocational assessment. These three aspects combine to help prepare individual learning plans that are sufficiently tailored to meet individual learning goals. A new key worker has been appointed to review learners' progress. Literacy and numeracy are now taught as discrete sessions. SHIFT has developed a literacy and numeracy strategy to support this work and learners are now making better progress.

What progress has been made to improve advice and guidance for learners?	Insufficient progress
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At the previous inspection no structured careers advice and support was in place. Although some improvements have been made in improving relationships with the Connexions service, SHIFT has made insufficient progress in providing effective advice

and guidance to learners. A key worker, appointed to work with learners to develop skills for working life, does not hold appropriate advice and guidance qualifications. A 'jobs fair' is planned to assist learners in developing interview techniques, jobsearch skills and in preparing a curriculum vitae, but this has not yet taken place. SHIFT now has more links with employers but only two learners have had work-placements since the previous inspection. A health and safety process, including a risk assessment, has been developed to provide the necessary checks for work-placements.

## Leadership and management

What progress has been made to improve the management and use of data?	Reasonable progress
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At the previous inspection, SHIFT made inadequate use of management information and data. SHIFT has improved its collection and use of data. A management information system introduced recently now allows staff to collate and interrogate data effectively. SHIFT and DECAT share the same system. Data is analysed by individual company and for the contract as a whole. Weekly data reports provide information on learner achievement, early leavers and an analysis of learner performance by gender, ethnicity and postcode. SHIFT also maintains an additional computer spreadsheet that duplicates some of the data, which it will run in tandem with the new system until it is confident that the new system is fully functional. SHIFT is yet to fully analyse the results of the data to set improvement targets and measures.

What progress has been made to improve self-assessment and other quality improvement activities?	Insufficient progress
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At the previous inspection, self-assessment was insufficiently critical or evaluative and did not accurately identify the provision's strengths and areas for improvement. Quality improvement arrangements were new, and incomplete. The programme manager and board of trustees have monitored the implementation of the post-inspection action plan well. A number of key areas for improvement have been rectified. However, insufficient progress has been made in establishing and evaluating the affect of quality improvement procedures on learners. With the support of an external consultant, SHIFT is developing a quality system with specific and detailed procedures for monitoring each stage of the learners' programme. A quality planning cycle has been developed to support quality improvement. Although SHIFT has carried out some compliance auditing on learners' files, its planning cycle does not specify when quality audits will take place to measure the effectiveness of the procedures. The quality system is new and insufficient evaluation of key aspects of provision has taken place. An observation of teaching and learning scheme has been introduced and all staff have undergone one observation which has provided detailed feedback on areas for improvement. However, the observation scheme is not yet linked effectively to the newly introduced appraisal scheme or used to contribute to quality improvement. Observations rely on one member of the board of trustees who is not formally trained in lesson observations. SHIFT has made further

developments to its self-assessment process. However, staff still have too little opportunity to contribute to the identification of main strengths and areas for improvement. Aspects of the report are insufficiently evaluative and too descriptive. Some judgements in the report are not supported by clear and detailed evidence.

What progress has been made to improve strategic management of the organisation?	Reasonable progress
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Since the previous inspection, senior managers and the board have strengthened partnership working and communication between SHIFT and DECAT. Systems and procedures are shared across both organisations and have improved the operational management of programmes. The training room at SHIFT has been refurbished to provide a better learning environment. They have increased staffing levels and learners now benefit from better support in the classroom. Managers have drafted a three year strategic plan which sets out the key objectives on how it intends to improve and extend the quality of provision and increase SHIFT's effectiveness.

What improvements have been made to promote equality of opportunity?	Reasonable progress
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Arrangements for equality of opportunity, including the promotion of equality of diversity and learner understanding, were inadequate at the previous inspection. Reasonable progress has been made to promote equality of opportunity to staff and learners. SHIFT updated its equal opportunities policy in January 2009. All staff have had equality and diversity training recently. It now analyses data and reports on the performance of different groups of learners. It has a development plan for a single equality scheme. It has identified funds to improve access to the building. It now promotes equality and diversity in the curriculum through discussions with learners on current affairs and reporting in the media. At their monthly progress reviews, learners are questioned on their understanding of equal opportunities, but the questions are not sufficiently focused or probing to be meaningful. SHIFT has plans to develop a qualification for learners covering age discrimination, implications of racism, understanding different faiths, affect of homophobia and respecting and understanding the international rights of the child. It has consulted learners on the content of the proposed new programme and their response was positive.