

Huddersfield Textile Training Limited

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 52395

Name of lead inspector: Bob Busby HMI

Last day of inspection: 11 December 2009

Type of provider: Independent learning provider
Huddersfield Textile Training Limited
Textile Centre of Excellence
Textile House

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Information about the provider

1. Huddersfield Textile Training Limited (HTTL) is a not-for-profit training company based in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. It was formed in 1976 to meet the training needs of local textile manufacturers. A board of directors comprising eight representatives from member companies controls HTTL. In 1998, HTTL was recognised as a textile centre of excellence by the regional development agency, Yorkshire Forward.
2. Training at HTTL is funded through contracts with the Yorkshire and Humber Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to deliver apprenticeship programmes and Train to Gain programmes. Government funding represents approximately 20% of HTTL's annual turnover. HTTL offers training for apprentices and advanced apprentices in manufacturing textiles, mechanical and electrical engineering, and print and printed packaging. It also offers qualifications in laundry and dry cleaning, warehousing and business administration and has commercial contracts with local employers. Manufacturing technologies were inspected and graded during this inspection. Although the other sector subject areas were not directly inspected, evidence from them contributed to the leadership and management judgements.
3. HTTL has expanded its provision significantly since the previous inspection. It has introduced a Train to Gain programme and training, particularly in laundry and dry cleaning. Most apprentices and Train to Gain learners work in the manufacturing sector and the service sector for laundry and dry cleaning. The company employs 26 staff, of whom 13 are involved directly in the delivery of work-based learning. Approximately 51% of learners are men and 6% are from minority ethnic groups.
4. Unemployment in Yorkshire and the Humber between April 2008 and March 2009 was 7.1% compared with 6.2% nationally. The proportion of school leavers gaining five or more General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs) at grade C or above, including mathematics and English, in Yorkshire and the Humber in 2006/07 was 57.8 % compared with 61.3% for the UK as a whole. According to the 2001 census around 8.3% of the population in Yorkshire and the Humber are from minority ethnic groups.
5. At the time of the last inspection in June 2005, the provision was satisfactory in all aspects, except retailing, customer service and transportation which was good.
6. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the provider:
 - Edward Marshall (textile training)
 - MS Training Services (printing training)
 - Lorraine Stott (textile training)
 - Kirkdale Industrial Training Services (engineering training)

- Kirklees College (engineering training)
- Bradford College (engineering training)
- Gallagher-Thompson (Skills for Life training)
- Wendy Reed (Skills for Life training)

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	102 learners 80 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 4
Capacity to improve	Grade 3
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	4
Safeguarding	4
Equality and diversity	4
Subject areas	Grade
Manufacturing technologies	3

Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of HTTL's provision is inadequate. Directors and senior managers effectively balance strategic and reactive leadership to maintain the core mission of the organisation and the company's viability in a volatile marketplace. They have managed the expansion of the apprenticeship provision and the introduction of Train to Gain programmes effectively. HTTL has implemented a number of key improvements since the previous inspection, including to the structure of its training provision, the capacity of staff to fulfil their roles and the quality assurance infrastructure. Staff work well with employers to provide good training at work that meets well the needs of learners and employers. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory but their progress is often slow. Not enough learners achieve within the agreed time. Arrangements to assess learners at work are managed effectively. Arrangements to safeguard learners are inadequate. The wider elements of safeguarding have not been sufficiently prioritised. The designated responsible person has not received sufficient training to carry out the role effectively. The safeguarding policy is inadequate although learners say that they feel safe and protected from abuse. HTTL does not promote equality and diversity effectively. Most learners had only a limited understanding of equality and diversity.

Main findings

- Success rates for apprentices in 2008/09 are high. The proportion of learners achieving their qualifications in 2008/09 is high. Most learners achieve within the agreed timescale. Achievement of key skills is good and has improved significantly. However, of the 31 learners following apprenticeship programmes in 2009/10, more than half have so far left without achieving.
- Success rates on Train to Gain programmes are satisfactory. The proportion of learners achieving their qualifications in 2008/09 is satisfactory. Most Train to Gain learners have completed their qualifications within the expected year. However, of the 69 learners currently on programme, 31 are two months or more beyond their anticipated end date.
- Most learners develop good vocational and personal skills which are recognised and valued by employers. They make good use of on-the-job training and additional vocational courses to extend their knowledge and skills. They display increased levels of self-esteem and confidence as they work towards their qualifications.
- HTTL provides a good range of programmes. Managers work well with local and member employers to ensure that learners are working towards industry-relevant qualifications. Most learners take additional computing, first aid, health and safety and other work-related qualifications.
- Assessors provide good support. Assessors visit frequently and provide good feedback. They are particularly sensitive to employers' needs and are very flexible in meeting them.
- Support for the literacy needs of Train to Gain learners is inconsistent. Their support needs are routinely identified by means of an initial assessment, but staff do not always meet the identified needs.
- Monitoring of learners' progress is insufficiently effective. Individual learning plans do not record the target dates of intermediate milestones. Monthly reviews of learners' progress, carried out jointly by internal verifiers and assessors, are ineffective. They do not systematically trigger supportive intervention when learners are at risk of underachieving.
- The directors and managers of HTTL provide strong leadership. HTTL fulfils its mission to be at the cutting edge of research and development in textile manufacture. The board and managing director effectively balance strategic and reactive leadership to maintain the core mission of the organisation and the company's viability in a volatile marketplace.
- HTTL's approach to quality improvement and self-assessment is satisfactory. HTTL makes satisfactory use of self-assessment and peer support to improve its provision. Managers are aware of the company's development needs. Learner and employer feedback is not used sufficiently to evaluate and improve the provision.
- Safeguarding practices are inadequate. All training staff have received initial safeguarding awareness training and have Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance. However, wider elements of safeguarding have not been sufficiently

prioritised. The designated responsible person has not received sufficient training. The safeguarding policy is inadequate.

- The promotion of equality and diversity is inadequate. The company's current equal opportunities material does not sufficiently help learners to understand the range of social and occupational practices and behaviours which could constitute discrimination.

What does Huddersfield Textile Training Limited need to do to improve further?

- Improve safeguarding practices through appropriate training and the development of robust systems and procedures.
- Improve learners' understanding of equality and diversity by developing staff's skills to provide stimulating and illuminating learning experiences throughout the programme.
- Improve success rates, particularly timely success rates, by improving the effectiveness of the monitoring of learners' progress and the introduction of intermediate targets.
- Improve the effectiveness of quality assurance arrangements through clearer actions to be taken, more specific target setting and robust monitoring arrangements.
- Improve the development of fundamental skills needed by Train to Gain learners so that they can complete their courses successfully, by providing access to literacy and numeracy support from appropriately qualified staff.
- Better prepare learners for the requirements of their programmes by providing guidance on evidence collection and portfolio building early in the programme.
- Improve the use of employer and learner feedback by developing a more systematic approach to the collection of their views and maintaining and building on good relationships between assessors and employers.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- individual support from very patient, flexible, knowledgeable tutors who explain things clearly
- their renewed enthusiasm for learning
- their increased understanding of the purpose of job activities in the workplace
- the continual challenge from the tutors to drive progress.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the content and structure of the workbooks
- the slow start to the laundry and dry cleaning course

- the confused structure of the units within the national vocational qualification (NVQ)
- the very late supply of textbooks for college, four months after the start of the course
- the difficulties in arranging time with the assessor if the workplace is busy.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- HTTL's responsiveness in meeting the training needs whilst minimising impact on production
- the improved appreciation by staff of what each other's job entails
- that as well as raising learners' competence, HTTL also provides a framework to properly evaluate their capabilities relating to specific tasks
- the public celebration of success for all learners
- the opportunities to work closely with HTTL to structure courses differently and for the benefit of the employer
- the ongoing support from HTTL throughout the company's progress and development.

What employers would like to see improved:

- the length of the process which can cause some learners to lose interest
- the poor organisation of the start of the laundry and dry cleaning programme
- the unnecessary duplication of paperwork.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

8. HTTL's capacity to make and sustain improvements is satisfactory. HTTL has made a number of key improvements since the previous inspection, including to the structure of its training provision, the capacity of staff to fulfil their roles and the quality assurance infrastructure. HTTL has been ambitious in the expansion to its provision, including Train to Gain, growth in the coverage of its apprenticeship programmes and an innovative strategy to increase the take-up of specialist textile provision by 14 to 16 year old learners. A new monitoring system has helped to focus assessors on individual learner achievement, though this is not kept up to date sufficiently.
9. Managers make satisfactory use of self-assessment to improve the quality of provision. Both overall and timely success rates rose significantly for 2008/09, though it is clear that the rates for 2009/10 will be lower. Learner and employer feedback is not used sufficiently to evaluate and improve the provision. Managers are aware of the company's development needs, but they do not sufficiently record their analysis of issues for appropriate reflection and future monitoring. Much work has been done recently to develop safeguarding and equality and diversity practices, but it is far too early to judge the impact of this work and some has yet to be implemented.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

10. Success rates were high in 2008/09. The overall success rate on apprenticeships improved to 87.5%, well above the national rate. Timely success rates on apprenticeships improved to 78.3%, well above the national rate. However, of the 31 learners following apprenticeship programmes in 2009/10, 16 have already left without achieving.
11. HTTL introduced its Train to Gain programme in 2008/09. Success rates on this programme are satisfactory at 80%, and above the national rate. To date, most Train to Gain learners have completed their qualifications within the expected year. However, of the 69 Train to Gain learners currently on programme, 31 are two months or more beyond their anticipated end date. Of the 90 Train to Gain learners who are due to complete in 2009/10, 12 have completed in the planned time but 15 have left without achieving.
12. Inspectors agreed with employers' views that most learners develop good vocational and personal skills. Learners make good use of on-the-job training and additional vocational courses to extend their knowledge and skills. More than three quarters of all learners follow at least one additional qualification; some work for up to three additional awards. Learners display increased levels of self-esteem and confidence.

13. All learners feel safe. They clearly understand their rights and responsibilities and demonstrate good safe working practices. HTTL provides safety information to each learner at induction and most learners cover aspects of health and safety within their courses. First Aid training is offered to all learners as an additional qualification. HTTL employs a health and safety specialist. Almost all assessors and internal verifiers hold the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) managing safely qualification. Assessors monitor the standards of health and safety in the workplace appropriately and check that all learners work in a suitably safe, healthy and supportive environment. Most learners feel protected from harassment and bullying and would know who to complain to if necessary. However, checks on bullying and harassment are limited to closed questions during reviews and these are not always carried out in a sufficiently private area.
14. HTTL has started to introduce a range of informative leaflets on health-related issues to learners during induction. A newly appointed 'Every Child Matters (ECM) Champion' has started to produce new information on all five aspects of ECM, but these have not yet been issued to learners. The ECM champions from several providers have met to share good practice. However, it is too early to judge the impact of these initiatives.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

15. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching, training and assessment are satisfactory. Staff have appropriate skills and expertise. Textile tutors' teaching skills are supplemented well by their commercial and industrial experience. Some tutors make insufficient use of alternative teaching and learning methods. Assessors provide good support for learners. They visit frequently and negotiate appropriate long- and short-term targets. Learners understand what they need to do. Assessors supplement their visits well with telephone and email support. One subcontractor uses a web-site well to distribute learning materials. Assessment is fair and reliable and meets external bodies' requirements. Tutors' feedback from assessments is constructive and helps learners improve their performance. Portfolios are well organised.
16. Learning and assessment are appropriately linked to initial and current assessments. Most learning takes place in the workplace, using well-written and illustrated workbooks. HTTL plan to enhance the workbooks following feedback from learners.
17. Individual learning plans fail to record intermediate target dates for programme milestones. Some learners' programme end dates are unrealistic. This was recognised in the self-assessment report.
18. Support for the literacy and numeracy needs of Train to Gain learners is inadequate. Their support needs are routinely identified but staff are not always sufficiently qualified or experienced to provide appropriate specialist support. Managers have recognised this and are using external support to redress the issue. This has yet to have an impact.

19. Tutors pay insufficient attention to the techniques of evidence gathering and portfolio building at induction. Some learners not already familiar with these processes make slow progress.
20. Internal verifiers meet monthly with assessors to discuss learners' progress. The records of this process lack rigour. Most Train to Gain learners had not had their achievements recorded. Five learners making slow progress were identified by inspectors but HTTL could not provide evidence of any additional support. The most recent progress report available on apprentices was three months old.
21. HTTL meets user needs and interests well. All learners are employed and they study towards qualifications that are mapped well to the skills requirements of their employers. The range and context of provision meet learners' medium and long-term employment goals. HTTL consults effectively with local employers and uses their feedback to inform the range of qualifications offered. Learners benefit from being able to obtain a good range of additional work-related qualifications in computing, first aid and health and safety.
22. Arrangements for learning and assessment are highly flexible. Assessors are particularly sensitive to the needs of the workplace and work effectively with supervisors to provide appropriate learning and assessment opportunities, sometimes outside normal working hours. Where necessary, they organise quiet rooms to work in.
23. HTTL uses partnerships well to develop its provision. They work well with member companies to develop training programmes highly relevant to the skills needed in local workplaces and the textile industry. Good links with schools, key education providers and employers have led to the development of the Kirklees Studio School, which officially opens in September 2010.
24. Guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. Staff provide appropriate advice and guidance. Particularly good support has been provided to help one group of learners for whom English is not their first language. Four out of seven apprentices who were made redundant were helped to find further employment which allowed them to continue their studies. An 'Every Learner Matters' champion promotes the take-up of additional support covering a range of issues. Links with external organisations to support this work have yet to be developed.

Leadership and management

Grade 4

25. Strategic management at HTTL is good. The board of directors is drawn from the local textile-related industries and a strong group training association with membership of around 50 companies. The board and managing director effectively balance strategic and reactive leadership to maintain the core mission and the company's viability in a volatile marketplace. The particularly innovative Kirklees Studio School, opening in 2010, brings together many key education providers and employers to provide a much needed impetus to the

recruitment of young learners to careers in the creative industries. The board effectively creates financial accountability but does not sufficiently monitor the on-going quality improvement of provision. The staff appraisal system is being used well to build HTTL's assessor and verifier capacity.

26. HTTL's safeguarding arrangements are inadequate. The company has robust procedures for the vetting of learners' workplaces. Around 35% of current learners have taken up the opportunity to gain an additional health and safety qualification. There has been a planned increase in the number of staff gaining health and safety qualifications. All training staff have Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance and an appropriate central record is maintained. Staff recently received initial safeguarding awareness training. Learners feel safe. Staff respond well to learners' welfare concerns. However, the wider elements of safeguarding have not been sufficiently prioritised. The designated responsible person has not received sufficient training to carry out the role effectively. The safeguarding policy is inadequate. It does not contain information to help staff understand how to handle sensitive situations. Safeguarding is not discussed with learners and they have not been involved in developing HTTL's safeguarding practices. The new policy on internet safety has not yet been issued to learners.
27. The promotion of equality and diversity is inadequate. The company's current equal opportunities material does not sufficiently help learners understand the range of social and occupational practices and behaviours which could constitute discrimination. Staff received training in equality and diversity very recently, though it is too early to see the impact of this training on learners' understanding, which is generally poor in this area. Equality and diversity training during induction is poor. Staff do not have sufficient strategies to reinforce or develop effectively learners' understanding during the course or progress reviews. HTTL's internal verification system also identified some of these shortcomings. The new learner support handbook, which is in development, has been written specifically to engage learners and contains illuminating illustrations of inappropriate practice and behaviour. There is no significant variation of performance by different subgroups of learners. All of HTTL's premises are accessible to wheelchair users and have an induction loop for people with a hearing impairment.
28. HTTL makes satisfactory use of self-assessment and peer support to improve its provision. In June 2008, a small group of peers from external organisations worked with HTTL to review the quality of its provision. Subsequently, significant changes were made to the staffing, structure and quality system. Clear document control was introduced along with new procedures for the creation of new business and change management. However, these new procedures have not been used sufficiently to carry out risk assessments of planned developments and expansion. Some of the issues identified in the peer review remain in the November 2009 self-assessment report. A new progress monitoring system was developed at the beginning of 2009. Since then there has been a steep increase in both overall and timely achievement. However, this central record of attainment is not kept sufficiently up to date and current

in-year data show that last year's high success rates are not being maintained. The quality improvement plan is insufficiently clear about how proposed improvements will be carried out. Targets are not sufficiently specific and lack adequate monitoring strategies. Learner and employer feedback is not used sufficiently to evaluate and improve the provision. The self-assessment report identifies some of the areas for improvement found by inspectors but fails to identify safeguarding and equality and diversity as key areas for development.

Information about the inspection

29. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's apprenticeship and internal verification manager, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding bodies, the previous inspection report, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
30. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires recently completed for the provider by learners and employers. They also observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Huddersfield Textile Training Limited

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; 16-18 Learner responsive: FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; 19+ responsive: FE full- and part-time courses; Employer responsive: Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners		
Full-time learners	32	32
Part-time learners	105	105
Overall effectiveness	4	4
Capacity to improve	3	
Outcomes for learners	3	3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3	
How well do learners progress?		
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2	
How safe do learners feel?	3	
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>		
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>		
Quality of provision	3	3
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3	
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2	
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3	
Leadership and management	4	4
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2	
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2	
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	4	
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	4	
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3	
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3	
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3	

*where applicable to the type of provision

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