

# Finning (UK) Ltd

Inspection report

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Unique reference number: 51835

Name of lead inspector: Phil Romain HMI

Last day of inspection: 18 September 2009

Type of provider: Employer

Address: Watling Street,  
Cannock  
WS11 8LL

Telephone number: 01543 461461

## Information about the provider

1. Finning (UK) Ltd is the sole Caterpillar dealer within the UK and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Finning International, a Canadian company based in Vancouver. Finning (UK) Ltd's business is to sell Caterpillar equipment and offer a parts and product support system for the entire product line. To support these products Finning (UK) Ltd employs over 500 service engineers, of which over 350 are field engineers. Apprentices work as part of the service engineering function and are based throughout the UK.
2. Finning (UK) Ltd has its headquarters in Staffordshire and branches throughout England, Scotland and Wales. It employs 56 apprentices within its Earthmoving division and Power Systems division. The apprenticeship is organised through the technical training unit at Cannock. The technical training manager is supported by three full-time training instructors and has a fully equipped training centre with access to a wide range of Caterpillar products.
3. Finning (UK) Ltd contracts with Staffordshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Since the previous inspection Finning (UK) Ltd no longer offers apprenticeships in motor vehicle maintenance having sold its materials handling division. It now offers advanced apprenticeships in plant maintenance. All current apprentices are men and none are from minority ethnic groups.
4. The following organisation provides training on behalf of the provider:
  - Alliance Learning, Bolton

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Employer provision: Apprenticeships	55 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 2
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	4
Safeguarding	4
Equality and diversity	4
Subject areas	Grade
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	2

## Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of Finning (UK) Ltd's provision is inadequate. Although it provides good training for apprentices, its arrangements for safeguarding and for the monitoring and promotion of equality and diversity are inadequate. Finning (UK) Ltd has implemented many improvements since its previous inspection and invested significantly in high quality training resources. Training is good and is very effectively linked to apprentices' experience in the workplace. The programme meets the needs of the apprentices and the industry very well by providing a good range of relevant and effective training. Apprentices enjoy their training and achieve well. The apprenticeship is well planned and rigorously monitored. Health and safety in the workplace are well managed and apprentices say they feel safe.

## Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. The proportion of apprentices completing their apprenticeship is very high and they achieve within the agreed timescale. Most apprentices remain with the company on completion.

- Apprentices develop good work-related skills including technical and communication skills. Their written work is well presented and NVQ portfolios are well organised.
- Teaching and learning in the Cannock training centre are good. Training is well-organised and successfully develops practical skills and technical knowledge.
- Training in the workplace is very effectively linked to that undertaken in the training centre. Close liaison between training staff and workplace managers and supervisors ensures that learners undertake practical work directly related to their training and qualification.
- The assessment and monitoring of apprentices is rigorous. Assessment in the workplace is well organised and apprentices' progress is tracked carefully. Most technical certificate assignments are marked carefully but some feedback is insufficient to help apprentices understand how they could do better.
- Training resources are of a very high quality. In the training centre, apprentices work on a wide range of industry-standard engine, transmission and hydraulic equipment. In their workplace, they also work on modern industry-standard equipment using advanced diagnostic equipment.
- Arrangements to identify and provide additional support for the minority of apprentices requiring it are underdeveloped.
- The apprenticeship is well organised. Managers carefully plan the training and experience each apprentice will receive and closely monitor their progress. Communications between managers and training staff are good however workplace supervisors are insufficiently involved in regular progress reviews.
- Staff are well trained in teaching and assessment skills and have good and relevant technical qualifications and experience. However managers do not systematically observe teaching and learning as part of the company's quality assurance arrangements.
- Arrangements for the safeguarding of learners are inadequate. The company has not undertaken an assessment of risk in relation to learners under 18 years of age; checked the safeguarding arrangements of its subcontractor; or implemented procedures to ensure that learners under 18 years of age do not share rooms with adults in hotels.
- Arrangements to monitor and promote equality and diversity are inadequate. Data are not routinely collected on the application, recruitment or participation of various under-represented groups and no analysis has been undertaken. There has been insufficient staff development and insufficient promotion to under-represented groups.
- The use of self-assessment is satisfactory overall. The quality improvement plan is used effectively to drive improvements identified through self-assessment. However the self-assessment report does not sufficiently include the views of all stakeholders and is not widely shared among staff and managers.
- Finning UK Ltd provides good value for money. Staff and learners have access to high quality learning resources and learners progress well.

## What does Finning (UK) Ltd need to do to improve further?

- Implement best practice safeguarding arrangements to ensure that apprentices are not at risk.
- Collect and analyse data on apprentice and applicant ethnicity, gender and disability to ensure that the recruitment process is fair.
- Identify and implement ways to promote the programme which encourages more applications from under-represented groups.
- Provide equality and diversity training for training staff and workplace supervisors to help them to better support apprentices and reinforce apprentices' understanding.
- Train staff in the identification of additional learning needs and promptly make available any necessary support so that all apprentices can progress and achieve on time.
- Mark all technical certificate assignments to a consistently high standard to ensure that apprentices know how to improve their technical skills, grammar and spelling.
- Directly involve all training staff and users in forming judgements for self-assessment and share the findings of self-assessment with training staff, managers and work-place supervisors to promote greater involvement in continuous improvement.
- Observe training staff at least annually and provide constructive feedback to them to maintain and improve the standard of teaching and training.

## Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

### What learners like:

- the good training
- that the training programme is well-organised
- that the training is relevant to the work they do in the workplace
- the good relationship with trainers
- the amount of feedback they get on how they are progressing
- mixing with apprentices from across the country and making new friends
- the high quality advanced training equipment
- the out of hours activities at Cannock

What learners would like to see improved:

- apprentices did not identify anything they would like to see improved

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

6. Finning (UK) Ltd has made significant improvements to its provision since the previous inspection. Following the sale of its materials handling division it has introduced a new apprenticeship framework in plant maintenance. It no longer uses the services of a local college to provide training and assessment having identified that this was not meeting its needs. It has invested in its own dedicated training centre. It has gained accreditation to deliver the technical certificate, key skills and the NVQ. During this transition it has maintained the good standard of training and good success rates for learners. It has rectified the slow progress identified in the previous inspection and apprentices now progress well.
7. Managers are self-critical and quickly introduce improvements in response to identified weaknesses. Managers use the quality improvement plan effectively to drive key improvements whilst individual members of staff take full responsibility for improving their own work. Self-assessment is ongoing but the self-assessment report does not sufficiently include the views of all stakeholders and is not shared widely enough.

### Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

8. Success rates are good. The success rate in 2008/09, the first cohort of apprentices to complete this programme, was outstanding at 100%. In the same period timely success was good with all apprentices completing all aspects of their framework within the expected time. Of the 19 apprentices who are due to complete the programme in 2009/10, 83% are currently on target to complete successfully. Employment opportunities are good and most apprentices remain with the company on completion of their apprenticeship.
9. Apprentices enjoy their training and make good progress with their qualifications. They present their written work well, both in printed and handwritten form. Apprentices' portfolios are well organised and are clearly cross-referenced to relevant evidence.
10. Apprentices develop good employability skills. They demonstrate good practical skills and learn how to use advanced computer-based diagnostic equipment. Later in their apprenticeship they develop more advanced diagnostic skills and begin to take on more responsibility, including going off-site to service customers' equipment. Their communication skills are well developed.
11. Apprentices demonstrate good health and safety practices. They complete relevant health and safety training during their induction and throughout their apprenticeship. As part of their training, they obtain relevant health and safety qualifications such as the Construction Safety Card Scheme and the Passport to Safety. Apprentices state that they feel safe and are free from harassment and

bullying. They understand health and safety procedures and the procedures for reporting if they are subject to bullying and/or harassment.

## The quality of provision

Grade 2

12. Teaching and learning are good. Off-the-job training in the Cannock training centre is well organised and effective. In addition to providing technical and key skills for the apprenticeship it also meets the requirements of Caterpillar's own 'Think Big' world-wide training programme. Teaching staff are skilled in developing apprentices' practical skills and imparting the knowledge they need for future employment. Apprentices learn their skills in a well-equipped workshop on a wide range of industry-standard engine, transmission and hydraulic equipment. Training staff produce high quality and comprehensive learning materials which are also available electronically. Staff mark most work well, carefully identifying spelling and technical errors, but some feedback to apprentices does not sufficiently identify where they should improve further. Key skills tutors make good use of apprentices' daily work to develop and assess the key skills.
13. On-the-job training is well managed and effective. Staff carefully plan each apprentice's work to further develop the skills and knowledge learned in the training centre. The close liaison with workplace managers and supervisors ensures that learners undertake practical work directly related to their previous off-the-job training block. Assessors and workplace supervisors closely monitor apprentices' progress and when necessary arrange for them to attend other sites to learn skills not available at their usual workplace.
14. Assessment in the workplace is rigorous and well organised. Assessors carefully monitor each apprentice's progress through the NVO. They make sure that apprentices are clear about the purpose of each assessment visit and receive relevant feedback and a suitable action plan for further assessment related tasks.
15. The range and content of provision meets the needs and interest of users very well. Finning (UK) Ltd has closely aligned the programme to employment opportunities within the industry. Apprentices develop good employment skills including effective communication and the ability to liaise effectively with customers. Once offered a place on the programme they attend work experience for a week before they fully commit to a three year apprenticeship. Employment opportunities are further enhanced through additional qualifications in health and safety and welding skills.
16. Finning (UK) Ltd supports its apprentices well. They have access to professional advice and support, an occupational health service and the use of a hire car to attend the off-the-job training. Training staff arrange outings and recreational activities during the 8-week blocks of training including access to a local gymnasium. An experienced mentor is assigned to each apprentice in the workplace to provide technical guidance and support. Each apprentice receives



a complete toolkit when they start and an annual allowance to update and maintain it.

## Leadership and management

Grade 4

17. Managers provide clear and effective leadership and direction for the apprenticeship programme. They have high expectations and have invested significantly in training facilities and staff development. The company continues to recruit apprentices even in the current economic downturn, recognising the importance of continuing to train engineers for the future. Apprentices have good employment and promotion opportunities and the company is developing further opportunities through a foundation degree.
18. Day to day management of the programme is also good. Detailed planning ensures that apprentices gain experience in a broad range of relevant areas. Communications between the training centre and workplace supervisors and managers are good. Workplace supervisors receive comprehensive reports on apprentices' progress and are able to plan relevant work experience linked to off-the-job training.
19. Staff are well trained in teaching and assessment skills and have good and relevant technical qualifications and experience. However the company does not systematically observe teaching and learning as part of its quality assurance arrangements.
20. Finning (UK) Ltd's safeguarding arrangements are inadequate. The company has not met its contractual requirement to register with the Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) and has not undertaken a risk assessment. No checks on staff have been undertaken. The company has a good relation with the hotel where apprentices stay during their block training and apprentices are able to contact a member of staff 24 hours a day. However there are no clear arrangements to ensure that apprentices under 18 years of age do not share accommodation with adults. Finning (UK) Ltd has not checked that its subcontractors have adequate safeguarding arrangements in place. Staff do not have an adequate understanding of safeguarding.
21. The promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity is inadequate. Finning (UK) Ltd does not routinely collect data during the recruitment process in order to analyse the proportion of applicants from women and minority groups; neither does it formally analyse or review participation in the programme by different groups. One female apprentice has just completed her apprenticeship and there is no difference in performance between her and her colleagues. The company does not have any targets or strategies to promote its programme to underrepresented groups. There has been insufficient staff development in equality and diversity with just the apprentice manager and administrator having undertaken such training. Apprentices receive satisfactory equality and diversity training during their induction but staff do not adequately monitor and reinforce their understanding throughout the apprenticeship. The identification and provision of additional support needs is under-developed. The organisation

has been very slow in providing specialist support for one apprentice who has difficulty with written work even though this was identified over 12 months ago. Trainers provide some additional support to apprentices during their off-the-job training however there are no systems in place to identify learners who may have additional support needs such as dyslexia and no systems in place to support these learners.

22. Finning (UK) Ltd makes satisfactory use of self-assessment to improve its provision. Training staff are self-critical and have begun a series of meetings with workplace supervisors to identify good practice and how to share this more widely across the organisation. Managers use the quality improvement plan to drive significant improvements. The self-assessment report identified most of the key finding of inspection but failed to adequately evaluate issues of safeguarding and equality. It over graded the provision and did not provide sufficient evidence to substantiate all of the grades offered. The self-assessment report includes the views of apprentices and training staff but they do not have sufficient direct involvement in writing it or making judgements about the quality of provision. The self-assessment report is not sufficiently shared with all stakeholders.
23. Finning UK Ltd manages its resources well and provides good value for money. Learners have access to high quality training facilities and well qualified trainers and assessors. They receive good training and achieve well. The company has appropriate policies for sustainability and embed these principles into their training.

## Information about the inspection

24. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one additional inspector, assisted by the provider's apprentice trainer 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), the previous inspection report, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
25. Inspectors used group and individual interviews. They looked at learners' work, 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)

## Finning (UK) Ltd

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	55	55
Part-time learners	0	0
Overall effectiveness	4	4
Capacity to improve	2	
Outcomes for learners	2	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2	
How well do learners progress?	2	
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2	
How safe do learners feel?	2	
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	n/a	
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	n/a	
Quality of provision	2	2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2	
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	1	
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	3	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2	
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>	n/a	
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?	2	
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?	2	

\*where applicable to the type of provision

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