

# LAGAT Ltd

## Focused monitoring visit report

---

Unique reference number: 52902

Name of lead inspector: Nigel Bragg HMI

Last day of inspection: 12 November 2009

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: Acorn House  
Lindum Business Park  
North Hykeham  
Lincoln  
LN6 3QX

Telephone number: 01522 501300

## FOCUSED MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

### Context and focus of visit

LAGAT limited (LAGAT) was established in 1987 and has a head office and training centre in the centre of Lincoln. The provider has 32 staff and 339 learners.

Apprenticeship training is offered in ICT, retail and commercial enterprise, leisure, travel and tourism, education and training, and business, administration and law. Since the previous inspection, LAGAT now delivers and subcontracts Train to Gain provision. In addition, a small number of learners are participating in 'response to redundancy' and employability skills programmes. LAGAT holds a nextstep contract for the provision of information and advice.

LAGAT was inspected in August 2006. The overall effectiveness and main aspects of the provision were judged to be good, as was the provision in each of the subject areas inspected. This focused monitoring visit reports on the two mandatory themes of outcomes for learners and self-assessment and improvement planning. In addition, inspectors evaluated the progress made in the use of data, involvement of employers, equality and diversity and safeguarding arrangements.

### Themes

#### Self-assessment and improvement planning

What progress has LAGAT made in improving the effectiveness of the self-assessment process to bring about improvements? Insufficient progress

At the previous inspection, inspectors expressed broad confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process. However, they identified that the report was overly descriptive. This is still the case for the most recent report, which is insufficiently evaluative. The report includes a range of numerical data but the provider does not systematically use this to make self-critical judgements. LAGAT effectively incorporates learner and employer views into the self-assessment process. However, the provider does not share a summary of the outcome of this process with stakeholders.

As at the previous inspection, LAGAT satisfactorily monitors and reviews the associated improvement plan. It has strengthened this process through the involvement of a wider range of staff. However, the actions are not always specific enough or include clear challenging targets and milestones to aid monitoring. Significant areas for improvement, identified by LAGAT, including the low overall and timely success rates do not have adequate prominence within the self-assessment or subsequent action planning process. In addition, LAGAT has not adequately identified and resolved some key areas for improvement, including a minority of

issues identified at the previous inspection. LAGAT has not always implemented timely actions to improve the quality of the learners' experience.

### Outcomes for learners

What progress has LAGAT made in improving the overall and timely success and outcomes for learners? Insufficient progress

Apprenticeship success rates have slowly improved since the previous inspection but remain consistently below the national average. Timely success rates have improved and for the last two years are near the national average. Sector areas show wide variation in timely and success rates. For the relatively large number of business administration learners the overall success rates were low in 2006/07 but improved in 2007/08 before falling again in the subsequent year. The rate for all three years was well below the national average. Timely success rates show a similar pattern. Rates for retail and commercial enterprise programmes have been low in the two years since the previous inspection but show an improving trend. For 2008/09, the rates are good.

In Train to Gain catering programmes, the success and timely rates for Train to Gain programmes are good. However, for the majority of areas the success and timely rates are generally low with no improving trend since the previous year. Approximately 17% of current learners have not completed their programme by the planned date.

LAGAT recognises the need to improve the monitoring of learners' progress against realistic targets. However, it is too early to judge the effectiveness of proposed initiatives for improvement.

### Quality of provision

What progress has LAGAT made in improving the involvement of employers in the learning process? Insufficient progress

At the previous inspection improvements in employer involvement within administration and customer service programmes was identified as a key challenge. The provider has carried out some useful work to promote learning with local employers. LAGAT has provided free and reduced cost training for some employers and promoted other additional training opportunities. LAGAT now offers a wider range of qualifications and training programmes than at the time of the previous inspection.

Employers and workplace supervisors are insufficiently involved in planning and progress reviews of learning. Staff carry out most formal progress reviews in a timely manner; but too often employers are not present and make little contribution to the planning of future assessments. Employers do not sufficiently understand the content of the NVQ and apprenticeship programmes followed by their employee. They have a

poor appreciation of how they can support learning. Not all learners fully understand the apprenticeship framework requirements and how much progress they have made towards completing their qualification. Employers are also unclear as to learners' progress and how much work remains to be completed. Many learners have exceeded their planned end date.

### Leadership and management

What progress has LAGAT made in improving its use of data as a tool for improvement? Insufficient progress

At the previous inspection inspectors identified that the use of data and planning for the introduction of new measures for success was insufficient. Managers make appropriate use of data for strategic and business planning. However, LAGAT has not sufficiently developed its arrangements for the analysis, evaluation and use of data as a tool for improving its provision.

The provider has recognised the need for increased investment in information technology to improve its access and use of data. It has well-developed plans in place for the purchase of new software systems. LAGAT routinely produces data reports for contract management and audit purposes. However, too little use is made of available information about the quality of the provision.

Managers have detailed information about the performance of individual staff and their performance against key activity indicators. However, whilst concerns over performance have been discussed at meetings, appropriate action points have not been agreed.

LAGAT makes insufficient use of numerical data to support staff appraisal and target setting to improve performance. The provider has made recent improvements to the monthly meetings between the centre coordinator and the training officers. However, it is too early to make a reliable judgement about their effectiveness.

What progress has LAGAT made in maintaining and improving the effectiveness of strategies to promote equality and diversity? Insufficient progress

At the previous inspection, the promotion of equality and diversity was judged satisfactory. LAGAT participates in a number of relevant partnerships and actively targets and encourages the involvement of learners who are hard to reach. It has established a group of staff to identify and implement actions for improvement and is introducing a range of relevant initiatives.

LAGAT does not currently have a sufficiently detailed plan that implements timely actions for the promotion of equality and diversity that covers all aspects of the learners' journey. The provider does not adequately tailor individual strategies to promote learners understanding of equality and diversity or make adequate use of relevant training strategies to reflect the experience of learners within the workplace.

The provider has made improvements to the capture of accurate data on learners' disability status. However, as identified at the previous inspection, LAGAT does not sufficiently use data for equality of opportunity purposes. Participation rates are regularly monitored and evaluated but not all categories used for comparison have sufficient detail. Only recently has data been analysed to compare the success of different groups. Currently the provider's does not routinely apply this assessment at the programme level or effectively use it to address any achievement gaps.

What progress has LAGAT made in introducing effective safeguarding arrangements?

Insufficient progress

LAGAT is not meeting current government child protection requirements. Senior managers have recognised the need to develop arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable adults. Staff that have regular contact with learners have completed Criminal Record Bureau checks. Most staff have attended recent relevant training. LAGAT has drafted a safeguarding policy and plans to introduce it by January 2010. However, the provider has not introduced adequate child protection arrangements.

A significant proportion of apprentices are under 18 years of age. Staff have not attended relevant child protection training. The provider does not maintain an appropriate central register. LAGAT does not have adequate child protection policies and procedures in place. The most recent self-assessment report does not make sufficient reference to child protection and safeguarding.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this report in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404040, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester, M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2009