

Insulation & Environmental Training Agency (IETA)

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 54958

Name of lead inspector: Nigel Bragg HMI

Last day of inspection: 2 October 2009

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Information about the provider

1. The Insulation & Environmental Training Agency (IETA) is the Training Division of the Thermal Insulation Contractors Association (TICA). The organisation was established in 1990 when the Thermal Insulation Contracting Industry (TICI) sector relinquished its arrangements with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB).
2. IETA's head office and national training centre is based in Darlington, County Durham. A training manager reports to the chief executive who has overall responsibility for IETA's strategic planning as well as equal opportunities and health and safety. Three tutors deliver National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) training and assessment. An assessor is responsible for the delivery and assessment of key skills. Three training officers liaise with employers and have responsibility for learner recruitment, progression, on- and off-the-job training and monitoring arrangements. In addition, they assess the non-trade specific units of the NVQ. An administrative assistant and training administrator provide administration support.
3. IETA is funded through the collection of a voluntary training levy from member companies within the TICI. A committee of industry representatives monitors the provision. Companies who employ and train apprentices are supported by means of incentive grants. In addition, funding is received from In-Training in both Scotland and Wales. At the time of inspection the North East Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded all apprentice training in England. Government funded training of apprentices represents 50% of the provider's business. The small Train to Gain programme was not subject to inspection.
4. All learners are following apprentice training in thermal insulation. Learners are employed within the construction industry and based on a wide variety of sites across England.
5. The provider provides training on behalf of the following providers:
 - InTraining (Scotland)
 - InTraining (Wales)
 - NETA

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Employer provision: Apprenticeships	94 apprentices

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Grade 3
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	3
Subject area	Grade
Building services	3

Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of IETA's provision is satisfactory. It has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Learners develop good practical skills that meet the needs of their employers. However, planning for timely success is poor. Target setting and review are not fully effective. Not all learners have a realistic programme completion date. Learners receive good on- and off-the-job training that is closely linked to their work activities. However, the quality assurance of teaching and learning is not fully effective. Employers receive insufficient formal feedback following off-the-job training to help them plan further on-the-job training. Learners receive good pastoral support from their training officers. IETA monitors attendance effectively. Learners have a good understanding of health and safety at work. The chief executive and managers provide a clear strategic direction that effectively supports improvement and development. IETA managers and staff have established a positive ethos that promotes learning and mutual respect. A committee of industry representatives does not receive all the data it needs to suggest actions for improvement. Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory and adequately protect learners, who feel safe. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. IETA ensures that learners are appropriately protected. However, few staff have received recent updating training and the number of learners recruited from some groups is

low. Training resources are good. Learners work in a healthy and safe environment. IETA provides good value for money.

Main findings

- Learners develop good practical skills that meet the needs of their employers. Learners work as a respected member of a work group on site. On completion of their apprenticeship some progress to supervisory positions.
- Planning for timely success is poor. Individual learning plans are not adequately individualised.
- Teaching and learning are good. Learners receive good training both on and off the job that is closely linked to their work activities.
- Employers provide a wide range of job opportunities to develop workplace skills. However, employers receive insufficient formal feedback following off-the-job training to help them plan further on-the-job training.
- Learners receive good pastoral support from their training officers. IETA monitors attendance effectively.
- Learners have a good understanding of health and safety at work. It is well reinforced during progress reviews. However, target review and setting are not fully effective.
- There is insufficient follow up of targets set at the previous progress reviews. Targets do not sufficiently help learners make progress.
- The chief executive and managers provide a clear strategic direction that effectively supports improvement and development. IETA managers and staff have established a positive ethos that promotes learning and mutual respect.
- IETA has good links with employers and professional groups. It very effectively promotes accredited training. However, a supervisory committee does not receive all relevant data to inform actions for improvement.
- Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory and adequately protect learners. Learners feel safe. Staff have yet to receive relevant planned updating training.
- Promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Learners have an appropriate understanding of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour. Too few staff have received recent updating training. The number of learners recruited from some groups is low.
- Arrangements for the observation of the quality of teaching and learning do not effectively secure quality improvement for all learners.
- Training resources are good. Learners work in a healthy and safe environment. IETA provides good value for money.

What does IETA need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all staff participate in training that updates their knowledge of equality, diversity and safeguarding.

- Improve timely achievement rates by ensuring that all learners have a realistic programme completion date.
- Implement initiatives to ensure the range of learners better reflects the areas they are recruited from.
- Improve short-term target setting in progress reviews.
- Ensure employers are better informed about learners' progress and tasks they need to complete at work.
- Provide the committee of industry representatives with all the data it needs to inform actions for improvement.
- Improve arrangements for the observation of the quality of teaching and learning that secures learner focused quality improvement.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- The quality of training and facilities at the training centre
- The support they receive from the staff
- Gaining experience at work
- Training that meets the needs of workplace requirements
- Feeling safe at work
- Being part of a team
- Earning whilst learning

What learners would like to see improved:

- The location of the accommodation whilst attending block release training
- The amount of IT based learning resources used during training sessions
- The range of pipe sizes available at the training centre
- The length of the very long breaks at the training centre
- The opportunities to take further qualifications
- The amount of information they receive about when they are due to complete their programme

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- The knowledge and practical skills apprentices gain during their off-the-job training
- Knowing what activities learners are undertaking at the training centre

What employers would like to see improved:

- The availability of a higher level qualification that will allow learners to progress into supervisory/management roles
- The amount of feedback on learners' progress

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

7. IETA has made satisfactory progress since its previous inspection. Senior managers have established and effectively communicated a clear strategic direction. IETA has identified appropriate priorities in its business plan that focus on many aspects of the learning journey. IETA has made good improvements to the quality of training resources and facilities available to learners. It provides good value for money. Management structures and staffing levels are satisfactory. All staff are suitably qualified and experienced. IETA collects and uses stakeholders' views appropriately. Success rates show an improving trend. However, timely success rates have remained consistently below the national rate. Targets for learners are set but are not ambitious and often lack detail or fail to be appropriately time bound. Staff development is satisfactory but has focused on improving teaching skills rather than wider personal development and updating. The most recent self-assessment report was generally accurate and self-critical, though often insufficiently evaluative and overly descriptive. The self-assessment process has led to a satisfactory pace of improvement. The associated report has given prominence to safeguarding and equality and diversity. However, updating training for all staff has not yet been delivered. IETA has not fully addressed some key areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection monitoring visit.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

8. Success rates are satisfactory. Since 2006, overall success rates have continued to improve and have risen to 67% for 2007/08. For 2008/09 the rate was good at 82%. Achievement of key skills is excellent and has continually improved over the past three years. All learners who complete their programme achieve their key skills. Timely success rates for completion of the full apprenticeship show an improving trend but remain low.
9. Learners develop good employability skills. They acquire good practical skills and relevant theoretical knowledge during their training. Most learners are occupationally competent before completion of their apprenticeship. Many apprentices have progressed to supervisory positions at work. In addition to the requirements of the apprenticeship, IETA offers learners the opportunity to attain key skills at a higher level. Many complete key skills in ICT at levels 1 and 2, in addition to their framework. All learners are employed and most continue with their employer on completion of their training. They work as a respected member of site teams.
10. Learners feel safe at work and at the training centre. Their knowledge and practice of health and safety is outstanding. Health and safety are a significant part of their training which employers effectively develop.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

11. Teaching and learning are good. Learners receive good training, both on and off-the-job. It is closely linked and very relevant to their work activities. Resources for training are good. Employers provide a wide range of job opportunities to develop workplace skills and reinforce health and safety. However, many employers are not adequately aware of what learners need to do at work to meet the requirements of the training programme. Following progress reviews most employer supervisors receive satisfactory verbal feedback on learners' progress. However, the arrangements to provide feedback following off-the-job training do not effectively support planning of further on-the-job training by employers.
12. Learners have a high regard for health and safety at work. They receive extensive off-the-job training that is well supported and reinforced by employers in the workplace. Most learners achieve relevant additional health and safety qualifications. There is good checking of learners' understanding of health and safety during progress reviews.
13. IETA regularly assesses learners at their workplace. Appropriately qualified staff effectively plan and carry out assessment. The provider uses an adequate range of assessment methods in a single assessment with appropriate emphasis on direct observation of learners in the workplace. Assessors provide very good feedback to the learner following an assessment and give adequate verbal feedback to the employer.
14. Learners receive progress reviews every 12 weeks. Reviews include good reinforcement of health and safety. However, there is insufficient follow up of progress made in completing targets set at the previous review. Targets set during progress reviews are not sufficiently detailed or time bound to allow learners to aid learners' progress.
15. Learners receive satisfactory support and guidance overall and good pastoral support from their training officers. IETA suitably monitors attendance at the training centre and employers provide good feedback about absence at work. Staff sensitively and appropriately deal with learners' personal issues. As part of their off-the-job training all learners receive good reinforcement of equality and diversity issues. However, IETA does not adequately enhance understanding during progress reviews.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

16. Both the chief executive and managers provide clear strategic direction that effectively supports the improvement and development of the learners' programme. IETA appropriately communicates relevant strategic aims to staff who are clear about their role in achieving relevant targets. IETA managers and

staff have established a positive ethos that promotes learning and mutual respect.

17. Links with employers and professional groups are good. Strong emphasis is placed on engaging with employers in the sector to promote accredited training for thermal insulation. IETA works well across a wide geographical area to support the achievement of regional, national and international priorities.
18. A committee of industry representatives meets to discuss sector specific issues. As part of its monitoring role, the committee receives detailed reports from IETA to aid an appropriate assessment of the quality of programme management. The committee suitably monitors key training related data including funding and welfare issues. However, the committee does not receive detailed timely success data to inform effective evaluation and formulation of actions for improvement.
19. IETA's safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. A senior member of staff has responsibility for safeguarding. The provider has ensured that relevant staff have completed a Criminal Records Bureau check. The safeguarding policy and procedure adequately protects learners in the workplace and at the training centre. IETA very effectively promotes learners' understanding of health and safety to secure a safe working and learning environment. IETA has adequate arrangements to ensure learners' safety when using computer facilities at the training centre. Staff effectively monitor learners' experiences at the training centre and workplace to ensure protection from bullying and harassment. However, staff have yet to receive planned updating training to enhance their awareness of safeguarding and the Every Child Matters agenda.
20. Promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Staff have an adequate understanding of their role in implementing IETA's equality of opportunity policies and procedures. The provider effectively responds to all complaints and implements timely remedial action as required. All learners and employers receive relevant and current information that suitably promotes a non-stereotypical view of equality and diversity. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and what to do if they have any concerns. IETA effectively monitors and deals with any behaviour that may cause offence. This is well checked and promoted during sessions at the training centre. However, training officers do not sufficiently reinforce learners' knowledge of equality and diversity during workplace visits. Too few staff have received recent updating training.
21. Previous and current recruitment patterns conform to those found in the industry. At the time of the inspection all learners were male with approximately 3% from minority ethnic communities. IETA has no direct control over the profile of the apprentices as employers recruit the learners. To address the imbalance the provider has implemented a range of strategies to improve the rate of applications from under-represented groups. These have had some

success though the current number of learners from under-represented groups starting the programme remains low.

22. IETA has satisfactory arrangements to engage with users of its service to support and promote improvements. Users have adequate opportunities to give IETA their views on the service they receive. IETA appropriately analyses feedback to improve its service. For example, the provider has used the outcome of feedback to introduce improvements to the information employers receive and the planning of training sessions.
23. IETA makes satisfactory use of self-assessment to improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners. The process is a well established and integral part of the provider's quality improvement strategy. IETA uses a suitable range of stakeholders' views and relevant data to inform judgements. They also monitor the associated improvement plan adequately. Internal verification procedures are satisfactory. IETA monitors the quality of teaching and learning at the training centre through observation. However, the observations do not sufficiently focus on learning during training. On-the-job training is not subject to a sufficiently effective assessment by observation.
24. IETA manages its resources well and provides good value for money. Training centre facilities are good. The provider appropriately maintains equipment used in practical sessions. It efficiently uses accommodation and staff to support learning. Training facilities are matched well to the needs of the industry. Workplaces include access to a good range of learning materials, equipment and facilities. All learners work in a healthy, safe and welcoming environment.

Information about the inspection

25. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's training 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 LSC or other funding bodies, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
26. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the provider. They also observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in the subject area the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Insulation & Environmental Training Agency (IETA)

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	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners	130				130
Full-time learners					
Part-time learners					
Overall effectiveness	3				3
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?	3				
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	3				3
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	3				
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?	3				
Leadership and management	3				3
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>	3				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3				
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?	2				

*where applicable to the type of provision

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