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Ms R Triggs  
Managing Director  
CMS Vocational Training Ltd  
Majestic House  
29 Green Street  
Huddersfield  
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Dear Ms Triggs

Ofsted 2009-10 survey inspection programme: the role of employers in work-related education and training

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation during my visit on 10 November 2009. I am particularly grateful to you and your staff for the hard work involved in preparing for the visit and for giving up a great deal of time during the visit to meet me. Please pass on my thanks to all those concerned.

The visit provided valuable information that will contribute to our national survey of good practice in the role that employers play in work-related education and training. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing organisations but individual contributors will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with five staff, five employers and five learners; observation of a learner's progress review; and scrutiny of the examples of good practice provided. Several documents, case studies and data were reviewed.

I agreed to provide a summary of the good practice seen and to identify some areas for development, and outline the main findings below.

The main strengths

- Overall success rates on business administration apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship programmes have remained high and, in 2007/08, were 84% and 100% respectively.
- Timely success rates continue to show year-on-year improvements and are significantly above the national rate.
- Networking arrangements with employers are particularly effective and well-established to benefit learners. CMS staff are members of Business Networking International for both Wakefield and Huddersfield, and the

Huddersfield Town Centre Association. Each week, staff meet a wide range of employers in the region and use the opportunity to expand their employer base and to provide additional opportunities for learners. They maintain a good understanding of small- and medium-sized enterprises and of the changing world of work.

- Links with employers are strong and maintained well by assessors who work effectively with managers and supervisors to prepare individual programmes for learners that make good use of the training provided by their employers. They establish close relationships, maintaining consistency and quality and helping learners to make progress. Many employers have worked with CMS for a number of years.
- CMS staff have a role as 'key account holders' for employers and are their main point of contact. Communication between staff and employers is good. Staff respond quickly and effectively to employers' queries, and deal with potential problems before they impact on learners. The customer relationships management database is effective in recording contact and subsequent action-planning with employers.
- Employers' involvement in the planning and delivery of training is very good. Workplace supervisors are highly involved in discussions that cover the type of on-the-job training that the employer can provide. They discuss topics, such as increased responsibilities and job rotation, to enhance learners' skills development. Many employers provide good training opportunities that complement the National Vocational Qualification.
- Workplace supervisors take an active part in learners' progress reviews and contribute well to action plans to support learners' development.

The main areas for further development are to:

- establish effective review procedures with all workplace supervisors
- develop the customer relationships management database to provide a monthly report to monitor activity.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop provision. If there are any points you wish to discuss, please contact me. We gather information on the impact of our visits. To this end, you may be contacted by telephone or sent a questionnaire to complete six to 12 months after the visit. I hope you will contribute to this evaluation.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website and will be available to the team for your next inspection.

Yours sincerely

Linda Gallacher  
Additional Inspector