

Stubbing Court Training Ltd

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 54649

Name of lead inspector: Stephen Miller HMI

Last day of inspection: 18 June 2010

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Information about the provider

1. Stubbing Court Training (SCT) is a limited company established in 1982 located near Chesterfield in Derbyshire. The company provides land-based training in horse care. The majority of training takes place at equine centres throughout Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and West Yorkshire. However, the company also works with a small number of centres located outside these counties. SCT provides training at 11 centres throughout these areas and works with approximately 66 employers. Programmes are funded through a single contract with the Skills Funding Agency, covering the East Midlands and Yorkshire regions.
2. Currently 93 learners are on programme with SCT. Of these, 32 learners are advanced apprentices, 60 are apprentices, and one learner is on an Entry to Employment programme. Forty-seven per cent of SCT's learners have additional learning needs. In addition to government funded apprentices, SCT provides training for employers and learners in equine transport.
3. The unemployment rate in the East Midlands is 5.1% and 2.45% in Derbyshire. The proportion of the East Midlands school leavers achieving five or more GCSEs at grade C or above is 63%. Approximately 8% of the East Midlands population are from minority ethnic groups, and 1.4% in Derbyshire.
4. The unemployment rate in West Yorkshire is 5%. In 2009 the proportion of West Yorkshire's school leavers achieving five or more GCSEs at grade C or above was 61%; approximately 11% of West Yorkshire's population are from minority ethnic groups.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Provision for young learners: Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment	1 learner
Employer provision: Apprenticeships	92 apprentices

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 1
Capacity to improve	Grade 1
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	1
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	1
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	1
Subject areas	Grade
Horse care	1

Overall effectiveness

5. The overall effectiveness of SCT's apprenticeship provision is outstanding. Learners enjoy their training and speak highly of their programmes. The chief executive of the company provides excellent leadership, promoting high standards. Targets for improvement are set and monitored effectively. The previous outstanding provision has been maintained with further improvement since the last inspection. Outcomes for learners are outstanding with learners developing a high level of practical and work-related skills. The number of learners who successfully achieve their qualification in the planned timescales has improved significantly.
6. Teaching and learning are good overall, with practical training being outstanding. The extent to which the programmes meet the needs of learners is outstanding. Enrichment activities are outstanding, with good opportunities for learners to participate in courses run by international riders. Support for learners requiring additional help to develop their literacy and numeracy skills is good.
7. SCT has developed very effective partnerships with employers, colleges and external agencies, which improve the provision and benefit learners. Arrangements to ensure learners are safe are good. Learners feel very safe and effectively utilise their health and safety training to ensure safe working

practices. SCT's promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. The company engages with a range of community groups and external agencies to promote its programmes to groups traditionally underrepresented within the equine industry. All groups of learners achieve equally well.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are outstanding. Success rates have been consistently high and are well above the national average for this area. Success rates within the planned timescales have improved significantly and are well above the national average. Most learners gain employment at the end of their training.
- Learners develop excellent practical skills, in most cases exceeding those required for the qualification. Learners have a good understanding of health and safety; they take responsibility for their own well-being and the safety of others.
- Teaching and learning are good overall. Practical training is outstanding, with learners receiving instruction in show jumping, training of young stock, and the use of the very latest equipment. In some theory sessions, teaching lacks inspiration. Information and learning technology (ILT) is not used sufficiently to support learning.
- Assessment is generally good; however, the company has recognised that it needs to improve the way in which this is recorded. The use of photographic evidence needs to link better to specific assessment criteria. In most cases the internal verification process has identified this, and plans are in place to further improve the internal verification process.
- Target setting and monitoring of learners' progress are good. Learners are clear about what needs to be done to help them progress. SCT sets employers clear targets for what they need to achieve with their learners. In most cases targets are sufficiently challenging; however, there is insufficient challenge for some advanced learners.
- The range and content of provision meet the needs of learners and employers exceptionally well. Learning is well planned, flexible and highly individualised. Enrichment activities are outstanding with good opportunities for learners to work with international equestrian trainers.
- Care, guidance and support for learners are good. Support with the development of numeracy skills is particularly good, with individual training sessions that link to the vocational area. Tutors use excellent visual aids; learners enjoy these sessions and make good progress.
- The strategic planning of learning at SCT is very effective with a clear focus on improving provision. Development plans are clear with challenging targets that are frequently monitored to assess progress. The strategic plan has a strong focus on safeguarding and the promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity.
- SCT's approach to promoting equality and diversity, tackling discrimination and narrowing the achievement gap is outstanding. SCT has a clear strategy to

engage with learners from groups traditionally underrepresented in the equine industry. All groups of learners achieve equally well.

- Employer engagement and work with external partners are outstanding. Highly effective and productive links have been made with colleges and other external partners to develop projects that improve the provision and benefit learners.
- SCT have a strong focus on quality improvement. The self-assessment process is a very effective tool for quality improvement. Data are used well to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Very effective use is made of learner and employer feedback. Quality improvement planning has maintained and improved the high standards from the last inspection.
- SCT's self-assessment process has been successful at identifying and implementing strategies to improve some aspects of teaching, assessment and internal verification.

What does Stubbing Court Training Ltd need to do to improve further?

- continue to improve the quality of provision by implementing identified changes to assessment and internal verification procedures
- increase the range of assessment evidence used to provide sufficient challenge to more advanced learners
- continue to implement the leadership and management strategies to improve the theory teaching in order to provide more inspirational teaching.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the high level of involvement in practical training
- opportunities to work with very high quality horses
- help and support from SCT's staff and their employers
- the opportunities to participate in classes run by international riders.

What learners would like to see improved:

- more information on employment opportunities after they have completed their awards.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the first class guidance and help they receive from SCT
- the opportunities they have to train with international riders
- the very informative newsletter
- the strong focus on linking training to employer needs

- the help in developing and maintaining high standards.

What employers would like to see improved:

- better clarity in some of the training documentation used in the workplace.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 1

8. SCT's capacity to make and sustain improvements is outstanding. The company has improved success rates and increased the number of apprentices who are successful within the planned timescales. Success rates have remained significantly above the national average for this area for the last three years. Success rates for apprentices requiring additional learning support have improved significantly. This has been achieved against a background of an increase in the number of apprentices and the geographical spread of SCT. All current apprentices are on target to achieve their qualification within the planned time.
9. The quality of provision is good. The company has made considerable improvements to the provision with the introduction of new purpose-designed classroom facilities at its main centre. The quality of support for literacy and numeracy has been improved. SCT has recently introduced a new range of ILT to support learning.
10. The use of the self-assessment process as a quality improvement tool is well understood throughout the company. This has been significant in maintaining high standards and making improvements to the provision, particularly in steering the company's approach to engaging with underrepresented groups. The very effective self-assessment process makes good use of learners' and employers' views. SCT has successfully introduced good arrangements to safeguard young people. Quality improvement arrangements have successfully identified the need to improve theory teaching to make sessions more inspirational and the need to improve some assessment and internal verification processes.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 1

11. Outcomes for learners are outstanding. Overall success rates are high and are well above the national average for the equine industry. In 2008/09, 78% of learners completed their awards successfully; success rates are continuing to rise in the current year. The proportion of learners who achieve within the planned timescales has remained above the national average for the last three years, with continued improvement during the current year. Key skills development and achievement are good, with good integration of key skills into the vocational area. Employment rates for apprentices are excellent, with most progressing to supervisory roles within the equine industry.
12. Learners make excellent progress and develop outstanding practical skills. They develop yard and riding skills very well at their employer placements, where they are also fully involved in a very good range of relevant equine activities. They develop personal and social skills effectively to prepare them for further employment.

13. Learners state that they feel very safe and that they thoroughly enjoy their training. They apply safe working practices at work. Learners have a very good understanding of health and safety; they take full responsibility for their own safety and that of others. Learners appreciate the importance of improving their levels of physical fitness to work in the industry. Training and work areas are organised well, with a strong emphasis on health and safety.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

14. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The standard of practical training is outstanding; learners develop an impressive range of equine skills and experience in excellent employer placements. Learners receive very good practical training in a wide variety of specialist subjects such as show jumping, training of young stock, and use of specialist equipment. Learners are motivated and enthusiastic about their learning. Theory sessions are available at a good range of locations which learners value. However, some theory teaching lacks inspiration and sufficient challenge. Small groups with high levels of individual support facilitate effective learning. Good work to introduce ILT in teaching has recently commenced; however, ILT is not yet used effectively by all staff to enhance learning.
15. Assessment is good overall. However, the organisation has recognised the need to improve the way in which assessments are recorded. In some cases photographic evidence is not sufficiently linked to a specific assessment criteria; in most cases this had been identified by the internal verification process. Plans are in place to further improve the internal verification process. The standard of learners' portfolios is satisfactory.
16. Target setting and the monitoring of learner progress are good and timely. Learners are clear about what they need to do to attain their goals. Comprehensive skills check sheets are used well by employers and learners to record training and monitor progress. Employers are clear about what they are required to do to help their learners to progress. There is insufficient challenge for some advanced apprentices. These learners do not contribute to setting their own achievement objectives and their portfolios lack variety of evidence.
17. The range and content of provision meet the needs of learners and employers exceptionally well. Learning is well planned, flexible and highly individualised. Learners have good opportunities to inform SCT about aspects of their programmes that can be improved. Progression opportunities for learners from foundation to advanced level awards are good, with most progressing to higher level qualifications. Enrichment activities are outstanding. The highly effective use of international equestrian trainers, in a series of master classes, provides first class opportunities for learners to improve their riding. Learners have excellent opportunities to develop skills on specialist resources and equipment.
18. Care, guidance and support for learners are good. Numeracy support is particularly effective. A high number of learners have been identified as needing additional support, specifically in the development of their numeracy skills.

Individual training sessions are good, with tutors using excellent visual aids. Learners enjoy the sessions and make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade 1

19. SCT promotes, sets, and monitors very high standards for the management of the apprenticeship programmes. Excellent outcomes for learners are being maintained. The strategic planning at SCT is outstanding. Development plans are clear with challenging targets that are realistic and continually monitored to assess progress. Enrichment activities have been developed that inspire and motivate learners. SCT provides programmes that reflect the needs of learners and employers effectively.
20. The promotion of safeguarding is good; learners feel safe. Policies are devised well and informed by risk-assessment. Safeguarding is included as part of the company's overall strategic plan; SCT works well to interpret and implement new government standards. All training staff and the majority of employers have received training in good safeguarding practice. SCT promotes the safety of young people well through the use of posters and the prominent display of contact information.
21. SCT's approach to equality and diversity, tackling discrimination and narrowing the achievement gap between different groups of learners is outstanding. SCT has a clear strategy to engage learners from groups traditionally underrepresented in the equine industry. The company has successfully developed projects with community groups to promote the equine industry to young people from the inner city and from minority ethnic groups. It has effectively increased participation on apprenticeships by these young people and by young men. The company has realistic entry requirements that potential applicants do not consider exclusive. The success of different groups of learners is monitored effectively. Data show that all learners achieve equally well. Learners have a good understanding of personal values and a respect for differences. Learners are clear about their rights and responsibilities. Training for learners in equality and diversity are reinforced during progress reviews and through high visibility posters displayed at training centres. SCT has been successful at raising the understanding of equality and diversity with employers who have a good understanding of their responsibilities to learners. The company has good systems in place to support learners who require additional learning support. Learners who work in remote areas and are required to be accommodated at their place of work are supported very effectively by SCT.
22. SCT's employer engagement and partnership working are outstanding. Its relationships with colleges and other training providers are excellent and benefit all. The company has utilised its links with other providers to develop projects to improve the overall provision and benefit learners.
23. The company has a strong focus on quality improvement. The self-assessment process is clear, inclusive, and well understood by both staff and employers. Very effective use is made of data and feedback from learners, employers and

key partners to support findings. Arrangements to quality assure key procedures are linked to an overarching quality improvement calendar. Audits take place for compliance and the company uses external sources to verify its own evaluation of key procedures. A key focus of quality improvement has been on improving theory teaching; SCT has been successful in raising the standard of teaching, which is now good. The company has identified the need to improve some of its assessment and internal verification processes through its self-assessment process. Strategies to address this have been successfully implemented.

24. SCT provides outstanding value for money. Learners' success is outstanding with many achieving practical skills that are higher than those required by their qualification. Partnerships with external partners and employers provide excellent opportunities for learners to acquire skills that enhance their employment prospects significantly. SCT has a high profile within the equine industry which is used effectively to benefit learners.

Information about the inspection

25. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's chief executive 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 Skills Funding Agency, the previous inspection report, 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, assessment and progress reviews. Inspectors also collected evidence from the Entry to Employment programme.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Stubbing Court Training 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	93	93
Part-time learners		
Overall effectiveness	1	1
Capacity to improve	1	
Outcomes for learners	1	1
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	1	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	1	
How well do learners progress?	1	
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2	
How safe do learners feel?	1	
Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*	NA	
How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*	NA	
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?	2	
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	1	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2	
Leadership and management	1	1
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	1	
How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*	NA	
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2	
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	1	
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	1	
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	1	
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	1	

*where applicable to the type of provision

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