

S.W. Durham Training Limited

Independent learning provider

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|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Inspection dates | | 11–15 March 2013 |
| Overall effectiveness | This inspection: | Requires improvement-3 |
| | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory-3 |
| Outcomes for learners | | Requires improvement-3 |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | | Requires improvement-3 |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | | Requires improvement-3 |

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- Too many apprentices leave the programme without successfully completing the full apprenticeship training framework.
- Not enough training sessions are good or outstanding. The delivery of theory sessions at advanced level is too tutor centred, lacking pace and does not fully engage all learners. Tutors do not make enough use of learning technology to enliven learning.
- Learners' broad understanding and application of equality and diversity is not sufficiently developed. The embedding of equality and diversity in theory sessions is not consistent.
- Leaders and managers do not focus enough on developing outstanding teaching. Tutors are not provided with sufficient clear actions and training and development on how to improve their lessons.

This provider has the following strengths:

- Good rates of progression into employment. S.W. Durham Training Limited (SWDT) uses its employer network well to ensure most unemployed learners who successfully complete their basic training programme gain employment with local companies.
- Good vocational skills developed in the training centre and the workplace meet learners' and employers' needs well.
- Good practical training in the workshop. Staff use their extensive vocational experience to good effect within the training centre in supporting and guiding their learners in their development of knowledge and understanding.
- Good resources in the training centre and workplace enabling learners to access modern machine tools and equipment. Classrooms are generally of a high standard.
- Assessment in the workplace is well planned, frequent and thorough.
- SWDT works in effective partnership with local employers to help meet skills needs and is seen as an integral part of local engineering provision.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of learners who successfully complete their programmes, particularly for learners aged 16 to 18 following advanced programmes. Ensure through clear target-setting and close monitoring of learner progress that learners achieve within their planned end dates.
- Improve the delivery of theory classes by more effective use of questioning and checking of learner understanding. Make better use of interactive technologies to enliven lessons, to support assessment and to enhance workplace coaching sessions. Provide more detailed narrative on learners' written assignments enabling learners to understand how to improve.
- Improve the proportion of outstanding lessons by ensuring that lesson observations lead to high quality action planning and training. Link action plans closely to staff appraisals and subsequent development activities which support tutors and assessors to become more reflective practitioners so that they recognise what they need to do to improve practice.
- Further improve learners' understanding and awareness of equality and diversity themes in theory sessions by more effective embedding of the topic within a vocational context. Ensure tutors systematically, through lessons and reviews, develop and embed a thorough understanding by learners of equality and diversity.
- Improve performance management by better use of data to further develop the accountability of staff and managers for performance within their areas. Ensure staff understand organisational and individual targets to increase success rates. Extend the collection and use of data to include learners' progression onto higher education to provide a fuller picture of the success of the organisation.

Inspection judgements

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|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Outcomes for learners | Requires improvement |
|------------------------------|----------------------|

- Overall success on apprenticeships has declined from above national rates in 2009/10 to be 5% below the national rate in 2011/12. The proportion of apprentices completing their programmes within expected timescales also declined in the same period but has remained steady at around 6% above the national rate of 57.1%.
- Success rates for engineering learners on intermediate programmes increased from 61.9% in 2008/09 to 75.3% in 2011/12, to be close to the national rate of 76.3%. The proportion of intermediate apprentices completing their programmes within expected timescales also increased from 56.9% in 2008/09 to 73.6% in 2011/12, remaining above the national rate of 65.6%.
- Success rates for engineering learners on advanced programmes declined from a high of 84.5% in 2008/09 to 57.8% in 2011/12 to now be well below the national rate of 76.9%. The proportion of advanced apprentices completing their programmes within expected timescales also fell from 79.5% in 2009/10 to 50.6% in 2011/12, which was below the national rate of 61.0%.
- The proportion of learners remaining on their programmes has improved significantly to 89.5% to date in 2012/13 from 68.2% at same time in 2011/12. No learners have yet left their intermediate apprenticeship programmes to date in 2012/13 compared to only 77% being retained at the same time in 2011/12. The proportion of learners remaining on their advanced apprenticeship programmes has improved to 87.2% to date in 2012/13 from 59% at the same time in 2011/12.
- The number of learners who exceeded their expected programme duration has significantly reduced. The total number of learners who extended beyond their end date has reduced from

95 when records were first collected following the last inspection to 29 currently. Only three learners who have completed their apprenticeship training to date in 2012/13 were beyond their end date compared to 11 at the same time last year.

- Progression into employment is very good. In 2008/09 92% of learners progressed into employment. In 2009/10, 100% of learners, in 2010/11 77%, of learners, in 2011/12 66% of learners, and in 2012 to date 88% of learners have progressed into employment
- Skill development is good in engineering including mechanical fitting, machining, electrical and fabrication and welding. Learners develop good vocational skills and employability skills during their programmes and gain in confidence. Employers value the skills developed and recognise the contribution learners bring to their business. Many learners progress to significant positions of responsibility within their work place.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement, reflecting the decline in success rates to below the national rate in 2011/12. Particularly, the delivery of theory sessions at advanced level requires improvement.
- Staff use their extensive vocational experience to good effect in supporting and guiding their learners during practical sessions. The practical training programme in the training centre is well planned and delivered, leading to the development of good vocational skills which meet learners' and employers' needs well. Attention to health and safety is good. Learners quickly become confident at working to safe working practices. Classroom resources are good overall, with good information technology facilities in comfortable rooms adjacent to appropriate practical facilities which include highly specialist and general engineering equipment used for development work by commercial companies as well as for training. However, staff, while vocationally skilled, do not always make best use of these resources to create fully involved, innovative learning.
- In the better theory sessions, tutors use an appropriate range of methods to engage the learner and provide relevant links from theory to practice. For example, using 'go' and 'no go' plug gauges to reinforce the use of British Standards applied to gauge design and using 'video clips' to identify the most effective way to deliver a presentation in a computer-aided design project session.
- In some of the less effective theory sessions the delivery is too tutor centred, lacking pace and does not fully engage learners or meet their individual needs. Many of the learners who complete tasks early have insufficient additional activities to provide further challenge. Whilst some effective use of questioning was observed, the regular checking of learner understanding during sessions is insufficient. Most sessions have clear aims and learning objectives but these are infrequently referred to and a minority of lessons do not have a summary recap or checking of learning outcomes.
- Teaching, learning and assessment supports apprentices who quickly move from basic training at the training centre into employment. A minority of apprentices benefit from a regular exchange visit with a German engineering company, which enhances their understanding of German language and culture as well as improving their team-working skills and confidence. During the exchange programme, apprentices gain a useful, additional computer-aided drawing certificate to complement their performing engineering operations qualification.
- SWDT uses its employer network well to ensure most unemployed learners who successfully complete their basic training programme gain employment with local companies. Many employers enhance their apprentices' skill development with a further period of additional, none accredited training which covers advanced skill modules, including computer-aided design, machining and programmable logic controllers. Employers value highly these additional skills.
- Assessment in the workplace is well planned, frequent and thorough. The standard of learners' written evidence is good. Portfolio evidence for advanced apprentices includes good use of witness testimony and photographic images. Employer links are effective and used well to ensure learners have the opportunity to cover all apprenticeship framework requirements.

However, written assignment work at the training centre is not routinely corrected and does not include sufficient guidance for learners on how they could improve.

- Learner progress reviews are thorough. All aspects of the learner programme are checked and appropriate targets set for completion at the next meeting are shared with employers who participate appropriately in the review process. In one company, after discussion with the employer, the apprentice implemented improvements to a railway casting storage system which successfully met the requirement of the qualification and also benefited the company. Monitoring of learner progress is effective, but does not sufficiently utilise the information on learner progress available at the training centre.
- The promotion of English and mathematics is satisfactory. Taught sessions effectively cover all the required aspects of functional skills during the basic training period at the centre. A few sessions reinforce learner understanding of English and mathematics, but this is not consistent across all lessons.
- Overall, information advice and guidance are good, being thorough at induction and reinforced during basic training and reviews. Initial assessment promptly identifies any learner support needs which are responded to quickly. One-to-one support is particularly effective at overcoming barriers to learning. However, SWDT recognise that a very small minority of learners on fabrication and welding programmes were placed on a technical certificate which did not meet their individual needs and ability. This has now been addressed.
- Equality, diversity and safeguarding are promoted well during induction and reinforced appropriately with posters in the workshop areas. Case study materials are used effectively to check learner understanding during workplace progress reviews. However, whilst much good development work is taking place, the embedding of equality and diversity in theory sessions requires improvement.
- Most apprentices make effective use of SWDT's virtual learning environment which is populated with an effective range of learning and assessment materials. Learners access this from home and use this resource well to catch up on any missed sessions or to reinforce a particular learning point. SWDT provide a well-stocked, small library resource within the training centre but this is not regularly used by learners.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The overall quality of leadership and management requires improvement. Employers are supportive of SWDT and recognise the benefits of the training programmes. Learners' needs are met although many learners perceive weaknesses in programme organisation. Arrangements to monitor the quality in each of the three subcontractors are satisfactory. Regular meetings resolve any issues although the informal approach misses opportunities to develop and share best practice.
- SWDT works in effective partnership with employers to help meet skills needs and is seen as an integral part of local engineering provision. Employers pay a nominal sum for which they can access benefits in training opportunities including health and safety training for their employees. Employers are supportive of SWDT and the benefits of the training programmes. Most local engineering employees have undertaken training with SWDT, many making good career progress and rising to senior positions. Many SWDT employees and several members of the company board started their careers as SWDT apprentices.
- In recent months SWDT have increased the focus on quality to provide increased attention at all levels to learner progress and attainment. Improvements to corporate governance, management meetings and to assessor case conferences have increased the focus on learner progress and attainment. Assessors and managers now better use data on learner progress. A senior manager now has responsibility for improvement. New team leader roles have clearer responsibilities for performance. Job descriptions for revised roles have been prepared although some focus mainly on tasks and miss opportunities to emphasise the required outcomes. Some appointments are

too recent to judge the impact. Actions identified at the previous inspection have been attempted but some have yet to lead to actual improvement.

- SWDT has developed a new strategic plan identifying its high aspirations for learners and for teaching and learning. The board have recently approved targets for improvement but these are too recent to evaluate any impact. Accountability of individual staff for their own performance is increasing. Board members now have a more comprehensive understanding of company performance. Monitoring of learner progress is improving with regular meetings and reports to senior managers. While success rates on apprenticeship programmes were low in 2011/12, in-year data for 2012/13 indicates a significant improvement. Managers have become more proactive in monitoring quality and have started to conduct 'walk through' observations and quality audits to enforce standards. A new post of learning and development advisor has been created to provide targeted development. However, ongoing monitoring and improvement of teaching and learning requires further development.
- All teachers are observed at least annually. Observations of teaching and learning identify useful strengths and areas for development. However, insufficient attention is given to some key aspects including the use of information learning technology and the embedding of English, mathematics and equality topics into vocational subjects. The extent to which learners are provided with stretch and challenge and the effectiveness of learning is not fully evaluated. Identification of best practice to stimulate more rapid improvement is sometimes missed. While SWDT coach the minority of teachers judged no better than satisfactory, information from lesson observations do not consistently contribute to appraisals and resulting plans do not routinely contain actions to improve teaching, learning and assessment.
- All staff receive training in equality and diversity and in safeguarding issues. Good equality and diversity case studies are used to support learner reviews to develop learners' understanding. Managers are starting to monitor the relative attainment of different learner groups. Appropriate support is provided for learner welfare issues with a useful target for the responsible manager to achieve success rates for these learners comparable to other learner groups.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet legislative requirements. Information on designated safeguarding officers is appropriately displayed. All staff benefit from annual updates to their initial safeguarding training. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks are completed for all staff and an appropriate, summary list maintained. SWDT has well established arrangements to promote health and safety for learners starting work. A comprehensive review includes child-protection issues and the content of workplace induction. The accident rate is low with only one centre-based incident in the last year. However, opportunities are missed to collate information relating to minor incidents to enable information on best practice to be more effectively shared.
- SWDT's self-assessment report is accurate. Inspectors agreed with overall grades within the self-assessment report. SWDT are open about their perceived strengths and weaknesses and recognise more improvement is needed. A learner council meets several times each year to ensure learner views are considered. However, arrangements to gather the views of employers, subcontractors and other partners to contribute to improvement are underdeveloped.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

| S.W. Durham Training Limited | | | |
|--|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate | Overall | Apprenticeships | Other work-based learning |
| Overall effectiveness | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Outcomes for learners | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management | 3 | 3 | 3 |

| Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Grade |
|--|--------------|
| Engineering | 3 |

Provider details

| S.W. Durham Training Limited | |
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| Type of provider | Independent learning provider |
| Age range of learners | 16+ |
| Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year | Full-time: 943 |
| | Part-time: 0 |
| Principal/CEO | Charl Erasmus |
| Date of previous inspection | March 2010 |
| Website address | www.swdt.co.uk |

| Provider information at the time of the inspection | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|-----|-----------------|-----|----------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| Main course or learning programme level | Level 1 or below | | Level 2 | | Level 3 | | Level 4 and above | |
| | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ |
| Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships) | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ |
| Full-time | 0 | 18 | 33 | 29 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 2 |
| Part-time | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age | | | | | | | | |
| | Intermediate | | Advanced | | Higher | | | |
| | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | | |
| | 10 | 11 | 38 | 115 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Number of learners aged 14-16 | 56 | | | | | | | |
| Number of community learners | N/A | | | | | | | |
| Number of employability learners | N/A | | | | | | | |
| Funding received from | Skills Funding Agency (SFA) | | | | | | | |
| At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Darlington College ▪ New College Durham ▪ Hartlepool College of Further Education | | | | | | | |

Additional socio-economic information

SWDT offers intermediate and advanced apprenticeships in engineering in Darlington and the North-East of England. The percentage of pupils in the local area gaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and mathematics is 6.8% above the national average. Unemployment is just below the rate for the North-East which is 3% above the national average. The proportion of the local population who have no qualifications is 11%, which is 0.4% more than nationally. The proportion of the local population who hold qualifications at advanced level or above is 49.7%, which is 3% below the national average. The main employment in the local area is in public administration, education and health and in distribution, hotels and restaurants.

Information about this inspection

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| Lead inspector | Bob Busby HMI |
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One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the chief executive officer as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of

teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

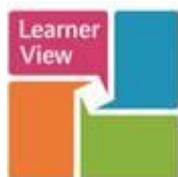
What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement |
|---------|----------------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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