



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
Promoting Improvement*

**Providing Inspection Services for  
Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of a Follow-up Inspection**

**following an**

**Inspection of the Training for Success  
and ApprenticeshipsNI provision in**

**CRAFT Recruitment and Training**

**May 2012**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF CRAFT RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING**

The inspection in November 2010 highlighted strengths in: the range of training provision offered; the good standards of work achieved by most of the trainees on the Training for Success programme; the well qualified and hard-working staff, including those employed by Global Horizon Skills Limited; the excellent success rates across the professional and technical areas, and in the essential skills; the good quality of most of the work placements; and the good arrangements for care, guidance and support, including additional learning support.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the lack of clear and effective curricular leadership in most of the professional and technical areas;
- the ineffective processes employed to ensure effective quality assurance and promote a culture of sustained self-improvement;
- the variable quality of the learning resources on the ApprenticeshipsNI programmes and in the essential skills, including the lack of appropriate online learning resources; and
- the overall modest and satisfactory retention rates for the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes, at 65% and 77% respectively.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of CRAFT Recruitment and Training have taken place:

- the development and implementation of a revised organisational structure including the appointment of team leaders for the professional and technical areas inspected;
- the appointment of a quality manager and a number of additional professional and technical tutors and administration staff;
- the development of a virtual management system; and
- the development of a virtual learning environment.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried one interim follow-up visit in October 2011 and a follow-up inspection in May 2012.

The improvement plan produced by the organisation in response to the inspection findings was of a good quality.

The organisation's quality improvement plan has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- the improved provision for retail, which is now good;

- the development of better quality online learning resources across most of the professional and technical areas, which can be accessed by learners through the virtual learning environment;
- better access for management and staff to more detailed and relevant data and reports through the virtual management information system; and
- the improved retention rates for the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programme which are now very good at 77% and 81% respectively.

The areas which require further development are the:

- more effective monitoring of the subcontracted provision by senior management;
- quality of the provision for learning in business and administration and Information Technology (IT) user, which remain satisfactory; and
- quality assurance procedures, including the processes for the monitoring and review of the training provision, to promote a culture of sustained self-improvement across the organisation.

## **CONCLUSION**

In most of the areas inspected, the quality of training provided by CRAFT Recruitment and Training remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The organisation has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but significant areas for improvement in leadership and management, and training and learning remain to be addressed if the needs of all of the trainees and apprentices are to be met effectively. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the progress made by CRAFT Recruitment and Training in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

## **BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION**

The original inspection in November 2010 highlighted strengths in the provision including: the extensive provision across a wide geographical area under the ApprenticeshipsNI programme; the effective support provided by the tutors from Global Horizon Skills Limited to meet the needs of the apprentices; and the excellent achievement rates for apprentices and trainees.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the quality and the range of the training resources available for apprentices, to extend their knowledge and understanding of current practice in business administration;
- more effective monitoring of the apprentices, particularly in setting and reviewing targets in their vocational and essential skills work; and
- the use of management information to aid quality improvement planning.

In the interval since the evaluation, the following actions which affect the work of the organisation have taken place:

- the development of a management information system to track and monitor the progress of trainees and apprentices; and
- the numbers registered on the ApprenticeshipsNI programme has increased from 33 to 44 apprentices.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- the apprentices have access to a an appropriate range of training and learning resources in directed training sessions and in the workplace to support their training and development; and
- better use of management information to monitor and track the progress of apprentices and trainees in the professional and technical units of their National Vocational Qualification (NVQ).

The area which requires further development is:

- to remedy shortfalls in the monitoring and evaluation arrangements of the ApprenticeshipsNI provision, including:
  - the inappropriate recruitment of a minority of apprentices to the programme who had attained previously higher education qualifications;
  - the quality of the personal training plans for a significant minority of the apprentices, which do not record effectively their prior achievements, or information on their work roles and specific development needs; and
  - variations in the quality of the progress reviews, which are inadequate for a significant minority of the apprentices and, are impeding their progress in their professional and technical units.

In business and administration, the quality of training provided by CRAFT Recruitment and Training remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The organisation has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but significant areas for improvement remain to be addressed if the needs of all trainees and apprentices are to be met effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the progress of CRAFT Recruitment and Training in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) USER**

The original inspection in November 2010 highlighted strengths in the provision including: the good support and positive encouragement provided for the trainees and apprentices; the good or better retention and success rates; and the trainees' and apprentices' good occupational skills and progress in their target qualifications.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the insufficient breadth of experiences in some of the work placements;
- the quality of the information and communication technology (ICT) equipment and resources; and
- a strengthening of the arrangements for the leadership and management of the ICT provision.

In the interval since the original inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the organisation have taken place:

- a co-ordinator for the ICT provision has been deployed, along with a support tutor;
- overall enrolments to ICT programmes remain steady at just under 30 trainees, although no new IT User apprentices have been recruited since the original inspection; and
- there has been an investment in ICT equipment and resources across the three offices, including access for the trainees to an organisation-wide virtual learning environment.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- the establishment of a clear structure for the leadership and management of the ICT provision across the organisation; and
- the improved ICT rooms, equipment and availability of online resources.

The areas which require further development are:

- to increase the proportion of the Programme-Led Apprentices who have access to a suitable work placement; and
- the lack of access for the Training for Success trainees to varied, good quality ICT-related work placements.

In IT User, the quality of training provided by CRAFT Recruitment and Training remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The organisation has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but significant areas for improvement remain to be addressed if the needs of all trainees are to be met effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the progress of CRAFT Recruitment and Training in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

## **RETAIL**

The original inspection in November 2010 highlighted strengths in the provision including: the effective links with employers; the good match between the apprentices' training programme and their job role; the supportive and flexible assessment arrangements; the excellent success rate and good retention rate; and the good occupational skills achieved by the apprentices.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the limited range of training approaches used to extend the apprentices' skills and knowledge beyond their existing experiences or settings;
- the insufficient careers advice and guidance to promote and support the apprentices to progress to higher training or education programmes; and
- the ineffective use of the personal training plans to plan, monitor and review coherently all aspects of the apprentices' training programme jointly with the apprentice and their employer.

In the interval since the original inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the organisation have taken place:

- the development of additional online learning resources;
- the provision of the apprentices' essential skills training in parallel with their professional and technical training; and
- the revised tracking arrangements between CRAFT Recruitment and Training and Global Horizon Skills Limited to monitor the apprentices' progress.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- the use of a broader range of training approaches in the apprentices' directed training sessions;
- the more effective and regular reviewing of the apprentices' progress across all aspects of their training programme; and
- the provision of appropriate information for the apprentices to inform and support their progression to a level 3 apprenticeship in retail.

The areas which require further development are the:

- further use of information and learning technology (ILT) to engage and support more fully the apprentices in their learning and assessment; and
- clearer involvement of the employers in the setting of appropriate training targets for the apprentices.

## **CONCLUSION**

In retail, the quality of education and training provided by CRAFT Recruitment and Training is now good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its training and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor CRAFT Recruitment and Training's progress on the areas for improvement.

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