



*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**

Rutledge Recruitment and Training

January 2014

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF RUTLEDGE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

The inspection in October 2012 identified strengths in the organisation's provision including:

- the good quality teaching, training and learning in a majority of the directed and workplace training sessions;
- the start made in the use of electronic portfolios (e-portfolios) and the virtual learning environment (VLE) to support training and learning;
- the appropriate match between the qualifications undertaken by most of the apprentices and their job roles;
- the effective arrangements in place for the care, guidance and support of the trainees and apprentices;
- the good standards of work demonstrated by most of the trainees and apprentices in directed training sessions and in the workplace; and
- the good or better achievement rates for those trainees and apprentices who stay and complete their qualifications.

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

- the need to review curriculum planning at a strategic level to provide more coherent programmes matched better to the needs of the trainees;
- the further development of the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes to address key weaknesses in the provision;
- the provision of targeted professional development for tutors that includes enhanced support for new tutors, a focus on pedagogy and the effective use of information learning technology (ILT) to enhance learning, and opportunities for tutors to maintain or update their industry experience;
- the satisfactory quality of provision in business and administration, construction, essential skills, hairdressing, Information Technology (IT) users, and retail and customer services;
- the need to review the quality of the personal training planning process to ensure that the individual training needs of trainees and apprentices are identified clearly, and progress is measured and monitored effectively; and
- the implementation of strategies to increase the number of work placements for trainees on the Training for Success programme, and to further improve retention rates.

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

- the revised Training for Success 2013 programme has been implemented;
- a new joinery workshop has opened in the Bangor office, and two new hairdressing salons have been opened in the Belfast and Enniskillen offices;

- a review of the curriculum provision for the trainees has taken place;
- the personal training planning process has been reviewed and revised;
- the e-portfolio system has been further developed across the organisation;
- an appropriate programme of staff development, including opportunities for tutors to update their industrial experience, has been implemented;
- a programme of classroom/peer observations and mentoring has been implemented, to support improvements in the quality of teaching and learning across the professional and technical areas and in the essential skills;
- revised attendance and retention strategies have been implemented;
- engagement has taken place with a community organisation to encourage a number of young people, who have disengaged from education and training, to participate in a relevant training programme; and
- the number of aged 25+ apprentices recruited has decreased significantly across the training provision.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) evaluated the improvement plan which was submitted by Rutledge Recruitment and Training following the original inspection, and reported to the organisation that it was appropriate. A first interim follow-up inspection visit was carried out by the ETI in May 2013. The improvement plan was updated accordingly before the follow-up inspection, which was carried out in January 2014.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection in October 2012:

- the commitment and action taken by most of the course teams to improve the quality of the provision, including more effective collegial working by staff across the organisation;
- the improved awareness, among management and staff, of the need to broaden the range of learning experiences to meet the trainees' and apprentices' individual learning needs;
- the more holistic planning and integration of the various elements of the trainees' and apprentices' training programmes, resulting in a curriculum offer which is matched better to their individual needs;
- the more effective curriculum planning across the provision, including improvements to timetabling arrangements;
- the more effective systems in place to track and monitor the progress of the trainees and apprentices, and to support them on their learning programmes;
- the greater range of teaching strategies used by a majority of the tutors, which are resulting in enhanced learning experiences for the trainees and apprentices;

- the more robust and effective personal training planning process which captures more effectively the specific training and development needs of the trainees and apprentices;
- the high proportion of essential skills learners who undertake their qualification at level 2;
- the improvement in the quality of the provision in business administration, the essential skills, hairdressing, and IT users;
- the improved use of quality improvement plans by course teams to track and monitor the quality of provision; and
- the improved monitoring of a range of key performance indicators by senior managers, resulting in improvements in the rates of attendance, retention and achievement.

The areas which require further development are:

- to strengthen further the leadership and management of the organisation, particularly the management of curriculum development and quality assurance across the organisation;
- to strengthen further the self-evaluation process to support evidenced-based and robust judgements on the quality of the provision across the organisation;
- to strengthen overall levels of economic engagement in order to increase the proportion of trainees on the Training for Success programme with access to a work placement; and
- to further improve the quality of the provision in construction and retail which remains satisfactory.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the quality of the work-based learning provision in Rutledge Recruitment and Training is now good, although the quality of the provision for construction and retail remains satisfactory. The organisation has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which Rutledge Recruitment and Training has demonstrated the capacity to address. The ETI will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION

The inspection in October 2012 highlighted strengths in the business and administration provision including:

- the extensive provision across a wide geographical area;
- the good match between the work placements and the assessment requirements of the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ);
- the deployment of level 3 apprentices in appropriate supervisory roles to allow them to complete their programme;
- the good start made in the use of e-portfolios to give the trainees and apprentices more responsibility for their learning; and
- the good or better achievement rates for trainees and apprentices across the provision.

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

- the quality of the directed training which was satisfactory or inadequate in one-half of the sessions observed;
- the need to strengthen the leadership and management of the provision, particularly the arrangements for self-evaluation, curriculum planning, and timetabling;
- the quality of the personal training plans which did not sufficiently identify the prior achievements and development needs of the trainees and apprentices; and
- the retention rate on the Programme-Led Apprenticeship strand which was unsatisfactory at 48%.

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

- the session observation process has been further embedded to support staff in the development and improvement of the quality of teaching, training and learning;
- tutors have been provided with further opportunities to undertake relevant continuous professional development in industry;
- a more effective timetabling strategy has been introduced for the Training for Success programme;
- the use of ILT to support and enhance the quality of teaching, training and learning has been further developed;

- there has been an improved focus on employer engagement which has resulted in the development of a range of work placements that are well matched to the needs of the Training for Success trainees; and
- the use of e-portfolios has been further developed to provide the apprentices with enhanced opportunities to take more responsibility for their learning.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection in October 2012:

- the improvement in the quality of teaching, training and learning, which was very good in all of the sessions observed;
- the further development of the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes;
- the implementation of improved systems to monitor and evaluate the rate of retention and ensure early intervention for those trainees and apprentices identified as being 'at risk';
- the effective embedding of the use of ILT to support teaching, training, learning and assessment;
- the improved collaboration between professional and technical and essential skills tutors which has led to more contextualised learning experiences for all of the trainees and apprentices; and
- the introduction of a more integrated review process to track and monitor the progress of the trainees and apprentices.

The area which requires further development is:

- to sustain and build on the links with employers to further improve the overall quality of the provision.

CONCLUSION

In business and administration, the quality of education and training provided by Rutledge Recruitment and Training is now very good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its training and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated its capacity to address. The ETI will monitor the organisation's progress on the area for improvement.

CONSTRUCTION (WOOD OCCUPATIONS)

The inspection in October 2012 highlighted strengths in the wood occupations provision including:

- the good quality of most of the training and learning and the work placements;
- the effective co-ordination of the wood occupations provision;
- the high level of support and encouragement provided for most of the trainees;
- the good retention rate on the Skills for Work strand of the Training for Success programme; and
- the outstanding achievement rates on the Skills for Work and the Programme-Led Apprenticeship strands.

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

- the unsatisfactory average retention rate on the Programme-Led Apprenticeship strand of the Training for Success programme;
- the limited curriculum offer, which does not provide sufficient opportunities for the Skills for Work and Programme-Led Apprentices to develop their occupational skills and knowledge; and
- the further development of the self-evaluation and improvement planning processes for the wood occupations provision.

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

- a review of the procedures for identifying trainees at risk of not achieving has been carried out, which has resulted in the implementation of more effective intervention strategies for the trainees, including improved channels of communication with parents/guardians;
- staff development has been put in place to support improvement in the quality of teaching, training and learning;
- project-based learning approaches have been introduced to enhance the learning experience of those trainees who are not in a work placement;
- a programme of guest speakers from industry has been introduced;
- the self-evaluation and improvement planning processes have been further developed;
- revised personal training plans have been implemented; and
- a significant investment has been made in new accommodation and additional equipment and tools to enhance the teaching, training and learning.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection in October 2012:

- the improved monitoring and tracking of the trainees, particularly those who are identified at risk of not making appropriate progress in their programme;
- the collective responsibility and commitment demonstrated by the programme team to improve and enhance the overall quality of the provision;
- the improved learning experiences for the trainees; and
- an increase in the number of trainees recruited to the Training for Success programme in the Bangor and Belfast offices.

The areas which require further improvement are:

- to increase the low proportion of trainees in a work placement;
- to address the slow progress being made by a minority of the trainees on their training programme; and
- to monitor more closely health and safety practices and procedures in the workshops, to ensure that they are strictly adhered to and that appropriate behaviours and attitudes are developed by the trainees.

CONCLUSION

In construction, the quality of education and training provided by Rutledge Recruitment and Training remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The organisation has demonstrated evidence of improvement but important areas for improvement in training and learning remain to be addressed if the needs of all the trainees are to be met more effectively. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

The original inspection in October 2012 highlighted strengths in the essential skills provision including:

- the high levels of commitment demonstrated by the co-ordinators and tutors;
- the flexible ApprenticeshipsNI provision which meets the needs of the learners and their employers;
- the confidence building opportunities for learners, including participating in competitions for external awards and their success in gaining external recognition;
- the high number of learners who achieve an essential skills qualification; and
- the good standards of work in most of the action-based activities.

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

- the timetable structure which was resulting in some learner disengagement;
- the arrangements for the monitoring of the provision and the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes;
- the further development of the induction and continuous professional development process to support the essential skills tutors; and
- the significant minority (37%) of the teaching, training and learning that was satisfactory or below.

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

- a revised timetabling model for the Training for Success provision has been implemented;
- improved procedures to support the more regular monitoring of the learners' progress, and to identify and support those learners who are not making sufficient progress, have been introduced;
- departmental staff meetings have been introduced which are starting to provide more opportunities for staff to share good practice in teaching and learning;
- a new induction programme for the essential skills tutors has been developed;
- a continuous professional development programme for the essential skills tutors has been implemented;
- processes to improve the linkages between the essential skills, the life skills and the professional and technical tutors have been introduced; and
- a programme of tutor observations, to inform the self-evaluation process and the continuous professional development of staff, has been introduced.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection in October 2012:

- the improved attendance and behaviour of the learners in the essential skills classes observed;
- the improved timetable structure which has resulted in better engagement by the learners in their learning;
- the improved quality of the teaching and learning observed, with most sessions being good or better;
- the more regular and effective monitoring of key performance indicators by the office managers and the teaching and learning manager;
- the more appropriate arrangements in place to support the induction and continuous professional development of the essential skills tutors;
- the improved support for tutors through the tutor and peer observation process to help them improve the overall quality of the provision for the essential skills; and
- the high proportion of learners who are targeting a higher level of essential skills than is specified in their programme framework.

The areas which require further development are:

- to address the variation in the quality of the co-ordination of the essential skills provision across the organisation; and
- to increase the staffing capacity for the essential skill of ICT which, at present, is not adequate to support the delivery of the provision.

CONCLUSION

In the essential skills, the quality of education and training provided by Rutledge 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 ETI will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

HAIRDRESSING

The original inspection in October 2012 highlighted strengths in the hairdressing provision including:

- the good co-ordination of the provision;
- the good or better quality of the teaching, training and learning;
- the appropriate standards of work produced by most of the trainees and apprentices;
- the good quality of the workplace training for those trainees in a placement; and
- the commitment of the staff to the care and welfare of the trainees on the Training for Success programme.

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

- the curricular planning to provide clear and coherent programmes across the provision;
- the overall inadequate retention rates;
- the insufficient involvement of employers in setting and monitoring short-term training targets to support the trainees' and apprentices' skills development; and
- the more effective arrangements for the quality assurance and improvement planning of the provision, in particular the process of self-evaluation.

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

- the investment in the development of two further JD Hair Academies in Belfast and Enniskillen to support the training process;
- the introduction of new qualifications in barbering, beauty and nails to expand the curriculum offer;
- two additional training and learning facilitators have been appointed in hairdressing, and a salon manager has also been appointed to take responsibility for the running and resourcing of the salons;
- the timetabling arrangements have been revised and there has been a strengthening of communication between the essential skills, life skills, and professional and technical tutors, to facilitate the development of more coherent learning programmes;
- the awarding body for the hairdressing provision has been reviewed and changed; and
- the number of trainees and apprentices recruited to the hairdressing provision has increased.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection in October 2012:

- the more effective quality improvement planning processes deployed across the provision;
- the increased overall retention rate, which is now good at 73%;
- the improvement in the delivery and integration of the life skills and the essential skill of ICT into the hairdressing programmes; and
- an increased focus on developing the work-readiness skills of the trainees.

The areas which require further development are:

- to further develop curriculum planning to ensure the trainees and apprentices are provided with a clear and coherent learning experience, particularly the more effective integration of the essential skills of literacy and numeracy into the hairdressing programmes;
- to involve employers more in the setting and monitoring of short-term training targets to support the trainees' and apprentices' skills development; and
- to ensure that the improvements made to date are sustained and developed further.

CONCLUSION

In hairdressing, the quality of education and training provided by Rutledge 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 ETI will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) USERS

The original inspection in October 2012 highlighted strengths in the Information Technology (IT) users provision including:

- the positive support, encouragement and flexibility provided by staff for the trainees and apprentices;
- the good quality of a majority of the directed and workplace training sessions, with a mostly good blend of instructional IT training and assessment activities;
- the hard-working and committed co-ordinator who had a good oversight of the provision;
- the good evidence of the enhancement by a majority of the apprentices of their work-related IT skills and knowledge; and
- the mostly good or better outcomes.

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

- the inadequate access to work placements for a majority of the Programme-Led Apprentices, leading to an insufficiently IT-focused curriculum;
- a more consistent quality of teaching, training and learning for the trainees and apprentices across all of the offices providing IT programmes;
- the lack of adequate progress and generally low standards of IT-related work of a minority of the Training for Success trainees; and
- an improved apprenticeship recruitment process to ensure a better match between the IT users qualification and the apprentices' job roles.

An interim follow-up inspection visit was carried out by the ETI in May 2013. It was reported during this visit that while Rutledge Recruitment and Training had made progress in addressing some of the areas for improvement identified in its IT provision in the original inspection, overall it was making inadequate progress in addressing the key issues for improvement identified.

The interim follow-up visit identified important areas which required further development, including the need:

- to urgently review the recruitment strategies for the IT services and development apprenticeship, in particular the significant mismatch between the qualification framework and the job roles of most of the apprentices;
- to address the low proportion of Programme-Led Apprentices in appropriate work placements that had not improved sufficiently since the original inspection; and
- to review the suitability and appropriateness of the IT services and development apprenticeship framework as an internal IT skills staff development programme for a significant number (39) of Rutledge Recruitment and Training staff.

In the interval since the interim follow-up inspection visit in May 2013, Rutledge Recruitment and Training has taken the following actions which affect the work of the organisation:

- the provision of the IT services and development ApprenticeshipsNI programme has been discontinued;
- 78 learners have been recruited to the Training for Success 2013 programme;
- IT-related project work, for completion by Training for Success trainees who are not in a work placement, has been further embedded into the provision;
- timetabling arrangements have been changed to better meet the learning needs of the Training for Success trainees; and
- actions to improve the security of the learners' IT-related digital work have been implemented, including the further roll-out of an e-portfolio system across the IT provision.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection in October 2012:

- the implementation of closer monitoring of the quality of teaching, training and learning;
- a more rigorous recruitment process to ensure a better match between the job roles of most of the apprentices and the IT user apprenticeship framework;
- the flexible model of apprenticeship training with good evidence of the up-skilling of the learners;
- the focused action to increase the proportion of Training for Success trainees in a work placement, which is now around 50%;
- improvements to the tracking of the progress of those Training for Success trainees identified at risk of underachieving or not meeting their training milestones; and
- the ongoing roll out of the e-portfolio system.

The areas which require further development are:

- to continue to develop stronger links with employers and to further improve the proportion of Training for Success trainees benefiting from a work placement; and
- to ensure more rigour and consistency in the IT-related project work for those Training for Success learners not yet in a work placement.

CONCLUSION

In IT Users, the quality of training provided by Rutledge 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 ETI will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

RETAIL

The original inspection in October 2012 highlighted strengths in the retail provision including:

- the appropriate match between the apprentices' work roles and their qualification;
- the good quality of the majority of the training sessions;
- the increased levels of self-confidence and occupational knowledge of the apprentices;
- the good outcomes on the customer service programme; and
- the good quality of most of the training accommodation.

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

- the quality of the training and learning in a significant minority of the directed training sessions;
- the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes to bring about sustained improvements in the quality of the provision;
- the proportion of trainees in work placements to develop their occupational skills; and
- the unsatisfactory outcomes on the Programme-led Apprenticeship and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes in retail, with only 42% of apprentices and trainees successfully completing the full framework.

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

- shorter training sessions have been introduced to match better the trainees' learning preferences and to improve their levels of attention;
- the factors contributing to low retention rates have been reviewed and used to inform better action plans, which are regularly reviewed;
- departmental team meetings are held more regularly to review and plan for a broader range of teaching, training and learning approaches; and
- careers talks and industry visits to increase the trainees' motivation and inform their career planning have been introduced.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection in October 2012:

- the increasing use of guest speakers to enhance the quality of the trainees' learning experiences;

- the upward trend in retention rates, leading to an increase of 15% in the proportion of retail trainees and apprentices who successfully complete their full framework; and
- the improved coordination and collegial working across the branches, which is leading to the better sharing and development of good practice in teaching and learning.

The areas which require further improvement are:

- to further embed the broader range of teaching, training and learning approaches being developed and implemented across the offices;
- to use ILT more effectively to support and enhance the quality of the trainees' and apprentices' learning and assessment;
- to increase the proportion of Training for Success trainees in work experience placements, which is currently too low, particularly for those trainees in the second year of their training programmes; and
- to continue to focus on increasing retention rates across the level 2 retail programmes, which remain inadequate at 57% for the period 2012/13.

CONCLUSION

In retail, the quality of education and training provided by Rutledge Recruitment and Training remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The organisation has demonstrated evidence of improvement but important areas for improvement in standards and outcomes and the quality of training and learning remain to be addressed if the needs of all the trainees and apprentices are to be met more effectively. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

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