



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Steps to Work Provision in
Bryson FutureSkills
Foyle Contract Area

Report of an Inspection
in December 2013

Quantitative terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------------|
| Almost/nearly all | - | more than 90% |
| Most | - | 75%-90% |
| A majority | - | 50%-74% |
| A significant minority | - | 30%-49% |
| A minority | - | 10%-29% |
| Very few/a small number | - | less than 10% |

Statistics

This report uses the most recent statistical data published by the Department for Employment and Learning¹. Any additional data and performance statistics in this report have been supplied and verified by Bryson Future Skills.

Performance levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

| |
|----------------|
| DESCRIPTOR |
| Outstanding |
| Very Good |
| Good |
| Satisfactory |
| Inadequate |
| Unsatisfactory |

¹[Steps to Work Statistical Bulletin: Statistics from September 2008 to December 2012 \(Department for Employment and Learning, September 2013\).](#)

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PART ONE: SUMMARY

1. Introduction

1.1 In September 2008, the Department for Employment and Learning (Department) introduced its new employment programme, Steps to Work, which subsumed the main New Deal programmes. The primary purpose of the Steps to Work programme is to help participants who are unemployed or economically inactive to find and sustain employment. The programme has been devised to ensure a more flexible approach to provision which can be targeted at the individuals' personal barriers to employment. Participation on Steps to Work is a mandatory requirement for all Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants aged 18 to 24 years who have been claiming JSA for six months or more, and those aged 25 and over who have been claiming JSA for 18 months or more. Steps to Work is also available on a voluntary basis to participants who are unemployed or economically inactive and who want to start or return to work.

1.2 Steps to Work is delivered in a '3 step' process.

Step One: Participants receive ongoing one-to-one support and guidance from an adviser from the Jobs and Benefits office/JobCentre with the primary aim of helping the participants find work as soon as possible. Available provision is focused on interventions of short duration such as Short Accredited Courses or Core Gateway.

Step Two: This is targeted at participants who require additional assistance to bring them closer to the labour market and help them find and sustain employment. The participant is offered and provided with a wider range of longer-term support; the provision will normally last for up to 8 weeks but can be up to 26 weeks.

Step Three: This is targeted at participants who have completed Step Two but have not found employment. The participant is provided with follow-up support and advice from an adviser for a period of up to six weeks.

2. Context

2.1 Bryson FutureSkills is contracted by the Department as Lead Contractor for the delivery of the Steps to Work provision in the Foyle Contract area of Northern Ireland. This contract area covers the parliamentary constituency area of Foyle, where the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMDM) show that it is the third most deprived government administration area within Northern Ireland. According to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI), this area has the highest claimant count for unemployment benefits, significantly above the Northern Ireland average.

2.2 Bryson FutureSkills, formerly known as North City Training, was established in 1989 and is contracted by the Department to deliver a wide range of employment and training programmes. These programmes include the Steps to Work programme, as Lead Contractor, in the contract areas of North Belfast and Newtownabbey since September 2008, South and East Belfast since June 2011 and in Foyle since October 2012. Bryson FutureSkills is part of the Bryson Charitable Group, and its head office is located on the Antrim Road, Belfast. To facilitate the administration of the Foyle Contract and to service participant referrals from the Jobs and Benefits offices of Lisnagelvin and Foyle, it has established two offices in Londonderry; one on Spencer Road and the other in Castle Street.

2.3 The data supplied by the Department shows that in July 2013 there were 6,010 Jobseeker's Allowance claimants in the Foyle area. The number of participants eligible for mandatory participation on the Steps to Work programme in this area has increased steadily from 770 in December 2009 to 1,725 in July 2013. The same statistics show that of the 2,070 participants registered on Steps to Work at the end of July 2013, 85% were mandatory, 69% were male, and 39% of them were under 25 years old.

3. Provision

3.1 At the time of the inspection, there were 496 participants registered on the Steps to Work programme, 39 on Step One and 457 on Step Two. Of the 39 participants registered on Step One, 35 were on Core Gateway and four on Short Accredited Courses. Of the 457 participants registered on Step Two: 136 (30%) were on the Back to Work strand; 123 (27%) on the Vocationally-Related Qualifications strand; 88 (19%) on the Essential Skills Training strand; 32 (7%) on Self-Employment Test Trading strand; 20 (4%) on the First Start strand; 39 (9%) on the Step Ahead strand; and 19 (4%) on the Youth Employment Scheme. On the Vocational-Related Qualifications strand, 15 (3%) of the participants were on the Graduate Acceleration Programme. There were no participants on Step Three. Approximately 87% of the participants were on Steps to Work for the first time, with the remainder having been on the programme once before.

3.2 Most (80%) of the participants had no formal qualifications on entry to the Steps to Work programme. Of the remainder, 3% had achieved four or more GCSEs at grades A* to C and a further 9% of them had achieved between one and three GCSE passes at grade C or above. Around 6% of the participants had achieved English and 5% of them had achieved mathematics at GCSE grade C or above. Around 11% of the participants had achieved vocational qualifications up to level 3, and 3% had achieved qualifications above level 3.

3.3 At the time of the inspection, 27 of the participants were registered directly with Bryson FutureSkills, with the remainder registered with the 16 sub-contractors. These included: Acorn Projects (7); Austin's Quality Training Services (16); Business in the Community (49); Customized Training Services (76); Derry Youth and Community Workshop (130); Enterprise North West (32); Fusion 21 (10); Job Directions (3); Nerve Centre (2); North West Academy (9); Possibilities NI (1); Resource Centre Derry (50); The Conservation Volunteers (13); The Training Company (42); Triax Neighbourhood Partnership (16); and The Women's Centre (13).

3.4 The contract is managed and supported by Bryson FutureSkills existing management team, comprising the Executive Director and nine senior management staff. Since the commencement of the Foyle Contract, nine additional staff have been appointed to administer it, comprising a development officer, employment consultant, quality and compliance officer and six administrators.

4. The inspection

4.1 This report is based on an inspection of the provision in Bryson FutureSkills and in a sample of the sub-contractors. The inspection took place over two phases, the first in May 2013 and the second in December 2013. Phase two involved a team of six inspectors and an associate assessor.

4.2 During the two phases of the inspection, the inspectors:

- observed 16 directed training sessions in centres operated by the sub-contractors;
- visited 139 participants on work experience placements;
- observed or held discussions with 182 participants, individually or in small groups;
- met and held discussions with the members of Bryson FutureSkills senior management team and senior staff from a majority of the sub-contractors;
- held discussions with key training and support staff;
- examined a wide range of documentation, including samples of participants' written work and their Personal Plans Towards Employment;
- held discussions with 80 employers; and
- held discussions with the key staff from the local Jobs and Benefits offices.

5. Main findings

5.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of the Steps to Work adult employment programme provided by Bryson FutureSkills in the Foyle Contract area is good. The organisation is meeting effectively the needs of the participants, and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained improvement.

5.2 The main strengths are the:

- strong leadership provided by the Lead Contractor to improve the quality of the training and services, particularly the high levels of support for the sub-contractors in developing strategies to improve the progression rate of participants moving into employment;
- implementation of effective systems and procedures to administer, monitor and manage the provision, including robust quality assurance and compliance arrangements;
- ongoing development of innovative programmes to increase the range of opportunities for participants to progress into employment, including tailored high quality programmes developed in partnership with employers which have very good rates of progression into employment;
- appropriate focus on further reducing the high dependency on the community and voluntary sectors to provide work experience placements for participants;

- significant scale of the Essential Skills Training strand, providing opportunities to improve the standard of participants' communication, information and communication technology (ICT) and numeracy skills; and
- increase in the progression rate of participants moving into employment, which over the period of the contract has increased from 15% to 23%.

5.3 The main areas for improvement are:

- the progression rate into employment for participants on Back to Work strand which is too low at 7%;
- a continued focus, across all stakeholders, to promote and provide more opportunities for participants to enhance their self-confidence and employability skills in private sector work experience placements where employment opportunities are better;
- the development of strategies to combat the upward trend in the backlog of participants waiting more than four weeks to progress onto Step Two strands; and
- improved arrangements for reviewing and evaluating of the effectiveness of the Lead Contractor's and sub-contractors' annual quality improvement plans.

Table of Performance Levels

| | |
|--|------|
| Overall performance level | Good |
| Contributory performance levels | |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Employment outcomes and achievement | Good |
| Quality of training and services | Good |

PART TWO: OVERALL QUALITY OF PROVISION

6. Leadership and management

6.1 Overall, the quality of the leadership and management of the Steps to Work provision in the Foyle Contract area is good.

6.2 The strategic leadership provided by Bryson FutureSkills as Lead Contractor is very good. The Lead Contractor's senior management team provides strong leadership in developing a sound infrastructure for the delivery of good quality training and services. Since the commencement of the contract, the Lead Contractor, drawing on existing expertise, has implemented and maintained effective systems and procedures to administer, monitor and manage the programme. In particular, there are robust quality assurance arrangements in place to monitor contract compliance and to review the quality of sub-contractors' provision. The Lead Contractor together with the sub-contractors have, with good effect, developed and implemented a range of innovative strategies to increase the participants' progression rates into employment. These strategies include: tailored training and employment preparation programmes undertaken in partnership with employers offering employment opportunities; appropriate use of social clauses in local government contracts to gain opportunities for participants; bespoke training and development programmes that reflect employment opportunities in the local economy; and reducing the high dependency on work experience placements in the community and voluntary sectors. Based on the latest statistics from the Department, these strategies have contributed to an increase in the progression rate of participants moving into employment, which over the period October 2012 to December 2012 increased from 15% to 23%.

6.3 The quality of the links and partnerships across the contract area is good. The Lead Contractor has established, and manages well, a broad range of sub-contractors who are reflective of the composition, community backgrounds and needs of the local community. These include community and voluntary sector organisations, private sector organisations and education and training providers. There is effective communication between the Lead Contractor and the sub-contractors, which is underpinned by the regular and well-planned opportunities to share information, review performance data, and develop and disseminate good practice. Effective working relationships have also been established with staff from the Jobs and Benefits offices, as evidenced by the good use of case-conferencing to review and support participants who are unduly delayed in acquiring work experience placements. The Lead and sub-contractors have established effective links and partnerships with an extensive range of local employers and agencies to provide work experience placements for the participants. While too many of the existing placements are still within the community and voluntary sector, there is a clear and appropriate strategic focus on increasing the number of placements in the private sector where employment opportunities are much better. Since phase one of the inspection, around 80% of the new work experience placement providers are in the private sector. There is also ongoing strategic engagement with key stakeholders such as the Skills Directorate of ILEX, Derry City Council Employer Engagement Forum, and the North West Employers' Forum.

6.4 The management and the use of data are mostly good. The Lead Contractor collates and tracks regularly and systematically the occupancy and participants' progression rates to sustained employment across the contract area, for each sub-contractor and strand. Key performance data is used well by the Lead Contractor to drive continuous improvement across the provision, particularly to re-balance the proportion of participants in work placements with limited progression to employment opportunities. The use of labour market information, however, to inform the Jobs and Benefits office staff and participants of employment trends and opportunities, and to inform curriculum planning and development, is under-exploited. Consequently, around one-quarter of the work experience placements are

in the retail sector, resulting in multiple placements in charity shops or retail outlets. In a few of the sub-contractors, the tracking of participants' progress and achievement is underdeveloped. This is particularly evident across the essential skills provision, where the uptake at, and progression to, level 2 is not captured or evaluated sufficiently.

6.5 The self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes are good. Through the rigorous compliance monitoring and quality review arrangements, the Lead Contractor has developed a clear understanding of the key strengths and areas for development across the provision. As a result, the Lead Contractor is well-informed and responsive in providing workshops and other standardisation arrangements to bring about improvements. The workshops included: improvement of the Personal Plans Towards Employment; consistency of essential skills training; effective use of pre-employment training programmes; delivery of Core Gateway; and standardisation of the Jobsearch provision. The monitoring and review of the quality improvement plans by the Lead and sub-contractors is, however, underdeveloped. There is, for example, insufficient timely evaluation of progress made against interim targets. In addition, there are insufficient quality assurance arrangements for the small proportion of training that is further sub-contracted to other organisations by some of the sub-contractors.

6.6 The staffing arrangements across the contract area are generally good. Recently, the Lead Contractor reviewed its own staffing arrangements to ensure that roles, responsibilities are matched to the needs of the contract. As a result, an employment consultant and a development officer have been appointed to undertake key roles, particularly to increase employer engagement and increase the number of participants in private sector work experience placements. Appropriate professional development arrangements for the staff are in place, including training opportunities in mentoring and employment-related services, and teaching qualifications.

6.7 Participant referrals and backlogs are mostly managed well by the Lead Contractor. Based on the Department's published data, the number of participants referred, and of those waiting more than four weeks for a work experience placement, have increased steadily from a low rate at the commencement of the contract. The proportion of participants waiting for more than 15 weeks has increased to 22%, although this is still below the NI average of 23%. While the Lead Contractor and the senior staff from the Jobs and Benefits offices are aware of this trend, there is a need for the Lead Contractor to plan for an increase in capacity to meet the increasing number of participants referred to the programme, particularly for those waiting more than four weeks.

7. Employment outcomes and achievements

7.1 Overall, the employment outcomes and achievements are improving steadily. During the period October 2012 to December 2012, based on data supplied by the Department, the overall participant progression rate from Step Two provision into employment is 23%. While this progression rate is just below the Department's contractual target and the Northern Ireland average of 25%, it needs to be set in the context that the contract area has one of the highest levels of unemployment in Northern Ireland and that the progression rate has increased from 15% to 23% over a relatively short period of time. It is a concern, however, that the participant progression rate into employment for the Back to Work strand, which accounts for just under one-third of the provision, has not increased in line with the overall rate. It remains too low at 7%, which is significantly below the Northern Ireland average of 20% for this strand.

7.2 Most of the participants on the Back to Work strand are making progress in developing occupational, employability and transferrable skills relevant to their job goals. Almost all of them report that their confidence and motivation have improved significantly. The overall outcomes into employment, however, are poor at only 7%. Actions to address these very low outcomes are a high priority for the Lead Contractor. Work is ongoing to increase the proportion of participants in private sector work experience placements, which has increased by 13% since the first phase of the inspection. In addition, the Lead Contractor has reduced the referral rate to the Back to Work strand by 10% through working in partnership with employers. Through these partnerships, known as the Pre-employment Programme, the participants have access to specific employment opportunities. While the Pre-employment Programme has contributed significantly to an increase in the progression rate into employment, the overly high proportion of participants on work experience placements in community or voluntary settings limit the potential impact and more needs to be done by the Lead Contractor to increase the numbers of private sector organisations participating in this scheme.

7.3 Most of the participants on the Essential Skills Training strand display good skills and overall standards of work in ICT, literacy and numeracy. The outcomes are good; 23% of participants who have left this strand during the period October 2012 to December 2012 progressed into employment, which is just below the Northern Ireland average of 24%. The achievement rates are consistently very high at over 95%. Inspection evidence also indicates that a minority of the participants are making good progress towards the achievement of a level 2, often from a low baseline.

7.4 Almost all of the participants on the First Start programme are in challenging work environments and develop good occupational and employability skills. The Lead Contractor has re-balanced the programme with an appropriate emphasis on ensuring that almost all new entrants are employed in the private sector, increasing potential employment opportunities. While the Lead Contractor has worked hard to establish the First Start programme, recruitment remains relatively low. A few of the participants, employers and sub-contractors report considerable delays between registering an interest in participation in the programme and the job actually commencing. This needs to be reviewed by the Lead Contractor to ensure that neither employers nor participants are discouraged from participation. According to data provided by the Lead Contractor, over the past year the progression rate into employment is very good at 48%.

7.5 The outcomes and achievements for the Vocationally-Related Qualifications strand are very good. Most of the participants are well-motivated in their training and are making good progress in the professional and technical units. The majority of them develop a broad range of occupational skills in the workplace to meet the assessment requirements of the training programmes. The high levels of motivation and commitment for most of the participants on the 'Strive to Work' programme is a feature of the provision; through a four week intense workshop programme they develop appropriate work readiness skills. Over the period October 2012 to December 2012, the participant progression rate (49%) into employment is well above the Northern Ireland average of 34%. Contributing to this high progression rate is the Graduate Acceleration Programme where the progression rate is 59%. Nearly all (94%) of the participants who complete the training programmes achieve their target qualifications.

7.6 The participants on the Self-Employment strand achieve good outcomes and standards. Almost all of them are very positive about the support they receive, including information and advice on the administrative, financial and promotional aspects of their businesses. Through regular reviews and discussion forums to forward plan, the participants make good progress in establishing their businesses. The progression rate (50%) into employment is below the Northern Ireland average of 57%.

7.7 Most of the participants on the Step Ahead 50+ programme have been unemployed for a significant period of time and are benefiting from reintegration into the workplace. A majority of them benefit from a positive working environment; they undertake purposeful activities with the opportunity to develop and apply a range of skills and they contribute well to the work flows of their placement organisation. Too few of the participants are aware, or avail, of the opportunity to improve their essential skills in literacy and numeracy or undertake other qualifications. According to data provided by the Lead Contractor, over the past year the progression rate into employment outcome is very low at just 5%, and significantly below the Northern Ireland average of 27%.

8. Quality of training and services

8.1 Overall, the quality of the training and services provided for participants by the Lead Contractor and the sub-contractors is good.

8.2 The quality of the provision for Core Gateway is good. Through effective relationships with sub-contractors, the Lead Contractor is providing effective support and guidance to standardise the training and enhance the quality of the provision. Almost all of the training sessions are planned carefully and the tutors work hard to engage the participants and to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The tutors are skilful in helping the participants to identify their strengths and most of them appreciate and value the help afforded to them in accessing Jobsearch opportunities, and in developing their curriculum vitae and interview skills. In particular, the tutors work hard to open up discussions on new or different career pathways. In the best practice, the tutors provide good signposting to other strands within the Steps to Work provision and to current employment opportunities, including structured support in the application process. The use of differentiated approaches, however, within the sessions to meet the wide range of differing needs of the participants, and to engage the more reticent of them, is underdeveloped.

8.3 The quality of the Back to Work strand is satisfactory. The sub-contractors report that communication with the Lead Contractor is good, and that the Lead Contractor has implemented rigorous quality assurance and monitoring and review arrangements to address key areas for improvement in the strand, particularly the low progression rate to employment. For example, the bespoke Pre-employment Programmes are used to good effect to match participants with, and prepare them for, realistic employment opportunities with local employers. While the participants' work experience placements are generally matched to their job goals or prior experiences, the majority of the placements are in the voluntary or community organisations, which offer only limited opportunities for progression to employment. A majority of the participants are provided with good opportunities to develop relevant, transferable occupational and employability skills. In a significant minority of the placements, however, the participants are not provided with sufficient stretch and challenge in order to develop the necessary skills to perform effectively in the work place. In a few instances, this is exacerbated by the placement of multiple participants in the same community or voluntary organisations for work experience.

8.4 The quality of the Essential Skills Training is good. Although all of the provision is sub-contracted, the Lead Contractor has put rigorous processes in place to monitor quality. The nine sub-contracted organisations operate a range of models of delivery, but a key strength is the tailored one-to-one support provided to the participants. While the individualised support works well in almost all of the sessions observed, it proves difficult in a small minority of sessions where the group size is too big. This needs to be reviewed by the Lead Contractor because it results in an assessment-driven approach with insufficient opportunities to embed learning. There are good relationships between the tutors and the participants and the tutors work hard to provide effective encouragement and support. The Lead Contractor has provided appropriate staff development for all of the sub-contractors, and the quality and compliance audits which are in place have begun to contribute well to the process of continuing improvement. Most of the participants are in appropriate work experience placements where they feel supported and are developing a range of employability skills. A significant minority of the participants who have complex barriers to employment report that their work experience placement has increased their confidence, motivation and self-esteem. Almost all of the participants view the essential skills as a further stepping stone to gaining employment. Approximately one-third of the work experience placements are in the private sector. This type of placement presents good levels of challenge and good opportunities for structured, work-related development which are not always evident in a minority of the placements in the community and voluntary settings.

8.5 The quality of the First Start programme is good. Without exception, the participants value the opportunity for a sustained period of employment. As a result of effective planning, there is a good match between the participants' skills, attributes, prior qualifications and career aspirations with the job role. The Lead Contractor is proactively establishing good working relationships with private sector employers across the contract area. More needs to be done, by all of the stakeholders across the contract area, to raise awareness of the First Start programme and the positive outcomes into employment it offers. In their job roles, most of the participants are well-settled, work flexibly, complete to a good standard busy work schedules, benefit from opportunities to work independently or as part of a team and develop good communication skills and self-confidence. Their contributions are valued by employers and many of them benefit from job-specific training in the workplace. The participants are supported well by the Lead Contractor and the sub-contractors, reviews are undertaken regularly, are detailed and provide clear employer-agreed targets for improvement and progression. The evidence is clear that participants on the First Start programme, in particular those employed in the private sector, increase substantially their employability.

8.6 The quality of the Vocationally-Related Qualifications strand is good. The majority of the sub-contractors have good links with local employers, which they use to good effect to secure appropriate work experience placements. As a consequence, the majority of participants are placed in relevant work environments, and undertake job roles which reflect their qualifications and career aspirations. The quality of the directed training is good or better. The sessions are well-planned and appropriate attention is given to supporting the individual needs of the participants in their learning, including advice and guidance on progression pathways. The quality of the 'Strive to Work' programme is very good; the tutors make skilful use of active learning strategies to develop the participants' problem solving and team-working skills. While a good range of qualifications is offered across the contract area, more work is needed to broaden further the curriculum offer to ensure the provision matches the employment opportunities and emerging skill needs in the area. Currently, the main provision is in retail, accounting for just under 20% of the provision, leading to significant challenges in placing participants in relevant private sector businesses. Too many of them are placed in charity shops, where the opportunities of progressing to employment are limited.

8.7 The quality of the Graduate Acceleration Programme is very good. The provision is well-matched to the local employment context and there are well-established links and partnerships with a range of local employers. As a result of detailed and thorough planning, most of the participants experience a well-integrated and coherent programme which combines the opportunity for them to gain a qualification in leadership and management with an extended period of work experience placement, and is matched very well to their degree specialism and career aspirations. The range and quality of the placements provides the participants with very good opportunities to build on their prior learning experiences and develop an effective career plan. They are provided with very good personal support and guidance to improve their self-confidence and preparedness for employment.

8.8 The quality of the Self-Employment strand is good; it is well-managed and planned effectively. There is regular and effective communication between the Lead Contractor and the business advisers, and there is a clear strategic focus on progressing participants to sustained self-employment. The number of participants registering on the strand across the contract area has increased by 48% during the last six month period. The participants are engaged in a range of test trading businesses, which are matched well to their skills and aspirations; these include arts and crafts, massage and sports therapy and an artistic illustration business.

8.9 The quality of the Step Ahead 50+ is satisfactory. The uptake of the programme is good and spread well across the sub-contractors. Across the Lead Contractor and the sub-contractors, good links and partnerships have been established with a wide range of community, voluntary and social economy organisations. The staff work hard to match the participants to placements which align well with previous employment experiences and skills, and future employment aspirations and capabilities. Around two-thirds of the participants visited are in work experience placements with good levels of challenge, providing them with the opportunity to develop and apply an appropriate range of occupational and other employability skills. By contrast, in around one-third of the work placements the range of experiences are overly limited, the job roles lack challenge, the expectations of the placement provider are too low and at times there are too many participants placed in the same organisation. As a result, the opportunities for these participants to improve their work-readiness are diminished. The Lead Contractor and the sub-contractors need to ensure that placements provide adequate levels of job-related challenge and skills development opportunities, in particular where more than one Step Ahead 50+ participant is employed.

8.10 The quality of the personal support provided for participants, including their Personal Plans Towards Employment, is mostly good. Through regular tracking and monitoring, most of the participants and their work experience placement providers are provided with detailed progress reviews on the participants' progress in improving occupational and transferable skills. For a minority of them, however, progress reviews are too superficial with insufficient information on the progress being made by the participant or meaningful work targets being set. The Jobsearch provision is mostly satisfactory. The participants have good access to suitable ICT facilities to update their curriculum vitae and to search for employment vacancies. Appropriately, the Lead Contractor is currently reviewing the Jobsearch provision with a view to enhancement, in particular to provide more opportunities for the participants to develop their interview skills and self-confidence to enable them to apply for a more diverse range of jobs.

8.11 The arrangements for the inspection of the personal support and safeguarding of vulnerable adults include the opportunity for the participants to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as meetings by the inspection team with individuals and groups of participants across the Lead and sub-contractors. Prior to the inspection, 200 questionnaires were completed by participants online. The returns show that almost all of them consider their experiences in the Bryson FutureSkills Steps to Work provision to be meeting their needs well. The Inspectorate has reported the outcomes of the questionnaire returns to the Lead Contractor.

8.12 The organisation has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding. The arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable groups comply with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007.

PART THREE: KEY PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

9. Key priorities for development

9.1 In order to raise the quality of its provision, Bryson FutureSkills should:

- further develop strategies to increase the number of participants progressing into employment from the Back to Work strand;
- continue to build a shared focus across all stakeholders to promote and increase the opportunities for all participants to increase their self-confidence, employability skills and employment opportunities, particularly for those furthest from the labour market; and
- develop capacity across the contract area to meet the increasing backlog of participants waiting to progress to Step Two.

APPENDIX

All participants in Foyle Contract Management Area who moved from Step Two into unsubsidised or subsidised employment (October to December 2012)

| Step 2 Activity | Total Leaving Step 2 | Moved to Subsidised /Unsubsidised Employment | % | NI average |
|------------------|----------------------|--|-----|------------|
| Back to Work | 125 | 10 | 7% | 20% |
| Essential Skills | 55 | 15 | 23% | 24% |
| NVQ | 0 | 0 | N/A | |
| Qualifications | 65 | 35 | 49% | 34% |
| Self-Employment | 10 | 5 | 50% | 57% |
| Step Ahead | 0 | 0 | N/A | 27% |
| | | | | |
| Total | 255 | 60 | 23% | 25% |

Foyle Contract Area - Summary of Backlogs

| Period | | Q2 2012 | Q3 2012 ² | Q4 2012 | Q1 2013 | Q2 2013 | Contract Area Total/Average [*] | N.I. Total/Average [*] | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|--|---------------------------------|--------|
| Back to Work | No. Referrals | 213 | 280 | 547 | 526 | 397 | 3,135 | 71,469 | |
| | < 4wks | Number | 78 | 227 | 274 | 290 | 139 | 1,090 | 12,552 |
| | | % | 37% | 81% | 50% | 55% | 35% | 35% | 18% |
| | >4wks < 15wks | Number | 106 | 53 | 228 | 157 | 169 | 1,005 | 32,407 |
| | | % | 50% | 19% | 42% | 30% | 43% | 32% | 45% |
| | > 15 wks | Number | 29 | 0 | 45 | 79 | 89 | 271 | 17,183 |
| % | | 14% | 0% | 8% | 15% | 22% | 9% | 24% | |
| Essential Skills | No. Referrals | 82 | 138 | 165 | 211 | 155 | 1,048 | 14,342 | |
| | < 4wks | Number | 33 | 94 | 67 | 80 | 47 | 341 | 2,583 |
| | | % | 40% | 68% | 41% | 38% | 30% | 33% | 18% |
| | >4wks < 15wks | Number | 39 | 44 | 94 | 97 | 73 | 468 | 6,764 |
| | | % | 48% | 32% | 57% | 46% | 47% | 45% | 47% |
| | > 15 wks | Number | 10 | 0 | 4 | 34 | 35 | 93 | 3,461 |
| % | | 12% | 0% | 2% | 16% | 23% | 9% | 24% | |
| Qualifications | No. Referrals | 66 | 152 | 155 | 176 | 158 | 1,127 | 13,829 | |
| | < 4wks | Number | 22 | 91 | 57 | 87 | 69 | 24 | 3,388 |
| | | % | 33% | 60% | 37% | 49% | 44% | 2% | 24% |
| | >4wks < 15wks | Number | 32 | 61 | 85 | 60 | 57 | 494 | 7,252 |
| | | % | 48% | 40% | 55% | 34% | 36% | 44% | 52% |
| | > 15 wks | Number | 12 | 0 | 13 | 29 | 32 | 105 | 2,684 |
| % | | 18% | 0% | 8% | 16% | 20% | 9% | 19% | |
| Self-Employment | No. Referrals | 0 | 19 | 26 | 16 | 31 | 165 | 4,749 | |
| | < 4wks | Number | 0 | 10 | 4 | 9 | 11 | 0 | 666 |
| | | % | | 53% | 15% | 56% | 35% | 0% | 14% |
| | >4wks < 15wks | Number | 0 | 9 | 16 | 6 | 11 | 60 | 2,014 |
| | | % | | 47% | 62% | 38% | 35% | 36% | 42% |
| | > 15 wks | Number | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 16 | 1,307 |
| % | | | 0% | 23% | 6% | 29% | 10% | 28% | |
| GAP | No. Referrals | 45 | 51 | 44 | 12 | 22 | 294 | 3,661 | |
| | < 4wks | Number | 11 | 26 | 19 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 677 |
| | | % | 24% | 51% | 43% | 67% | 36% | 2% | 18% |
| | >4wks < 15wks | Number | 17 | 25 | 23 | 4 | 10 | 184 | 2,028 |
| | | % | 38% | 49% | 52% | 33% | 45% | 63% | 55% |
| | > 15 wks | Number | 17 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 50 | 570 |
| % | | 38% | 0% | 5% | 0% | 18% | 17% | 16% | |
| Total No. of Referrals | No. Referrals | 406 | 640 | 937 | 941 | 763 | 5,769 | 111,367 | |
| | < 4wks | Number | 144 | 448 | 421 | 474 | 274 | 1,892 | 19,866 |
| | | % | 35% | 70% | 45% | 50% | 36% | 33% | 18% |
| | >4wks < 15wks | Number | 194 | 192 | 446 | 324 | 320 | 2,211 | 52,014 |
| | | % | 48% | 30% | 48% | 34% | 42% | 38% | 47% |
| | > 15 wks | Number | 68 | 0 | 70 | 143 | 169 | 535 | 26,118 |
| % | | 17% | 0% | 7% | 15% | 22% | 9% | 23% | |

* Totals and averages cover the period from 2010 to 2013

² Commencement of the Foyle contract with Bryson FutureSkills

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