



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Steps to Work Provision in
Bryson FutureSkills (formerly
North City Training) South
and East Belfast Contract Area

Report of an Inspection
in April/May 2012

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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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

PART ONE: SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In September 2008, the Department for Employment and Learning (Department) introduced its employment programme, Steps to Work. The aim of the Steps to Work programme is to assist people 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 between eight and 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. They may also access some provision such as Short Accredited Courses or elements of Core Gateway, if needed.

2. CONTEXT

2.1 Since June 2011, Bryson FutureSkills has been contracted by the Department, as Lead Contractor for the delivery of the Steps to Work provision in the South and East Belfast area of Northern Ireland. Participants are referred to the Lead Contractor through the Hollywood Road, Knockbreda and Shaftesbury Square Jobs and Benefits offices. Bryson FutureSkills has worked effectively to build up good working relationships across the contract area by communicating their vision with all stakeholders, holding regular meetings and by ensuring that management information systems and processes were quickly put in place to underpin the management and operation of the contract.

2.2 Bryson FutureSkills, formerly known as North City Training Limited, was established in 1989, and delivers a range of training and employment programmes for the Department. This includes the Steps to Work provision in North Belfast and Newtownabbey, where the organisation has been the Lead Contractor since September 2008. Bryson FutureSkills is part of the Bryson Charitable Group, operating from nine offices in and around North Belfast, Newtownabbey and the City Centre, with its head office currently situated on the Antrim Road. In order to deliver the South and East Belfast contract, Bryson FutureSkills acquired

new accommodation including premises on the Hollywood Road and a flagship building in Belfast City Centre to provide a visible presence across the contract area. Bryson FutureSkills is supported by 18 sub-contractors who have offices and training facilities which provide good local access opportunities for participants to all strands of the Steps to Work programme.

2.3 Bryson FutureSkills is managed by an Executive Director and a senior management team of eight people who have overall responsibility for the delivery of all programmes, including the two Steps to Work contracts. Since June 2011, the organisation has appointed an additional 25 staff members, 13 of whom are dedicated to the South and East Belfast contract area with the remaining 12 staff working across both of the Steps to Work contracts. In total the organisation now employs 81 people who work across the following functions: In addition to Managers (nine staff members) there are staff in Operations (16 staff members); Training Delivery (26); Finance and Administration (8); Programme Support (12); Quality and Compliance (3); and Employment and Development (7). There is a dedicated Operations Manager, who is part of the senior management team, for the day to day management of the Steps to Work contract in South and East Belfast. As part of the strategic development of the contract, the senior management team has very recently put in place an Employment and Development Unit to engage strategically with employers, to identify and extend the number and availability of work experience placements and to increase the number of employment opportunities. In addition, the organisation has also recently appointed a staff member dedicated to monitoring and tracking leavers from the programme.

2.4 The South and East Belfast contract area encompasses some of the most affluent areas of Northern Ireland as well as some of the most deprived, and as such presents particular challenges to Bryson FutureSkills in meeting a wide and diverse range of participant needs. The data supplied by the Department shows that, in December 2011, there were 6,025 Jobseeker's Allowance claimants in the South and East Belfast contract area, the fourth highest claimant count in Northern Ireland overall for this period. The number of participants eligible for mandatory participation on Steps to Work in this region had increased by just over 55% from 750 (December 2009) to 1,165 (December 2011). The same statistics show that of the 1,744 participants on Steps to Work in the South and East Belfast contract area, in quarter four of 2011, 77% were male and 31% of the participants were under 25.

3. PROVISION

3.1 At the time of the inspection in April/May 2012, there were 305 participants on the Steps to Work programme across the South and East Belfast contract area. Almost all (93%) of them were on Steps to Work for the first time. Twenty-seven participants were registered on Step One; 23 on Core Gateway and 4 on the Confidence and Motivation strand. Two hundred and seventy-four participants were registered on Step Two; 99 (36%) on Back to Work, 98 (36%) on Qualifications lasting 26 weeks, 23 (8%) on Self-Employment Test Trading, 21 (8%) on Essential Skills Training, 17 (6%) on the Graduate Acceleration Programme, 13 (5%) on Step Ahead and 3 (1%) on National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) lasting 52 weeks. The remaining four participants were registered on Step Three.

3.2 At the time of the inspection, of the 274 participants on Step Two, 101 (37%) had no or few qualifications on entry to their provision. Forty-nine (18%) of them had between one and three General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) passes at grade C or above, with a further 37 (14%) having four or more GCSE passes at grade C or above. Ninety-four

of the participants had achieved English and 76 had achieved mathematics at GCSE grade C or above. Fifty-five participants (20%) had achieved vocational qualifications up to level 3, and a further 51 (19%) held higher education qualifications. At the time of the inspection there were 26 participants with degree-level qualifications, three with master's degrees, and one with a doctorate.

3.3 Bryson FutureSkills was working directly with 100 of the participants, with 15 of the 18 sub-contractors actively working with the remaining participants. In addition, most of the participants on the Step Two strands were receiving some form of employability preparation, including Jobsearch, Curriculum Vitae building, and interview skills.

4. THE INSPECTION

4.1 This report is based on an inspection of the Steps to Work provision in Bryson FutureSkills and in almost all of the sub-contractors' provision. The inspection took place over two phases, the first in December 2011 and the second over five consecutive days in April and May 2012. Phase two involved a team of five inspectors and an associate assessor.

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

- observed 35 directed training sessions delivered by Bryson FutureSkills and its sub-contractors;
- visited 56 participants on work experience placements;
- observed and/or held discussions with 54 participants, individually or in small groups;
- met and held discussions with members of Bryson FutureSkills senior management team and senior staff from the majority of the sub-contractors;
- met and 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;
- met and held discussions with 57 employers; and
- met and held discussions with the District Manager, and Managers from the 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 South and East Belfast contract area is very good; the organisation is meeting very effectively the needs of the participants.

The main strengths are the:

- very good leadership and management of the contract by the Lead Contractor which is characterised by very good strategic planning and a good range of innovative programmes being developed to enhance and support the participants' progression to sustained employment;

- well developed quality assurance procedures which are being implemented across the contract area, and the commitment to continuous improvement and capacity building by the Lead Contractor and the sub-contractors;
- outstanding working relationships across the contract area facilitated through regular and effective communication between the Lead Contractor, sub-contractors and staff from the Jobs and Benefits offices, all of whom work effectively to provide good support to the participants;
- effective collation and analysis of data which is used well to inform improvement planning and target-setting;
- good or better quality of the provision, including work experience placements which are well matched to the individual needs of most participants; and
- outcomes into employment from June 2011 to April 2012, at 27%¹.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- further development of the quality assurance and improvement planning processes to share best practice and address variations in the quality of the provision; and
- development and use of the Enhanced Support and Confidence and Motivation strands of the programme for a minority of participants, to facilitate more effectively their progression to sustained employment.

Table of Performance Levels

Overall performance level	Very good
Contributory performance levels	
Leadership and management	Very good
Employment outcomes and achievement	Very good
Quality of training and services	Very good

¹ "Into employment" data used by agreement with the Department, as validated data on "sustained employment" was not available at the time of the inspection.

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 South and East Belfast is very good.

6.2 The strategic leadership provided by Bryson FutureSkills in the South and East Belfast contract area is very good. At all levels within and across the contract, there is a strong commitment to continuous improvement and to the provision of a wide range of high quality training and services to improve the employment opportunities for all job seekers, including those who are long-term unemployed. The Bryson FutureSkills Management Board, Executive Director and senior managers work hard to develop effective strategic links and partnerships with relevant organisations and employers, and to promote and support outstanding working relationships with sub-contractors and staff from the Jobs and Benefits offices.

6.3 Bryson FutureSkills has made significant investment in staffing and in the upgrading of its accommodation. The staffing arrangements across the contract area are very good and the Lead Contractor has established an effective, cohesive team whose roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. The provision of dedicated, responsive, and well-qualified staff to manage all aspects of the contract has added significantly to the good relationships between the sub-contractors, the Jobs and Benefits office staff and the Lead Contractor. The participants have access to a good range of high quality professional and technical, essential skills and Jobsearch resources, which are used to good effect to improve their employability.

6.4 Bryson FutureSkills and the sub-contractors have been very responsive to the detrimental impact of the economic downturn, the Department's recent initiatives and revisions to the Steps to Work programme, and to the introduction of the Qualifications and Credit Framework. For example, in early February 2012, Bryson FutureSkills successfully recruited 98 participants to the Step Ahead 2012 programme in a short period of time. There has been further development and extension into a wider range of professional and technical areas on the pre-employment "Step Into" programmes. The organisation works collaboratively with the staff from the Jobs and Benefits offices and local employers to provide the Steps to Work participants with the opportunity to improve their skills and enhance their employability, and the participants are guaranteed an interview for any existing vacancies at the end of the placement. The recently formed Employment and Development Unit uses client profiling and the identification of current job vacancies (Hot Jobs) to match with those participants who already demonstrate the existing skills, knowledge and motivation in order to move them quickly into employment.

6.5 The quality of the links and partnerships across the contract area is very good. The Lead Contractor has established, and manages well, a broad range of sub-contractors who reflect well the needs of the local communities. These include community and voluntary sector organisations, private sector organisations, and other education and training providers. There is effective communication and outstanding relationships between the Lead Contractor and the sub-contractors. Through a range of frequent and appropriate meetings there are good opportunities for all stakeholders to share information, monitor participant referrals, report on performance outcomes, and develop and disseminate good practice. There are also outstanding relationships with the staff of the local Jobs and Benefits offices. Through regular meetings with the Office Managers and Team Leaders, and with sub-contractors, the Lead Contractor monitors effectively the backlogs of participants, the referral process, and any changes to administrative procedures which affect them.

6.6 Very good professional development arrangements for the staff of the Lead and sub-contractors are in place. There is a good range of workshops to share good practice and a good start has been made to standardising important aspects of the provision across the contract. These include sessions on quality and consistency in the provision of Core Gateway and in the production of self-evaluation reports. The development of bespoke programmes for delivery of the Confidence and Motivation strand by the Lead Contractor and sub-contractors is at an advanced stage. The Lead Contractor has provided a very good programme of staff development which has addressed areas such as, Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults and dealing with the rehabilitation of offenders. The training is valued highly by the sub-contractors.

6.7 Bryson FutureSkills is committed to self-evaluation and quality improvement planning, and has implemented a range of appropriate and effective quality assurance measures, including the formation of a dedicated Quality and Compliance Unit, staffed by three full-time employees. Since the beginning of the contract in June 2011, formal quality and compliance audits have been carried out in all of the sub-contractors. These audits are valued highly by staff in the sub-contractors who find them very useful in building their capacity for self improvement and in improving the quality of their provision and training. Arrangements for the monitoring and tracking of data are very good. The Lead Contractor collates and tracks regularly the occupancy and participant progression rates to employment across the contract area, for each sub-contractor and across each strand. There is, however, a need for the quality improvement planning processes to further identify and share best practice, to address the variations in the provision in the quality of training and learning, in monitoring and review processes, and to address the persistent low performance of a small number of sub-contractors.

7. EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

7.1 The most recent data provided by the Lead Contractor, for the period January 2012 to the time of the inspection in April/May 2012, indicates that the overall progression rate from Step Two provision into employment is 27%², which is above the Department's target of 25%.

7.2 The number of participants who wait between four and 15 weeks to come on to the Steps for Work programme dropped by two-thirds to 58% between the fourth quarter of 2011 and the first quarter of 2012; however, it remains 12% above the Northern Ireland average. The percentage of participants waiting for over 15 weeks in April 2012 is 33%, which is 5% above the Northern Ireland average. The Lead Contractor recognises the need to take additional action to reduce these backlogs and they are monitored and reviewed on a monthly basis across all providers. The sub-contractors report that the Lead Contractor deals with the issue of backlogs in a helpful and supportive manner and action to be taken is mutually agreed. Between February and April 2012, for example, total backlogs were reduced by 30% from 268 to 187.

7.3 The employment outcomes for the Qualifications and NVQ training strands are good at 33%. The achievement rates for Qualifications vary from 25% to 100% across the professional and technical areas, and across the Lead and sub-contractors. Most of the participants are making very good progress in their directed training and in their work

² "Into employment" data used by agreement with the Department, as validated data on "sustained employment" was not available at the time of the inspection.

experience placements. They demonstrate high levels of commitment and motivation, and achieve good occupational standards of work. In the best practice, participants develop and demonstrate key employability skills, including good time keeping, initiative taking, and relevant occupational competences.

7.4 Most of the participants on the Essential Skills Training strand are enthusiastic, achieve good standards of work, and are making very good progress in their learning. There are, however, punctuality issues with a minority of participants. They are all working at an appropriate level as identified in the initial assessment process. While the number of participants registering on the Essential Skills Training strand is low, progression to employment at 21% is well above the Northern Ireland average of 13%.

7.5 The into employment outcomes for the Step Ahead strand are satisfactory. Since June 2011, of the leavers from Step Two who participated on this strand, 21% progressed into employment. While the overall numbers of participants who progress to employment are low, the participants display high levels of motivation and enthusiasm for the programme and are developing good employability skills. Most of them contribute effectively to the work of the employing organisation.

7.6 The into employment outcomes for the Self-Employment Test Trading strand since the inception of the contract are very good at 59%. Progression rates to employment for the Graduate Acceleration Programme are also very good at 59%. The staff from Business in The Community report that the Bryson FutureSkills staff are helpful and supportive, and that they work very well together in the interests of the graduates.

7.7 The into employment outcomes for the Back to Work strand are satisfactory. Since June 2011, of the leavers from Step Two who participated on the Back to Work strand, 20% progressed into employment. At the time of the inspection, although the numbers of participants who have completed the 'Step Into' programmes are low, the outcome into employment for this group is good at 40%.

8. QUALITY OF TRAINING AND SERVICES

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

8.2 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 individual and groups of participants across Bryson FutureSkills and the sub-contractors. Prior to Phase two of the inspection, 160 questionnaires were issued to the participants, of which 137 (86%) were returned to the Inspectorate; 45 of them contained additional written comments. The returns show that almost all of the participants consider their experiences in the South and East Belfast Steps to Work provision to be very good or better, and in particular they value the respect with which they are treated along with the high levels of personal support provided for them. The Inspectorate has reported the outcomes of the questionnaires and the discussions held with the participants to the Lead Contractor.

8.3 The quality of the strategic planning for the Core Gateway provision is very good with regular standardisation meetings for all of the sub-contractors, who are also being given the opportunity to work collectively on developing a range of resources to meet more effectively the needs of the wide range of participants coming onto the programme. The Core Gateway provision is delivered by a range of sub-contractors across the geographical area of the contract and the Lead Contractor is very responsive where there is increased demand for

places by providing additional classes. The quality of training and learning is good or better. The well-planned sessions are supported by appropriate materials and effective practical group activities. As a result of attending Core Gateway, participants report that they feel more confident and motivated to seek employment. The participants also report that they have good opportunities to improve their Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills.

8.4 The provision for Short Accredited Courses is very good. The Lead Contractor offers a very good range of provision with 222 participants having participated on a Short Accredited Courses while on Step One. The success rate across these courses is outstanding at 92%. There needs, however, to be raised awareness among participants of the availability of these courses particularly when they could be used to remove a barrier to employment at either Step Two or Step Three. The numbers of participants on Step Three are low. More emphasis needs to be placed by the Lead Contractor in the monitoring and review of participants on Step Two to identify those who would benefit and be more able to gain employment by accessing a Short Accredited Course. For example, a participant currently on the Back to Work strand could enhance his chances of gaining employment as a green keeper by gaining a Construction Skills Register Card.

8.5 Bryson FutureSkills recognises that Jobsearch is an important element of the provision for participants. In South and East Belfast the quality of the Jobsearch provision is good. The tutors provide good support to help participants in their aim to progress to employment. A good range of resources, which are matched well to the interests and capabilities of the participants, has been developed by the tutors. The participants receive effective support in the preparation of Curriculum Vitae, searching for employment vacancies, completing job application forms and preparing for interviews. The participants undertake a good range of Jobsearch activities including the use of the internet and those who are less confident in the use of computers receive good support from the tutors. However, for those Back to Work participants who do not attend any Jobsearch sessions, there is insufficient emphasis placed on encouraging them to participate in appropriate Jobsearch activities during their reviews.

8.6 The overall quality of the provision for Enhanced Support is satisfactory. At the time of the inspection, only ten participants were receiving enhanced support across four of the sub-contractors. While the quality of the enhanced support for the small number of participants was very good, it is essential that Bryson FutureSkills facilitates the sharing of the existing good practice in the provision of enhanced support in a small number of sub-contractors, and increases the overall numbers of participants benefiting from the provision. The Lead Contractor also needs to continue to work closely with staff in the Jobs and Benefits offices and the sub-contractors to ensure that the support needs of all of the participants across the contract area are identified and met effectively.

8.7 During the inspection four participants were registered on the Confidence and Motivation strand of the programme, undertaking an English for Speakers of Other Languages, Language for Work programme. Bryson FutureSkills has started to work proactively with sub-contractors to develop more bespoke Confidence and Motivation programmes which will meet the needs of their target client groups. The outcomes from this work need to be shared with all staff across the contract area, including Jobs and Benefits office staff, to raise awareness of the role and potential value of the provision.

8.8 The quality of the provision for the Qualifications and NVQ strands is very good. The quality of the directed training provision ranges from satisfactory to outstanding, and is good overall. Most (75%) of the sessions observed were good or better and the remainder satisfactory. In the good or better sessions, the training is well-planned, an appropriate range of training approaches is used, and the participants are provided with good

opportunities to develop and extend their knowledge and understanding of the principles and practice relating to their occupational area. In the satisfactory sessions, while there are good opportunities for the participants to develop relevant skills and knowledge, the planning to meet individual need is underdeveloped. The monitoring of most of the participants' progress is very good; the regular involvement of employers in the monitoring reviews is used to good effect to provide the participants with informative and supportive feedback. The provision of career education, advice and guidance is variable. While most of the participants have good opportunities to participate in Jobsearch activities and to receive helpful advice and guidance in preparation for interviews, a minority are not fully enough informed of the possible career progression pathways relating to their professional and technical area.

8.9 The quality of provision on the Step Ahead strand is good. The work placements are matched well to the participants' aptitudes and aspirations. The participants develop good transferable skills and demonstrate good standards of work. However, while the participants are well supported by almost all of the employers who provide good work experiences, only a minority are in the position to offer permanent employment. The participants are provided with good opportunities to access an extensive range of short training courses which are targeted effectively to match their career aspirations, including food hygiene certification, customer service skills, and the essential skills. All of the participants interviewed, value the support they are receiving from the Lead Contractor and sub-contractors. The qualitative feedback recorded on the participants' reviews, however, is too general and does not provide adequate measures of progression to enable them to identify what occupational and transferrable skills they need to develop further to enable them to progress into employment. There is a need to broaden the range of Jobsearch strategies used to match better the participants with suitable employers.

8.10 The Essential Skills Training provision is good. The directed training for the essential skills is offered on a weekly basis by the Lead Contractor and three of the sub-contractors. The tutors work very hard to encourage and support the participants, and to meet their individual learning needs, often providing good one-to-one support. There are good relationships between the tutors and the participants based on an ethos of mutual respect. The quality of the training and learning is good or better with a good range of training and learning strategies deployed which support and develop the participants' essential skills in literacy and numeracy.

8.11 The quality of the provision of the Self-Employment Test Trading strand is very good. The staff from Bryson FutureSkills work hard and to good effect with key staff from the three sub-contractors, who report that the processes which have been implemented are rigorous and robust. They also report that the lines of communication are very good and that the quality audits undertaken by the Lead Contractor have provided constructive feedback.

8.12 The quality of provision on the Back to Work strand is good. In almost all of the work experience placement settings, the employers provide a supportive environment in which the participants can develop their confidence and self-esteem and structured on-the-job training that contributes effectively to the development of the participants' work-readiness, transferable and personal skills. Most of the placements are matched well to the participants' aptitudes and career aspirations. Most demonstrate good standards of occupational skills including good administration and retail skills. Almost all are well motivated and enthusiastic and are keen to obtain and sustain employment. The innovative 'Step Into' programme matches effectively a minority of the Back to Work participants with employers who have current and relevant opportunities. The employers are committed to

the participants through investment in their training and, as a result, the participants have improved their prospect of employment in the organisations and in related businesses. The reviews, however, do not sufficiently reflect on the participants' career/job goals and particular and specific barriers to employment to enable better targeting of individualised support and provision to enable them to progress closer to the job market.

8.13 The provision for the Graduate Acceleration Programme is very good. As a result of detailed and thorough planning, the participants experience a well-integrated and coherent programme which includes an extended period of work placement which, for most of them, is very well matched to their degree specialisms and career aspirations. One-third of the graduates on the programme have additional learning needs or physical disabilities and they receive appropriate enhanced support which is valued highly by them. The participants benefit from the very good quality of the training programme, which has been developed appropriately to include a self-reflective journal which enables them to record their acquisition and development of key transferable skills. These include time management, working as a member of a team, dealing with difficult situations and resolving conflict. Within their work experience placements, most of the participants are demonstrating good or better standards of work and their workplace mentors value their contributions highly. The staff from Business in the Community, and the workplace mentor, provide very good levels of support to the participants

8.14 The quality and level of the personal support provided across the contract for the participants is very good. They report that they appreciate the commitment and the hard work of the tutors and the Lead Contactor's Employment Advisers in supporting them to develop their employability skills, secure work experience placements and prepare for interviews. Sub-contractors report that they value highly the support, advice and guidance provided to them by the Lead Contractor staff in dealing directly with safeguarding issues and vulnerable adults.

8.15 The quality of the Personal Plans towards Employment ranges from satisfactory to good, and is mostly good. Where they are effective, there are well-developed referral and initial interviewing processes, they capture well key information regarding the participants' prior employment and training and appropriate targets are set. However, a significant minority of the Personal Plans towards Employment are just satisfactory; they are too generic and fail to set short-term targets to measure individual participant progress and achievements of transferable and occupational skills. While there is regular monitoring and reviewing of participants' progress, there is inconsistent use of employer input in this process and in the setting of incremental targets to measure the participants' ongoing progress in developing and improving their employability. Further development of this process to capture relevant personal information and interests, to help plan for effective progression towards employment across all providers, is required. Bryson FutureSkills has put in place appropriate arrangements to monitor the quality of the Personal Plans towards Employment and to identify and share good practice across their own and the sub-contractors' provision.

8.16 Bryson FutureSkills promotes effectively the safeguarding of vulnerable adults. On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the organisation has very good 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:

- strengthen its quality assurance and improvement planning processes to address variations in the quality of the provision across the contract area, including the persistent low performance by a small number of the sub-contractors;
- further develop and use the Enhanced Support and Confidence and Motivation strands of the programme for a minority of participants, to facilitate their progression to sustained employment; and
- ensure that there is greater consistency in the quality of Personal Plans towards Employment across the contract area.

Period		27 Jun 11 - 30 Apr 12
Back to Work	Total Leaving Steps to Work	549
	Into Employment	111
	Into Employment %	20%
	Sust. 13 Wks	
Essential Skills	Total Leaving Steps to Work	41
	Into Employment	7
	Into Employment %	17%
	Sust. 13 Wks	
GAP	Total Leaving Steps to Work	22
	Into Employment	13
	Into Employment %	59%
	Sust. 13 Wks	
NVQ	Total Leaving Steps to Work	62
	Into Employment	27
	Into Employment %	44%
	Sust. 13 Wks	
Qualifications	Total Leaving Steps to Work	118
	Into Employment	33
	Into Employment %	28%
	Sust. 13 Wks	
Self-Employment	Total Leaving Steps to Work	86
	Into Employment	51
	Into Employment %	59%
	Sust. 13 Wks	
Step Ahead	Total Leaving Steps to Work	80
	Into Employment	17
	Into Employment %	21%
	Sust. 13 Wks	
Step Ahead 2012	Total Leaving Steps to Work	97
	Into Employment	14
	Into Employment %	14%
	Sust. 13 Wks	

³ "Into employment" data used by agreement with the Department, as validated data on "sustained employment" was not available at the time of the inspection.

Period		Q3 2011	Q4 2012	Contract Area Total/Average	N.I. Total/Average	
Back to Work	No. Referrals		227	250	2,431	37,016
	>4wks < 15wks	Number	327	392	1,677	13,814
		%	144%	157%	69%	37%
	> 15 wks	Number	93	144	898	8,959
		%	41%	58%	37%	24%
Essential Skills	No. Referrals		19	22	158	6,000
	>4wks < 15wks	Number	38	65	169	2,804
		%	200%	295%	107%	47%
	> 15 wks	Number	7	14	57	1,700
		%	37%	64%	36%	28%
NVQ	No. Referrals				498	3,317
	>4wks < 15wks	Number			230	1,549
		%			46%	47%
	> 15 wks	Number			156	915
		%			31%	28%
Qualifications	No. Referrals		86	83	611	3,755
	>4wks < 15wks	Number	132	171	545	2,249
		%	153%	206%	89%	60%
	> 15 wks	Number	37	33	201	764
		%	43%	40%	33%	20%
Self-Employment	No. Referrals		18	14	151	2,270
	>4wks < 15wks	Number	9	35	96	934
		%	50%	250%	64%	41%
	> 15 wks	Number	4	11	40	635
		%	22%	79%	26%	28%
GAP	No. Referrals		28	29	289	1,388
	>4wks < 15wks	Number	31	50	171	714
		%	111%	172%	59%	51%
	> 15 wks	Number	10	19	97	229
		%	36%	66%	34%	16%
Total No. of Referrals	No. Referrals		378	398	3,740	47,489
	>4wks < 15wks	Number	537	713	2,175	22,064
		%	142%	179%	58%	46%
	> 15 wks	Number	151	221	1,228	13,200
		%	40%	56%	33%	28%

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