



Education and Training
Inspectorate

European Social Fund provision in
4Rs Reuse Workshop

Active Inclusion Project

Report of an Inspection in
February 2020

eti

The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

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1. Context

4Rs Reuse Workshop is a social enterprise and chartered investment company; it is contracted by the Department for the Economy (Department) to provide the Active Inclusion European Social Fund (ESF) project. The project targets participants from 16 to 64 years old, who are not in education, training, employed or who are working under 16 hours per week. The project aims to support participants with mild to severe learning and physical disabilities to overcome barriers to work, to develop their employability skills and assist them to achieve accredited qualifications. Most of the participants enter the project with low or no levels of prior attainment. They are provided with opportunities to develop their personal, social and employability skills and to participate in work-experience placement sampling activities. In addition, the participants have access to accredited qualifications in joinery, electrical, retail, healthy living and progression to employment. The participants can also avail of one-to-one job clinics and individualised mentoring and support.

The project is managed by a project manager who has overarching responsibility for the project, and is supported by an operations manager. The project operates out of premises in Pennyburn Industrial Estate in Londonderry and is delivered by a team of two mentoring officers and two tutoring assistants. The project is overseen by the board of directors to whom the project manager provides monthly updates on the progress of the project.

At the time of the inspection, eleven participants¹ were registered on the project. They can remain on the project for up to 26 weeks. The participants attend for one day per week with the opportunity to engage in work-experience placement sampling for six to eight weeks depending on their individual personal support and development needs.

2. Views of participants

The inspection team met and spoke with a sample of participants during their learning and development sessions and in a focus group. They are positive about their experiences on the project and talked about the good relationships that exist between them and the staff. All of the participants interviewed stated that they feel safe, well-supported and know who to contact for advice or guidance. They report that their participation on the project is helping them to develop the basic construction skills needed to support their career progression aspirations and which are also relevant to the work they are doing in their work-experience placements.

3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all participants, the inspection linked internal and external approaches to evaluate the:

- outcomes for participants;
- quality of provision; and
- effectiveness of the leadership and management.

¹ All performance data in this report was provided by the ESF project promoter at the time of the inspection.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Outcomes for learners	Good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Good

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

The project promoter has established appropriate links and partnerships with a range of agencies to support the delivery of the programme. Overall recruitment to the project is very good; in year one the project met the set targets, with 42 participants recruited from a target of 40 (105%). In year two, the project has almost met the target for recruitment with 36 participants from the target of 40 recruited to date.

The overall retention rate is outstanding (97%) to date; it is outstanding for the year one (95%) participants and all of those recruited in year 2 have been retained to date. While the project initially did not set targets for participants achieving accredited qualifications, all of the participants who completed their programme have achieved at least one qualification and a minority (25%) of them have achieved two qualifications. Outcomes for individual participants vary depending on the nature and severity of the disability they present with. While in year one none of the participants progressed to employment, the target of six set for progression to further education was exceeded, with 24 progressing; overall a majority of the participants (73%) progressed to further education or into voluntary work. In year two of the project, of the 25 who have completed their programme to date, 28% of them have been supported into employment or voluntary work. The project promoter reports that the proportion of the participants with severe disabilities in this year was high and this impacted on their capacity to progress.

The participants demonstrate good standards of work in their portfolios of evidence, with evidence of independent responses and effective feedback from staff to promote improvement. The participants are encouraged well to develop an appropriate range of literacy skills and to take responsibility for their own learning.

The small number of work-experience placement providers interviewed were positive about their engagement with the project. They report that the project has impacted positively on the development of the participants' level of independence and team-working skills and enhanced their confidence and self-esteem. There is, however, a need for the project promoter to review the improvements in the participants' wider skills and dispositions at more regular intervals, and the outcomes used more effectively, to plan for their programme and to inform the self-evaluation report and quality improvement planning.

6. Quality of provision

The curriculum offer is appropriate. A good range of vocational programmes are offered at levels 1 and 2 to support the progression needs of participants, including appropriate planning for the introduction of additional programmes to encourage the recruitment of more female participants. Additional accredited qualifications of healthy living and progression to employment are also offered to support the development of the participants' personal, social and employability skills.

Effective pre-entry advice and guidance processes are in place, including comprehensive risk assessments that take appropriate account of the participants' learning and physical disabilities. The personal training plans are well-individualised, taking good account of the levels of prior educational achievement and the developmental needs of the participants. The timing of the initial baseline assessment, however, which is currently undertaken on the first day, needs to be conducted at a later date so that the participants are more settled into the project and the distance travelled by them in the development of their personal, social and employability skills can be more accurately measured. While the progress made by the participants in the development of their personal, social and employability skills is monitored and tracked at regular intervals, the recording of the intervention strategies used, and their soft skills development, needs to be integrated more effectively. In addition, the progress reviews are at times overly descriptive and could be improved through the use of more evaluative language.

The quality of the learning, training and development in the sessions observed is good. Positive mutually respectful relationships exist between the tutors, mentors and the participants. High levels of individualised learning support is provided. Safe working practices are promoted and reinforced. There needs, however, to be more stretch and challenge for the more able participants.

The project promoter has developed effective relationships with a good range of employers in order to provide the participants with productive work-experience placements. The employers spoke positively about the systems in place for supporting the participants while on placements. Where appropriate, the participants are provided with intensive support by the mentors in the workplace. Too few (35%) participants, however, are participating in work-experience placement sampling and there is a need to develop further their motivation and confidence in order to prepare and encourage more of them to undertake work-experience placement sampling and to transition onwards into employment.

The arrangements for care and welfare impact positively on the participants' learning and development. It is a strength of the project that all participants are assigned a mentor to underpin their development through building strong and supportive relationships. The approach by staff is sensitive, supportive, inclusive and tailored well to the participants' needs. Appropriate one-to-one mentoring support is provided across a range of issues, including mental health, sexual health and relationships, personal hygiene, money management skills, travel and journey training. There is also good signposting and use of services from a range of relevant external agencies to support those participants who have specific additional needs.

7. Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the project is good overall. The project promoter is committed to the development and sharing of best practice in the interests of the participants and is an active participant in the local ESF forum and disability employment network. The project manager has a good overview of the project and a sound oversight of the key challenges going forward. There are good processes in place for the standardisation of the resources and delivery of the various programmes and training. The project promoter has taken appropriate action to address the actions identified in the last inspection activity.

The staff are highly committed to the participants and work well collaboratively through a strong participant-centred approach to meeting their learning and development. They are well-qualified and experienced and are provided with good opportunities for appropriate continuous professional development to enhance further their skills and knowledge and the support that they can provide for the participants. The roles and responsibilities of all staff are clearly defined and their skills and attributes match well their job roles. Weekly meetings take place to allow staff to review the project outcomes and to discuss and address any key issues arising.

Effective collaborative links and partnerships have been established with a range of key stakeholders to support the delivery of the project, including, for example, the health trusts, local councils, community organisations, disability organisations and volunteer organisations. These links and partnerships are used to good effect to support recruitment to the project. Overall, however, there is a need to increase the number of participants self-referring to the project and also the proportion of female participants.

The quality of the accommodation and physical resources is very good; the practical training workshops are well-equipped to support the delivery of the joinery and electrical programmes and the main classroom is appropriately equipped to support the delivery of technology enhanced learning.

Appropriate self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes are in place. Processes are in place to monitor the quality of the learning, teaching and training through direct observation of training sessions by management and through peer observations. The processes, however, could be developed further to evaluate better the impact of the provision on the progress of the participants' in their learning and development. There is also a need also for the performance data and other information collated to be used more effectively to inform the self-evaluation process. The quality improvement plan needs to include clearer targets against which progress on the actions taken to promote improvement can be measured.

8. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding participants reflect broadly current legislation and practice.

The project promoter, however, needs to:

- update the policies and procedures for child protection and safeguarding young people and adults at risk of harm.

9. Overall effectiveness

The 4Rs Reuse Workshop demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the participants. There are areas for improvement that the project promoter has demonstrated the capacity to address. The main areas for improvement are to:

- continue to develop the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes;
- improve further the tracking and monitoring process, including the better recording of the interventions taken to support the participants to develop their personal, social and employability skills and overcome their barriers to learning and employment; and
- increase the number of participants self-referring to the project and also the number of female participants.

The ETI will monitor how the project promoter sustains improvement.

A. Project registrations

Programme	Numbers of enrolments	% against target
European Social Fund Active Inclusion Project 2018/2019	42	105%
European Social Fund Active Inclusion Project 2019/2020	36 (to date)	90%

B. Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI’s Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the [ETI website](#).

Three ETI inspectors observed eight participants in a range of settings including learning and development sessions and focus groups. Discussions were held with project promoter’s management team, mentors, tutoring assistants and employers. The management information systems, including the tracking and monitoring systems, samples of the participants’ work and personal training plans, and tutors and mentors planning documents were examined. The project promoter’s self-evaluation report, quality improvement plan and other relevant documentation were also scrutinised.

C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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%

Performance levels

The ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and on leadership and management.

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the project promoter:

The project promoter has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor how the project promoter sustains improvement.

The project promoter demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor how the project promoter sustains improvement.

The project promoter needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor and report on the project promoter's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

The project promoter needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor and report on the project promoter's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

Key Performance Indicators and Definitions

Retention	The percentage of enrolments measured over the full duration of their programme.
Achievement	The percentage of participants who completed their targeted individual outcomes.
Progression	The percentage of successful completers who achieved positive progression.

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