



Education and Training
Inspectorate

European Social Fund provision in
Triax

Skills 2020 project

Report of an Inspection
in December 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



CSE



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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for participants, on provision for learning and development, on leadership and management, and on the overall quality of the provision.

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| Current performance level |
| 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 organisation:

| |
|---|
| Overall effectiveness outcome |
| The organisation has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor the organisation's progress in addressing any area(s) for improvement through its annual scrutiny inspection. |
| The organisation demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor the organisation's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement through its annual scrutiny inspection. |
| The organisation needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement, which includes the need to produce an improvement plan, which will be the basis for a formal follow-up inspection. |
| The organisation 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 organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, which includes the need to produce an improvement plan, which will be the basis for 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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1. Inspection method and evidence base

Three ETI inspectors met with a total of 25 participants; 18 in learning and development sessions, six in focus groups, and one telephone interview. Discussions were held with the lead project management team, five employment mentoring officers from the partnership organisations, two external trainers and two employers. The management information system, including the tracking and monitoring systems, samples of the participants' personal folders and training plans were examined. The project promoter's self-evaluation report and other relevant documentation were scrutinised.

2. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the outcomes for participants;
- the effectiveness of the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes;
- the quality of provision for learning and development; and
- the quality of the leadership and management.

3. Context

Triax is a charitable organisation contracted by the Department for the Economy (Department) to provide the Skills 2020 European Social Fund (ESF) project. The main aim of the project is to support individuals furthest from the labour market to address personal barriers and other social or economic circumstances, and to progress toward employment. The Skills 2020 project is managed by a programme manager based in the Triax offices in the Gasyard Centre, Derry and includes a consortium of six other partner organisations with offices across the city and Castleterg¹. Each partner has a project manager who is supported in the delivery of the programme by employment mentoring officers, the complement of which is dependent on the targeted number of participants. The participants are assessed on entry and support planned according to their individual needs and interests: including access to a range of accredited level one qualifications, such as, business administration, construction skills register, first aid, food hygiene, health and safety, health and social care, text processing and progression to employment.

At the time of the inspection 201 participants were registered on the Skills 2020 project². The participants attend sessions for a minimum of one day and the duration of the programme is matched to their assessed needs.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

| | |
|---|--|
| Overall effectiveness | High level of capacity for sustained improvement |
| Outcomes for participants | Very good |
| Provision for learning and development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Very good |

¹ Full list of partner organisations is provided in the appendix

² All performance data in this report was provided by the ESF project promoter at the time of the inspection.

5. Outcomes for participants

The overall outcomes for participants are very good. The majority of them are demonstrating and achieving good standards in their work. Most of the participants engage well with project staff and in the planned activities which meet their needs and interests. Those participants with fewer barriers to employment achieve the relevant qualifications and receive appropriate support to quickly access their chosen field of work. The majority of the participants have also developed well their levels of self-confidence and motivation.

The project's activities are well planned, and help participants recognise and build upon their prior experiences and strengths. Almost all of the participants are developing well their personal and social skills, and building support networks. The small sample of participants interviewed reported that they are highly committed to overcoming their personal barriers and are motivated to progress in their learning, toward employment or other training and education opportunities. For a small number of participants, toward the end of their programme, the clearer identification of their remaining barriers to progression and appropriate signposting to further support is an area for improvement.

Triax are very effective in identifying and registering participants from the target group. At the time of the inspection, the project was ahead of its recruitment target with 471 participants recruited in 2015/16 exceeding the target of 352; a further 237 have been recruited in 2016/17 to date.

Retention (91%) and achievement rates (100%) are outstanding to date and Triax have been successful in progressing 29% of leavers into employment, significantly above the 14% target set. The proportion of participants progressing into further education or training is 19% to date, which is above the target of 15%; those progressing to volunteering at 14% is also above the target of 10%; and the into work-experience rate (4%) is slightly below the target of 5%, to date. There has been no change in circumstances for the remainder of the participants.

6. Provision for learning and development

The quality of the provision for learning and development, including the directed training sessions observed, is mostly good. Whilst the curriculum offers a good range of appropriate qualifications, a gap exists in addressing essential skills literacy and numeracy development needs.

The partner organisations make good use of a range of external training providers. There is an inclusive, caring ethos demonstrated by the lead organisation and the partners, with excellent working relationships evident between them, the participants and all staff. Participant feedback about their experiences on the project is very positive and all of those interviewed stated that the provision was tailored effectively to meet their individual needs.

A bespoke five day programme for participants who are interested in a career in adult care, and in particular domiciliary care, has been devised in consultation with key employers and has been a successful addition to the curriculum. The feedback from a small number of participants interviewed was very positive; a key employer stated that as a result of engagement in the programme the participants were well prepared for interview and for the job role.

Whilst the pre-entry advice, guidance and induction are effective, the individual participant plans do not reflect fully this good quality practice. The initial assessment and needs analysis carried out on entry to the programme are not used well enough to inform planning to meet individual training needs, and as a result the review process is not sufficiently well developed. The careers education, information, advice and guidance and planning for progression to the next stage of learning and development is an area for improvement.

The quality of the provision of care and welfare is very good. The staff across all of the partner organisations provide appropriate holistic care for the participants. There is also good signposting and use of services from a wide range of in-house and external agencies to support participants who have specific needs such as counselling, addiction support and other health related issues.

7. Leadership and management

The quality of the leadership and management is very good. The board and senior management team are very supportive of the project and are effective in setting its strategic direction. All of the staff are highly committed to meeting the needs of the participants, are very experienced and matched well to their job roles. Roles and responsibilities of the staff are clearly defined and they are well informed about operational changes and have the opportunity to share best practice through a regular scheduled cycle of team meetings.

Strategic links and partnerships are outstanding and reflect highly collaborative working arrangements that are used well to plan an appropriate curriculum offer. Triax and the partner organisations provide good quality physical accommodation, and learning and training resources to support the delivery of the project. All of the partnerships offices are well located, and easily accessible for their participants.

There are very effective channels of communication between Triax, partner organisations and other key stakeholders. There is good use of information and communication technology, and a shared online social impact tracker is used effectively to monitor and track participants' progress. Tutor observations and feedback from participants and key stakeholders are analysed and used well to inform and effect improvement in the provision. The organisation demonstrates responsiveness to previous inspection findings and is highly committed to quality improvement. The improvement planning could be strengthened by including more measurable outcomes, and by developing further the content and use of participant records, documentation and processes across the partner organisations.

On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, Triax has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding young people and adults at risk. However, the organisation needs to:

- update the safeguarding procedures to take account of the partnership arrangements; and
- display safeguarding information in all partner organisations.

8. Overall effectiveness

Triax has a high level of capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interests of all the participants. To improve the provision further, Triax needs to:

- further develop careers, education, information, advice and guidance, and quality improvement planning; particularly the use of measurable targets to monitor and effect improvement.

Current registrations by programme

| Programme | Numbers of enrolments | % against target |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| European Social Fund 2015/2016 | 471 | 134% |
| European Social Fund 2016/2017 | 237 | 79% ³ |

Partner organisations

Churchtown Community Association
 Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership
 Dove House
 Glen Development
 Greater Shantallow Area Partnership
 Waterside Neighbourhood Partnership

³ Draft target submitted to the Department but was not agreed at the time of the inspection

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