



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
Promoting Improvement*



*Providing Inspection Services for*  
**Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of a Follow-up Inspection**

**Protocol Skills  
Londonderry**

**May 2007**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF PROTOCOL SKILLS LONDONDERRY**

The inspection in May 2005 highlighted a number of strengths in the quality of the provision. These included the:

- good progress made by the trainees in their work and their high standards in the work-place;
- excellent success rates for those trainees who complete their training programmes;
- standards of literacy and numeracy for most trainees;
- commitment and support provided to trainees by the training consultants;
- good relationships between staff and trainees and the effective monitoring and review arrangements;
- good quality of work-based training;
- effective internal verification procedures;
- well-planned vocational training programmes;
- commitment of the company to continuous improvement; and
- good links with employers.

The inspection also identified the need for improvement in the following key areas, which were the:

- retention for Access programmes, the Traineeship in hospitality and catering, and the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 in retail operations;
- need to offer trainees good access to high quality and challenging learning resources;

- development of the trainees' knowledge and understanding of current trends in industry;
- need to broaden assessment evidence in hospitality and catering;
- support for trainees with weaknesses in essential skills;
- need for more formal procedures to elicit the views of trainees and employers in self evaluation and development planning;
- need to address the decline in trainee numbers;
- trainee access to information and communications technology (ICT) resources;
- monitoring recruitment levels from different backgrounds; and
- access to the centre for trainees with physical disabilities.

In the interval since the inspection, Protocol Skills, prepared an appropriate action plan to address the issues in the report. Since the inspection, the following changes, which affect the work of Protocol Skills, Londonderry have taken place:

- the appointment of a new regional director for Protocol Skills Northern Ireland in October 2006;
- participation on the Department for Employment and Learning Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programme for adults aged 25 years or over;
- more effective work-based reviews and monitoring of the trainees;
- decline in the numbers of trainees registered on Jobskills Access and Traineeship programmes; and
- the further commitment of the company towards the continued professional development to support the pedagogic and management skills of staff.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out a follow up inspection in May 2007. Protocol Skills has made good progress in addressing the key areas for improvement, and the following are the most significant since the original inspection:

- the development of a range of learning resources to broaden and extend the trainees' knowledge and understanding of current trends in industry;
- the significant improvement in retention rate on the NVQ level 3 in retail operations;
- more effective involvement of employers and trainees in planning and reviewing provision;

- more effective use of relevant evidence in the portfolios of evidence by trainees in hospitality and catering;
- improved access of trainees to ICT resources and the planned developments in the use of on-line learning materials to support the range of the trainees' learning experiences; and
- more effective monitoring of the background of trainees when they commence training.

The area which needs further development is:

- to ensure that there is an appropriate balance of qualified supervisors to MAs in the workplace.

In the area inspected the organisation has major strengths in its education and training provision. The educational, training, and pastoral needs of the learners are being well met, along with the needs of the community and local economy. The trainees and community can have confidence in the organisation's capacity for sustained self-improvement.

No follow up inspection is required.

### Report Grades

Grade	Original Inspection (Old Scale)	Follow up Inspection(Old Grade)	Follow Up inspection( Revised Scale)
<b>Overall Grade</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory Grades			
Standards and Outcomes	2	1	2
Quality of training and learning	2	2	3
Leadership and management	2	2	3

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