



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI Provision in Rutledge Training Limited

Report of a Follow-up Inspection
in April 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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CUSTOMER
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FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION OF RUTLEDGE TRAINING LIMITED¹

The original inspection carried out in May 2017 concluded that the organisation needed to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the trainees and apprentices.

The main areas for improvement were the need to:

- improve the quality of the provision in barbering, beauty therapy and hairdressing and the essential skills which had important areas for improvement and in customer service and retail which required significant improvement;
- improve the quality of leadership and management to provide better curricular leadership of each of the professional and technical areas and the essential skills;
- implement strategies to increase the work-experience placement rate across the provision which was too low at 43%; and
- improve the poor retention rates on the Training for Success (58%) and the ApprenticeshipsNI (67%) programmes, and the progression rate (67%) on the Training for Success programme.

The organisation submitted a revised annual quality improvement plan to address the key areas identified for improvement. By the time of the follow-up inspection, the organisation had also submitted an annual quality improvement plan for 2018/19.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an interim follow-up visit in December 2017 and a follow-up inspection in April 2018. In the interval since the original inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the organisation have taken place, and in particular the organisation has:

- restructured the management team, including enhanced roles for the training managers to oversee more holistically curriculum planning and quality improvement across the branches;
- upgraded the management and reporting arrangements to ensure key performance data and targets are tracked, monitored and reviewed more systematically;
- implemented revised quality improvement planning processes;
- provided staff development to equip staff to cope better with the trainees who present with complex social, emotional and behavioral needs;
- designed and implemented a bespoke careers, personal development and support programme for the trainees to increase their confidence and personal capabilities; and
- introduced a range of project-based learning activities across a number of vocational areas.

¹ At the time of the original inspection, the organisation was known as Rutledge Recruitment and Training.

Key findings

The **outcomes for learners** are now good.

- Through the recent introduction of a number of well-considered initiatives, retention rates have begun to increase. The retention rate for the ApprenticeshipsNI programme for 2016/17 is currently good at 71%. While the retention rate for the Training for Success programme, over the same period, increased to 63%, it continues to require further improvement.
- It is noteworthy that the achievement rates have remained outstanding, with almost all of the trainees and apprentices who complete their training achieving their full framework.
- Progression to employment or further training from the Training for Success programme has not improved sufficiently over the follow-up period and continues to be an area for improvement.

The **quality of provision** remains good.

- The quality of the provision in barbering, beauty therapy and hairdressing and in customer service and retail has improved and is now good.
- While some progress has been made in addressing the key areas for improvement in the essential skills provision, including better standards of work and more appropriate timetabling arrangements, there remains an important need to improve attendance patterns, particularly on the ApprenticeshipsNI programme.
- The quality of the learning, teaching and training has improved across all of the areas inspected, with most of the sessions observed during the follow-up inspection being good or better. A broader range of teaching and training strategies, including an increased focus on practical activities, is being implemented well to promote effective learning.
- A well-designed programme of careers education and personal development and support, which includes appropriate involvement in competitions, project-based learning, and community-linked activities, is providing the trainees with good opportunities to improve their self-confidence, interpersonal skills and readiness for the world of work.
- While the work-experience placement rate on the Training for Success programme has improved to 53%, this remains low and there continues to be a need to improve further the proportion of trainees who benefit from relevant work-experience placement opportunities.

The **Leadership and management** is now good.

- The revised management structure and reporting arrangements now provides effective curricular leadership and underpins well a shared ambition across the organisation to bring about sustained improvement.

- Managers have access to, and mostly make effective use of, pertinent, timely data and information in order to monitor and review more systematically the quality of the provision against appropriate key performance indicators and targets.
- The revised and strengthened quality improvement planning process is broadly effective. In particular, it is underpinned by a more rigorous use of lesson observations, quality and compliance audits, learner and employer feedback and performance data to inform self-evaluation reports and improvement plans. Going forward, there is need to sharpen further the action planning process to ensure progress can be evaluated robustly against more measurable targets.

Summary of revised performance levels

Programme/curriculum area	Revised performance levels
Training for Success programme	Good
Barbering, beauty therapy and hairdressing	Good
Essential skills	Important areas for improvement
Retail and Customer service	Good

Overall Effectiveness

In the areas inspected, Rutledge Training Limited demonstrates that it has the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interests of the trainees and apprentices. The ETI will continue to monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement, particularly:

- the attendance of the apprentices to essential skills training;
- further improvement in work-experience placement rate for the trainees; and
- further improvement to the retention and progression rates on the Training for Success programme.

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