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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
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*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 an Inspection**

### **Jobskills Provision Belfast Central Training**

**Inspected: May 2007**

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A number of quantitative terms are used in the report. In percentages, the terms correspond as follows:-

- More than 90% - almost/nearly all
- 75%-90% - most
- 50%-74% - a majority
- 30%-49% - a significant minority
- 10%-29% - a minority
- Less than 10% - very few/a small number.

## Grading System

The Education and Training Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) is piloting a new 6-point grading scale to replace the original 4-point scale as set out below. Where grades are recorded in this report, the grade is given on both the old and the revised scales.

Original Grade	Revised Grade	Descriptor
1	1	Outstanding characterised by excellence.
1	2	Consistently good; major strengths.
2	3	Important strengths in most of provision. Areas for improvement which the organisation has the capacity to address.
2	4	Overall sound/satisfactory but with areas for improvement in important areas which need to be addressed.
3	5	A few strengths; significant areas for improvement which require prompt action.
4	6	Poor; major shortcomings which require urgent action.

## **PART ONE**

### **SUMMARY**

#### **1. CONTEXT**

1.1 Belfast Central Training (BCT) is a charitable organisation, limited by guarantee. It was established in 1978 as Voluntary Service Belfast, to provide vocational and educational training for people who were unemployed or entering the labour market for the first time, and became known as BCT in 1990. Belfast Central Training supplies training for the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) through the Jobskills Access, Traineeship and Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programmes.

1.2 Belfast Central Training is managed by a team of two managers and a voluntary management committee is in place, who act in an advisory and supportive capacity. There are eight tutors employed, who are responsible for the provision of pre-entry guidance and support, the management of directed training in the vocational area, key and essential skills, and work-based learning. The pastoral support and monitoring of the trainees' overall progress in directed training and in the workplace is also an integral part of the role of the tutors.

1.3 Traditionally BCT has targeted and worked with people from areas of high unemployment, often long term unemployed or second or third generation unemployed. While most of the trainees are recruited from North Belfast, Ardoyne, Duncairn, New Lodge and the lower Shankill, the last few years has seen a widening of the catchment area, and recruitment of a significant minority of trainees from the greater Belfast area. Young people and adults from both of the traditional communities in Northern Ireland are recruited onto these programmes. A significant minority of trainees come to the organisation with personal, social and emotional difficulties and require personal support and guidance from their tutors.

1.4 The trainees on Jobskills programmes complete the framework appropriate to their level of training and vocational area, including a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), key or essential skills and a technical certificate as required. Most of the Jobskills trainees leave post-primary education with few qualifications. At the time of the inspection, only a minority (15%) of the trainees held at least four General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) qualifications at grades A\* to C on entry to their programme.

#### **2. PROVISION**

2.1 The number of trainees enrolled on Jobskills programmes has increased by approximately 96% since the last inspection in 2003, when 71 trainees were on the programmes. This expansion has been due largely to an increase in the numbers of trainees on the Traineeship and MA programmes in Hairdressing and the MA programme in Hospitality and Catering.

2.2 Belfast Central Training offers a range of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at levels 1 to 3 in the programme areas of Hairdressing, Hospitality and Catering, Retail and Warehousing, and at levels 1 and 2 in Beauty Therapy. During the week of the inspection 136 trainees were registered on Jobskills programmes, 24 (18%) on Access programmes, 51 (37%) on Traineeship programmes and 61 (45%) on MA programmes. Of the 24 trainees on

the Access programme: one is on the Retail programme; one in Beauty Therapy; two are in Hospitality and Catering: and 20, 83% are on the Hairdressing programme. Of the 51 trainees on the Traineeship programme: three are in Hospitality and Catering; eight are in Beauty Therapy; and 40 (78%) are in Hairdressing. On the MA programme one trainee is on the Retail programme, 14 are in Hairdressing and 46 (75%) are on Hospitality and Catering programmes.

### **3. THE INSPECTION**

3.1 The inspection focused on the quality of the training provided on the programmes in Hairdressing (NVQ levels 1, 2 and 3), Hospitality and Catering (NVQ levels 1, 2 and 3) and the area of learning for preparation for life and work, which includes the Access programme, the key and essential skills provision, the provision for trainee support, and the careers education, information, advice and guidance provision (CEIAG) provision. These areas, in total, account for approximately 93% of the 136 trainees registered at the time of inspection.

3.2 During the inspection a team of two inspectors from the Inspectorate and a specialist Associate Assessor observed training sessions and visited trainees in the workplace over a period of two days. A total of 40 trainees were observed in directed training sessions, in vocational, key and essential skills sessions. The inspectors also visited 12 trainees in the workplace. Discussions were held with the management team, the internal verifier, the vocational and essential skills tutors, employers, and trainees. The inspectors sampled vocational portfolios, internal and external verifier reports, minutes of management and team meetings, essential skills work and other relevant documentation.

3.3 A representative sample of trainees completed a pastoral care questionnaire during the inspection, which provided them with the opportunity to comment on the quality of their learning experiences and the pastoral care arrangements in BCT. The Manager also completed a questionnaire relating to the provision of pastoral care within the organisation.

### **4. MAIN FINDINGS**

4.1 In the areas inspected, the organisation has major strengths in its educational and pastoral provision with no significant areas for improvement.

No follow up inspection is required.

4.2 The main strengths are the:

- good standards of occupational competence of most of the trainees, commensurate with their stage and level of training;
- excellent success rate on the Access programme at 100% and the good progression rate at 86%, for those who complete their programme;
- good retention rate at 86% on the Traineeship programme, and the excellent success and progression rates at 99% respectively for those trainees who complete their programme;

- excellent success and progression rates at 96% for those trainees who complete their MA programme;
- opportunity for all of the trainees to achieve additional short course accreditation;
- good quality of the learner support to underpin the trainees' vocational training, provided by the vocational and essential skills tutors;
- well planned directed training across the provision inspected;
- good quality of the workplace training;
- positive development of the confidence, self-esteem and appropriate attitudes to work of the trainees;
- excellent relationships between tutors and almost all trainees;
- good leadership and management which are underpinned by a distinctive ethos of strong pastoral support;
- good external links with employers;
- good quality communication and team work across the organisation;
- effective internal quality assurance systems across the range of vocational programmes inspected; and
- commitment of management to continuous improvement.

#### 4.3 The main areas for improvement are the:

- overall poor retention rate on the MA programmes at 48%;
- provision of a more structured and formalised programme of CEAIG;
- development and implementation of an essential skills policy for provision at levels 1 and 2; and
- development of a strategy to address low recruitment across a few vocational areas.

### **Table of Grades**

<b>Overall Grade</b>	<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:	
Leadership and Management	2
Standards and Outcomes	3
Quality of Training and Learning	2

<b>Area of Learning Grades:</b>	<b>No of Trainees</b>	<b>Grades</b>
Hairdressing	54	2
Hospitality and Catering	49	2
Preparation for Life and Work	All	3
Contributory grades:		
Access	24	2
Essential Skills Literacy	3	2
Essential Skills Numeracy	3	2
Key Skills AON	95	3
Key Skills Communication	89	3
Trainee Support	All	2
Careers education, information, advice and guidance	All	3

### **Key for Grades**

Grade 1: Outstanding characterised by excellence

Grade 2: Consistently good

Grade 3: Many good features but some areas for improvement which the organisation has the capacity to address

Grade 4: Overall sound/satisfactory but with some areas for improvement which need to be addressed

Grade 5: Significant weaknesses which outweigh strengths

Grade 6: Poor

## **PART TWO**

### **OVERALL QUALITY OF PROVISION**

#### **5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

5.1 The quality of the management and leadership in BCT is very good. The management provide excellent strategic leadership and management of NVQ programmes to meet local social and economic needs. There are good communication channels throughout the organisation and relationships at all levels in the organisation are very good. The staff team meet each day before trainees arrive in the organisation and discuss a range of issues including the welfare of the trainees.

5.2 The training programmes are well managed and co-ordinated. Across the vocational programmes inspected, the internal verification processes are robust and there is regular sampling and checking of the quality of the learners' portfolios. Management also observe training and learning sessions on a regular basis. Formal feedback is also given to tutors through regular meetings.

5.3 Within BCT, appropriate opportunities exist for staff to undertake professional development programmes, including in-service training provided by Learning Skills Development Agency.

5.4 The management of accommodation and resources is generally good. However, overall timetabling needs to be revised to facilitate the requirements of essential skills training at levels 1 and 2.

5.5 Belfast Central Training has established good links with a number of external agencies including, support groups, community groups and specialist services.

5.6 The management support the implementation of a CEAIG programme. However, this programme needs to be implemented more formally across the entire range of provision through a structured programme.

5.7 The leadership and management across the organisation are committed to the pastoral care of all the trainees and they work hard to develop and maintain a strong ethos of care and support for all trainees but particularly for their more vulnerable learners. While the organisation has policies and procedures in place in relation to the protection of young people and vulnerable adults, it needs to develop further its code of conduct and recording system, to protect staff in relation to the more challenging behaviours of a small number of trainees.

5.8 The overall quality of the self-evaluation report and the development plan is excellent. The findings of the self-evaluation report are a good match to the findings of the inspection. The organisation has put in place an appropriate and effective development plan as a result of their self evaluation processes.



## 6. STANDARDS AND OUTCOMES

6.1 A majority of the trainees enter their training programme with significant barriers to learning characterised by low levels of self-esteem, and confidence and poor records of prior achievement. Most have not achieved in school and have low entry qualifications. A significant minority of trainees have entered their training programme at BCT from other training organisations where their experience was poor.

6.2 Across the vocational programmes inspected, all trainees are given strong pastoral support and, as a result their motivation and enthusiasm for their training programme have improved.

6.3 Almost all of the trainees are placed in good quality work placements and most achieve good standards in the workplace where they are well supported by their employers and tutors. Standards of attendance and timekeeping are generally good, but a small number of trainees do not achieve satisfactory standards. However, follow-up by the organisation is good.

6.4 The standards of the trainees' practical skills range from satisfactory to good, and are mostly good, and are commensurate with their ability and stage of training. Almost all trainees can carry out a range of tasks to the standards required by their employers. However, a majority of trainees would benefit from opportunities to reinforce their essential skills development in the workplace, in addition to the inputs in their directed training sessions.

6.5 The standards of the literacy and numeracy skills for most trainees range from satisfactory to good, and are mostly good. The standard of written communication and presentation in the portfolios of evidence is mostly good, in terms of occupational competence. However, a minority of trainees demonstrate weaknesses in spelling, grammar and register in their written work and a more consistent approach to identification and correction of errors by tutors is required across the range of vocational programmes.

6.6 Almost all of the trainees have good standards of oral communication and are able to discuss their work and to identify appropriate links between the work they complete in their directed training and the work carried out in the workplace.

6.7 Almost all of the trainees in the Access programme engage well in their training and are able to work effectively as members of teams in the workplace.

6.8 Over the last three years, of the 81 Access trainees who started the programme, 57 completed the programme and 57 gained the full award. This represents a good retention rate of 75% and an excellent success rate of 100% for those who complete their programme.

6.9 Over the last three years, of the 70 level 2 trainees who started the programme, 54 successfully completed their training. Taking into account the 3 trainees still on the programme, this represents a good retention rate at 86% and an excellent success rate at 99%.

6.10 Over the last three years, of the 140 trainees who started the level 3 programme, 65 successfully completed their training and 64 achieved their full award, taking into account the 15 trainees still on the programme, this represents a poor retention rate of 48% and an excellent success rate at 96%.

6.11 Over the last three years, progression to further education, training or relevant employment for those who successfully complete their training programmes is excellent across all Jobskills strands. Progression is 86% for trainees completing the Access programme, and 99% and 96% for those completing the traineeship and MA programmes respectively.

## **7. QUALITY OF TRAINING AND LEARNING**

7.1 The analysis of the trainee questionnaires completed prior to the inspection indicates that the majority of trainees enjoy being at BCT. They highlight in particular, the support from all of their tutors.

7.2 Belfast Central Training provides a caring and highly supportive environment for all the trainees, many of whom have significant personal, emotional and social difficulties. Across the vocational programmes inspected, very good relationships exist between tutors and trainees and between trainees and their employers. In almost all of the training sessions observed during the inspection, the trainees are well supported in their learning.

7.3 Induction is generally well organised and almost all trainees develop an understanding of the administrative requirements of the training programme, as well as the content and assessment requirements of their programme.

7.4 The quality of almost all of the directed training sessions is good. All of the directed training sessions inspected were well planned.

7.5 The quality of the use of Information Learning Technology (ILT) to support learning, across the vocational courses inspected is variable. Overall the use of ILT needs to be developed to ensure the support and promotion of active learning.

7.6 The Access provision is good; the tutors use a range of teaching and learning approaches in the vocational and essential skills sessions. All Access trainees have the opportunity to develop further their skills for life and work through attendance at a life skills course provided by Opportunity Youth.

7.7 All trainees have the opportunity to avail of additional short enrichment programmes in basic food hygiene, health and safety and employment rights and responsibilities.

7.8 The essential skills sessions at entry level are almost always well planned with good liaison with vocational tutors to facilitate effective integration with the vocational area. There is a need to liaise more effectively with staff in the work placements to ensure greater integration and development of the essential skills in the workplace.

7.9 The quality of the assessment procedures is mostly good. The pace of assessment within the vocational areas inspected is appropriate for nearly all trainees and almost all make good progress in their vocational units.

7.10 The quality of the work placements is good for almost all trainees. The staff have good relationships with the employers and have detailed knowledge of the learning and

developmental opportunities available for trainees. However, employers need to be made more fully aware of all the component parts of the trainees' qualifications, including the essential skills and need to be more fully involved in the setting of short term training targets.

7.11 The trainees are monitored regularly. Assessments are well planned and recorded by the tutors and constructive feedback is given to most of the trainees to help effect improvement. The tutors work very hard in the interest of supporting the development of all learners.

7.12 The tutors in BCT are appropriately qualified and experienced within their own vocational areas. Continuous Professional Development is fully supported by management who provide ongoing opportunities for staff to gain more skills and qualifications

7.13 The quality of the accommodation for almost all of the directed training is generally good. A majority of the classrooms provide access to a reasonable range of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment.

7.14 While the provision of CEIAG is informal, more needs to be done to ensure a more structured roll out of good quality CEIAG across the full range of provision.

## **PART THREE**

### **AREA OF LEARNING**

#### **8. HAIRDRESSING**

**Programmes Inspected: Hairdressing NVQ Levels 2 and 3**

Provision	Number registered	Grade
Overall	54	2
NVQ Level 2	40	2
NVQ Level 3	14	2

In the area inspected, the organisation has major strengths in its educational and pastoral provision with no significant areas for improvement.

No follow up inspection is required.

8.1 The main strengths are the:

- good standards of written work of most of the trainees in their vocational portfolios across all levels;
- good standards of occupational competence of most of the trainees, commensurate with their stage of training;
- well planned directed training in both theory and practical sessions;
- good quality of almost all of the work placements;
- commitment and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator and the high standards set for the trainees' behaviour;
- strong and effective collaboration among the vocational team and the key and essential skills tutors;
- excellent quality of trainee support;
- retention rate of 75% for Access trainees;
- excellent success rates for all trainees across the three Jobskills levels, who complete their programme; and
- excellent progression rates to further training or employment for all trainees across the three levels, who complete their training.

8.2 The main areas for improvement are the:

- use of ICT to enhance training and learning; and
- the modest retention rate on the MA programme at 64%.

## 9. HOSPITALITY AND CATERING

**Programmes Inspected: Hospitality and Catering Levels 2 and 3**

Provision	Number registered	Grade
Overall	49	2
NVQ Level 2	3	2
NVQ Level 3	46	2

In the area inspected, the organisation has major strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision with no significant areas for improvement.

No follow up is required.

9.1 The main strengths are the:

- well planned and appropriately challenging directed training in both theory and practical sessions;
- good standards of occupational competence, commensurate with the level and stage of training;
- improved confidence and self esteem of almost all the trainees;
- effective levels of engagement of almost all of the trainees with their training;
- dedicated co-ordinator, vocational, key and essential skill tutors;
- good to excellent retention rates on the Access and traineeship programmes;
- excellent success rates for all trainees who complete their programme across all levels; and
- excellent progression rates to further training and employment for trainees who complete their traineeship and MA.

9.2 The main areas for improvement are the:

- need for increased recruitment of trainees at level 1 and 2;
- need to ensure that vocational tutors contribute to the ongoing development of key skills literacy through vocational portfolios; and
- modest retention rates of 68% on the MA programme.

## 10. PREPARATION FOR LIFE AND WORK

**Programmes Inspected:**      **Jobskills Access**  
    **Essential Skills**  
    **Key Skills**  
    **Trainee Support**  
    **CEIAG**

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Number registered</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Overall	136	2
Key Skills	89 (Comm.) 95 (AON)	3
Essential Skills	3	2
CEIAG	136	3
Trainee Support	24	2
Access Provision		2

In the areas inspected, the organisation has major strengths in its educational and pastoral provision with no significant areas for improvement.

No follow up inspection is required.

10.1 The main strengths are the:

- high levels of pastoral care and support, including good links with external organisations, provided for trainees on the Access programme;
- good standards of occupational competence of most of the trainees, commensurate with their stage of training;
- well planned directed training at entry levels in essential skills;
- effective integration of the vocational context into the essential skills at entry levels;
- effective integration of the vocational context into the key skills training and learning;

- good quality of almost all of the work placements;
- high level of commitment demonstrated by staff, at all levels, to the development of the social, personal and work related skills of all the trainees;
- commitment and enthusiasm of the tutors and the high standards set for the trainees' behaviour;
- provision of good quality learner support to underpin the trainees' vocational training;
- opportunities for some Access trainees to achieve additional short course accreditation; and
- good progression rates to further training or employment at 86%.

10.2 The main areas for improvement are the:

- planning and tracking of the ongoing development of the key skills beyond the minimum requirement of the qualification across all the vocational areas;
- development of an essential skills policy and the planning for the introduction of essential skills at levels 1 and 2; and
- need for further development of a more formal, structured approach to CEIAG across the organisation.

## **PART FOUR**

### **KEY PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Belfast Central Training needs to revise its annual development plan to take account of the following key issues, which have been identified during the course of the inspection:

- the development of an essential skills policy to support the introduction of essential skills at levels 1 and 2;
- the overall low recruitment and poor retention rates across a few vocational areas; and
- a more formal structured programme of CEIAG for all trainees.



## APPENDIX

### Jobskills Access Table

<b>Year</b>	<b>Completed 4 weeks</b>	<b>Retention Rate</b>	<b>Success Rate</b>	<b>Progressed to Traineeship</b>	<b>Progressed to relevant employment</b>
2003/04	33	100%	100%	63%	8%
2004/2005	14	46%	100%	64%	11%
2005/2006	34	79%	100%	83%	17%
Total/ Average	81	75%	100%	70%	12%

### Jobskills Traineeship Table

<b>Year</b>	<b>Completed 4 weeks</b>	<b>Retention Rate</b>	<b>Success Rate</b>	<b>Progressed to Modern Apprenticeship</b>	<b>Progressed to relevant employment</b>
2003/2004	27	70%	100%	26%	74%
2004/2005	27	89%	100%	29%	67%
2005/2006	16	100%	98%	36%	55%
Total/Average	70	86%	99%	30%	65%

2003/2004 – 0 trainees still on programme  
 2004/2005 – 3 trainees still on programme  
 2005/2006 – 15 trainees still on programme

### Jobskills Modern Apprenticeship Table

<b>Year</b>	<b>Completed 4 weeks</b>	<b>Retention Rate</b>	<b>Success Rate</b>	<b>Progressed to relevant employment</b>
2003/2004	65	54%	100%	100%
2004/2005	50	25%	100%	100%
2005/2006	25	66%	90%	96%
Total/Average	140	48%	96%	96%

2003/2004 – 0 trainee still on programme  
 2004/2005 – 5 trainees still on programme  
 2005/2006 – 10 trainees still on programme

### Jobskills Overall Summary

<b>Year</b>	<b>Completed 4 weeks</b>	<b>Retention Rate</b>	<b>Success Rate</b>	<b>Progressed to employment or further training</b>
2003/2004	125	85%	100%	90%
2004/2005	91	53%	100%	90%
2005/2006	75	82%	97%	96%
Total/Average	291	73%	99%	92%

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