



Education and Training
Inspectorate

European Social Fund provision in
Workforce Training Services

Path 2 Employment

Report of a Quality Improvement
Planning Inspection in
January 2020



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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Introduction

In January 2020, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a quality improvement planning inspection of Workforce Training Services Path 2 Employment project, to evaluate the effectiveness of the project promoter's self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes. At the last inspection in March 2017, the project promoter demonstrated a high level of capacity to identify and bring about improvement.

Focus of the quality improvement planning inspection

The quality improvement planning inspection focused on the following key areas which the organisation had prioritised for improvement through its self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes:

- to increase the engagement of employers and stakeholders in order to extend the opportunities for employment for the participants; and
- to develop the provision of mentoring support to meet more effectively the individual needs of the participants.

The arrangements for safeguarding were also included.

Key findings

The inspection identified the following key findings:

- The project promoter has increased successfully its engagement with key stakeholders; effective strategic links have been developed with, for example, Belfast City Council, the Urban Villages Initiative and a range of community associations. The strategic links have resulted in well-established partnerships with a wide range of employers, including training academies, which provide sound employment opportunities that are well matched to the participants' needs, interests and aspirations. In the first two years of the project, the immediate and long-term employment targets are consistently being met, and exceeded.
- Mentoring support is provided effectively to meet the individual needs of the participants. The support is characterised by a strong emphasis on person-centred approaches which meet well the care and well-being needs of the participants, and help remove barriers to progression. Participants consistently report the positive impact that mentoring support has had on improving their self-confidence and self-esteem, helping them remain on the programme and to progress to employment or further training. The overall retention rate on the Path 2 Employment project is outstanding at 87% and progression to employment or training is well above the set targets.

Safeguarding

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

The project promoter, however, needs to:

- ensure that there is a consistent definition and understanding of adult safeguarding across all safeguarding policies; and
- provide all staff members with adult safeguarding training appropriate to their role and level of responsibility.

Overall Outcome

At the time of the quality improvement planning inspection visit, and in the areas evaluated, Workforce Training Services continues to demonstrate a high level of capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of the provision.

The outcome from this inspection will inform the next steps for the project promoter with regard to the inspection cycle.

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