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*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

Education and Training Inspectorate

Training for Success Provision

**North West Centre for Training and Development
Northern Ireland**

Inspected: October 2009

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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 minority

All the statistics in this report have been supplied and verified by the North West Centre for Learning and Development Northern Ireland.

Grading System

The Education and Training Inspectorate use the following performance levels (grades) in reports:

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

PART ONE

SUMMARY

1. CONTEXT

1.1 The North West Centre for Learning and Development Northern Ireland (NWCLD (NI)) is a community-based training organisation in Londonderry. It was founded in 1978 and was re-registered in 2008 as an industrial provident society for charitable purposes. The NWCLD (NI) has for many years provided professional and technical training and community-based support programmes to disadvantaged and marginalised groups in Londonderry. The training premises are located in the Pennyburn industrial estate on the west bank of the city. In September 2007, it was granted approval by the Department for Employment and Learning (Department) to provide professional and technical training under the Training for Success Programme in Londonderry. It is a member of the Derry New Deal consortium and provides a range of training courses funded by the European Union Social Fund programme. It also provides courses in computerised accounting to three local post-primary schools.

1.2 Derry city has higher levels of economic and social deprivation than the rest of Northern Ireland (NI). The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Industry October 2009 'Monthly Labour Market Report,' reported that the Derry District Council area has the highest claimant count in NI at 7.2%, which is significantly above the regional average of 4.9%. The Derry District Council Area is the second¹ most deprived local government area in NI, with 46% of the population living in NI's most deprived areas. Many of the trainees come from the most socially deprived areas of the city.

2. PROVISION

2.1 The number of trainees registered with NWCLD (NI) on Training for Success programme continues to be small; at the time of the inspection, there were only 20 trainees. Most of the trainees had low levels of educational attainment on entry to the programme, and a minority have special educational needs. None of the trainees had achieved a grade C or better in General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) English and only two of them had achieved a grade C or better in GCSE mathematics. A minority (20%) of the trainees, however, had attained grade C passes in four or more GCSE subjects.

2.2 The NWCLD (NI) provides training programmes across all strands of the Training for Success programme, in the professional and technical areas of administration, information and communication technology (ICT) and retailing. Ten trainees are undertaking training programmes in ICT; four on the information technology (IT) practitioners pathway and six on the ICT users pathway. There are five trainees registered in administration, and five in retailing. Two trainees were registered on the Skills for Your Life, and four on the Skills for Work programmes. The remaining trainees (14) are taking national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at level 2 under the extended pre-apprenticeship programme and the recently introduced Programme-Led Apprenticeship programme.

¹ Source: Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency (NISRA) measure of multiple deprivation, 2005

3. THE INSPECTION

3.1 The report is based on an inspection of the Training for Success provision in the NWCLD (NI).

3.2 A small team of inspectors observed trainees in directed training sessions, and in the work-place. Extended discussions were held with the manager, programme co-ordinators, and tutors. The inspectors examined a range of quality assurance documentation, the trainees' personal training plans (PTPs) and representative samples of the trainees' work.

3.3 The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for young people to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Questionnaires were issued to all the trainees; 17 (85%) were returned to the Inspectorate of which none contained additional written comments. The inspectors also met with groups of trainees to discuss their views of the organisation.

4. MAIN FINDINGS

4.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of education and training provided by the training organisation is good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

4.2 The main strengths are the:

- caring and supportive ethos, and the development of effective communication channels with the trainees' parents/carers and their previous post-primary schools;
- effective leadership and management of the provision;
- very good standards of work and the progress made by the trainees in their professional and technical and essential skills' work;
- high expectations of nearly all of the tutors and the good opportunities for the trainees to attain qualifications beyond the requirements of their training frameworks;
- high levels of success in professional and technical programmes and in essential skills; and
- good range of professional and technical qualifications provided to trainees to enhance their progression opportunities into employment, training and further education.

4.3 The main areas for improvement are the:

- need to implement actions to improve attendance and the punctuality of a significant minority of the trainees in their directed training;
- need for more consistent approaches to training and learning in directed training sessions, and to provide practical training facilities in administration and retailing and;
- need to formalise policies for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Table of Grades

Overall performance level (grade)	Good (3)
Contributory performance levels (grades)	
Leadership and Management	Good (3)
Achievements and Standards	Very Good (2)
Quality of Provision for Learning	Good (3)
Area of Learning	
Essential Skills	Good (3)
Information Technology	Good (3)

PART TWO

OVERALL QUALITY OF PROVISION

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 Leadership and management in the NWCLD (NI) is effective and appropriate actions are taken to meet the needs of the trainees. The mission statement of the organisation makes a strong commitment to raising the aspirations of all the trainees. This commitment is shared by the tutors in their work; in many instances, the trainees undertake work that is beyond the requirements of their training frameworks. A high priority is appropriately given to improving the literacy and numeracy skills of all the trainees. The manager provides good leadership and works well with the staff to develop an inclusive and collegial approach to operational planning, and the strategic direction of the organisation. Effective links are made with the trainees' parents and carers, as well as feeder post-primary schools, in order to support trainees in their work. A key constraint in the strategic and operational planning, however, is the difficulty in recruiting adequate numbers of trainees onto the Training for Success programme. The location of the training organisation in an industrial estate on the outskirts of the city presents a challenge in recruiting trainees on Training for Success programme, especially for those relying on public transport.

5.2 The quality assurance processes are sound and are linked effectively to the strategic and operational planning in NWCLD (NI). Although monitoring and evaluation arrangements are strong, the use of performance data to aid quality improvement planning at all levels is underdeveloped. A start has been made to make use of peer observation to evaluate the quality of training and learning but it needs to be applied more consistently across the organisation.

5.3 The tutors and ancillary staff are generally well-deployed to meet the needs of the trainees. Although most of the tutors are well-qualified, a small number of the sessions are taught by non-specialist tutors, which has an adverse effect on the quality of the trainees' learning experiences. The NWCLD (NI) achieved Investor in People status in 2008, and it works hard, within a very limited resource base, to enhance the tutors' professional and technical skills and teaching expertise. The staff development programme, however, gives insufficient attention to refreshing adequately the industrial experience of the tutors.

5.4 The accommodation is bright and well-maintained. Effective use is made of wall displays to celebrate the achievements of the trainees in key aspects of their work, particularly in the essential skills. With the exception of ICT, too little use is made of wall displays to promote career pathways. Most of the trainees have good access to appropriate learning resources in their work. The trainees in administration and retailing, however, have inadequate access to in-house training facilities to develop the important practical, work-related skills.

6. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

6.1 Most of the trainees enter the Training for Success programme with low levels of educational achievement and many have multiple barriers to training, and employment. These include non-attendance while at school, poor levels of literacy and numeracy, a lack of motivation and instances of inappropriate behaviour.

6.2 Almost all of the tutors work effectively to increase the expectations of the trainees in their directed training. The Training for Success programme are well-designed, with trainees undertaking industry standard qualifications that provide them with good progression routes into employment or further education and training. The majority of the trainees are

well-motivated and are making good progress in professional and technical work. Attendance and timekeeping at directed training, however, for a significant minority of the trainees remains poor.

6.3 The majority of the trainees attain good standards of work in directed training. The standards attained by trainees on the IT practitioner programme are very good. Under the supervision of the tutor and the IT technician, they competently work live on the organisation's computer network, and have recently re-cabled successfully one of the computer suites.

6.4 At the time of the inspection, only four of the trainees had secured work-placements as part of their training programmes, and six trainees were undertaking work-related activities in the organisation's own offices. Typically, those trainees not in a work-placement undertake training in NWCLD (NI) for four days each week. A minority of the trainees require a lot of support in securing and sustaining relevant placements. Although the tutors work hard to secure appropriate placements, and the trainees are provided with training sessions on career planning, they need more one-to one support in developing active Jobsearch skills.

6.5 The quality of work-based training for those trainees who have secured work-placements is good. They are working effectively in the workplace environment and attain good occupational skills to meet the requirements of their training programme. The employers provide good support to the trainees and communications between the training organisation and employers are well-developed and effective.

6.6 Although nearly half (42%) of the trainees do not complete their training programmes, success rates are excellent; over the last two years, 91% of those trainees completing their training achieved the target qualification.

6.7 Progression rates for those trainees who complete their training programmes are excellent, with 90% of trainees progressing to further education, employment or training.

6.8 The trainees attain good standards in the essential skills of literacy and numeracy. They have good opportunities to achieve essential skills qualifications beyond the levels specified in their training frameworks. They are making good progress in their work, and they achieve excellent results in external tests; over the last two years, at least 97% of those trainees who completed their programmes also achieved the essential skills qualifications.

7. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

7.1 The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in NWCLD (NI) is very good. The tutors work hard to support the welfare and emotional well-being of the trainees. The tutors maintain good contacts with parents and carers to review the progress of the trainees. The trainee questionnaire responses show high levels of satisfaction about their experiences in NWCLD (NI).

7.2 The quality of the PTPs is good. They are individual in nature and capture well the outcomes of initial assessment and identify appropriately any additional educational needs. Although the plans include targets for achievement and progress, these need to be supported with a weekly training plan for all of the trainees. In addition, although the monitoring and review of the trainees in both directed training and the work-place is good, it is not yet captured effectively within the PTPs.

7.3 The trainees' induction programme gives adequate coverage to the health and safety and the administrative aspects of the programme, along with the assessment requirements. Although some elements of the induction programme are included in the trainees' induction booklet, much of the content is too generic for Training for Success programme.

7.4 The essential skills provision is well-managed. The essential skills are an integral part of all the professional and technical training programmes. Appropriate use is made of diagnostic assessment to identify the trainees' literacy and numeracy needs. Insufficient use is made, however, of this information to plan training and learning strategies in directed training. More support is needed for those tutors who have only limited experience of delivering essential skills programmes. Good use is made of vocationally relevant training materials in literacy and numeracy, but this is underdeveloped in the ICT essential skill. The NWCLD (NI) has good links with appropriate external agencies to support those trainees with special educational needs.

7.6 The quality of the directed training sessions is inconsistent; just under one-half of the sessions are good or better. In contrast, the remaining sessions range from satisfactory to inadequate. In the best practice, the tutors make effective use of an appropriate range of training methods, including well-planned group activities to engage the trainees in their learning. In the remaining sessions, there is an over reliance on discrete tasks which narrow the range of the trainees' learning experiences. Good use is made of Information and Learning Technology (ILT) in teaching and learning in the professional and technical area of ICT. The tutors, for example, make effective use of electronic folders in order to support the trainees in their work. The trainees on the IT practitioners programme make use of a wide range of software applications to develop their diagnostic skills for computer networks. The use of ILT in the other areas of the provision is mostly underdeveloped.

7.7 The opportunities for trainees to develop work-related skills in directed training vary across the professional and technical areas. In the professional and technical area of ICT, the trainees have many opportunities to undertake an appropriate range of training and assessment tasks in their work. The range of work-related training activities in administration and retailing is mostly underdeveloped.

7.8 The NWCLD (NI) has some features of good practice in the safeguarding of vulnerable groups. Effective procedures are in place for handling disclosures, and all trainees have been vetted by Access NI. In the context of the recent vetting and barring legislation (Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007), the current arrangements, however, are not sufficiently robust. The organisation needs to:

- review and formalise the policies for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

7.9 The trainees have good access to careers advice on progression pathways from their specialist tutors, and they undertake a range of structured visits to local employers. The use of guest speakers from industry across the professional and technical areas is currently underdeveloped.

PART THREE

AREA OF LEARNING REPORTS

8. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Programmes inspected: **Skills for Your Life: ICT User**
 Skills for Work: IT Practitioner
 Programme -Led Apprenticeship: ICT User
 Extended Pre-apprenticeship: IT Practitioner
 Essential Skill of ICT

MAIN FINDINGS

8.1 The main strengths are the:

- good standards of work produced by the trainees, who are making good progress in their learning;
- good support for the trainees;
- good work-based training experiences for those trainees in work placement and the good skills development of those trainees placed in-house on the IT practitioners programme; and
- good ICT equipment and resources.

8.2 The main areas for improvement are the:

- provision of industrial visits and use of guest speakers to enhance the ICT provision; and
- development of more effective links between the ICT essential skills tutor and the professional and technical tutors to ensure a more effective integration and delivery of the ICT essential skill.

9. ESSENTIAL SKILLS OF LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Programmes Inspected: **The Essential Skills of Literacy and Numeracy**

MAIN FINDINGS

9.1 The main strengths are the:

- excellent success rates at 97%;
- good opportunities for trainees to achieve essential skills qualifications at a range of levels appropriate to their prior achievement in all skill areas;
- good quality and appropriate contexts of the action- based activities relevant to the trainees' professional and technical work; and
- the high priority given by management to the development of the trainees' essential skills.

9.2 The main areas for improvement are the:

- collation and evaluation of the findings from the initial assessment process to inform the planning for training and learning;
- consistent deployment of appropriately qualified tutors; and
- sharing of good practice between tutors.

PART FOUR

KEY PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

The North West Centre for Learning and Development Northern Ireland needs to revise its annual development plan to take account of the following key priority:

- to implement action to improve attendance, punctuality, and the work-ready skills for a significant minority of the trainees in their directed training.

APPENDIX

Achievements

Programme	Completed 4 weeks	Retention Rate (%)	Success Rate (%)	Progressed to FE/Training (%)	Progressed to employment (%)
Skills for Your Life	8	38	67	100	0
Skills for Work	12	50	100	100	0
Pre Apprenticeship	13	77	100	83	17
Average		58	91	90	10

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