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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**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of an Inspection**

**Hugh J O'Boyle Training Ltd**

**Inspected: March 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 Hugh J O'Boyle Training Ltd is a private training organisation recognised by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) as a supplier organisation to provide training under the Jobskills programme.

1.2 The organisation has two offices. Its main premises is in Downpatrick and its second office, on the Ormeau Road in Belfast, is known as the Belfast Centre of Learning (BCL). The organisation provides training for young people on the Jobskills programme throughout East Down and South and East Belfast. This report focuses on the Jobskills provision in the East Down area. Almost all of the vocational tutors are employed across the two sites in Downpatrick and Belfast.

#### **2. PROVISION**

2.1 Hugh J O'Boyle Training offers a range of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at levels 1 to 3 in the programme areas of Hospitality and Catering, Administration, Children's Care, Learning and Development (CCLD), Early Years Care and Education (EYCE), and Retail. Over the last three years, recruitment has declined. The recruitment on the Access programme has dropped by 29% from 38 to 27 and on the Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programme by 92% from 37 to three in the same three year period. At the time of the inspection, there were 54 trainees registered on Jobskills programmes: five, 9% were registered on the pre-vocational Access programme; 25, 46% on the Access programme; eight, 15% on CCLD; seven at level 2 and one at level 3; two, 4% on the Retail programme at level 2; two, 4% on the Catering programme at level 2; six, 11% on the Administration programme at level 2 and six, 11% on the Administration programme at level 3. The trainees all complete the appropriate framework including a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), essential skills and a technical certificate, if required.

2.2 Across the vocational programmes, at levels two and three, trainee numbers are low. The main provision is at level one and the organisation deals increasingly with a majority of trainees who enter at level one with a range of significant social and personal issues and barriers to learning. Of the 54 trainees registered across the full range of provision twelve, 22%, hold General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) English at grade C or better, nine, 17%, hold GCSE mathematics at grade C or better and eight, 15%, hold four or more GCSEs.

#### **3. THE INSPECTION**

3.1 The inspection focused on the quality of the training provided on the programmes in CCLD, including EYCE (NVQ levels 1, 2 and 3), Retail (NVQ level 2) and the area of learning for preparation for life and work, which includes the Access programme, the pre-vocational Access programme, the essential skills provision, the provision for trainee support, and the careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) provision. These areas, in total, account for approximately 56% of the 54 trainees registered at the time of inspection.

3.2 During the inspection a team of three inspectors from the Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) observed training sessions and visited trainees in the workplace over a period of four days. A fourth inspector joined the team for one day. A total of 38 trainees were observed in directed training sessions, in both vocational and essential skills sessions. The inspectors also visited 19 trainees in the workplace. Discussions were held with the management team, the internal verifier, the vocational and essential skills tutors, employers, and the monitoring and review officer. 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 prior to the inspection, which provided them with the opportunity to comment on the quality of their learning experiences and the pastoral care arrangements in O'Boyle Training. 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 important strengths in most of its education and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified minor areas for improvement which the organisation has the capacity to address.

#### 4.2 STANDARDS AND OUTCOMES

The main strengths are the:

- good standards of occupational competence of most of the trainees, commensurate with their stage of training;
- excellent success rate on the Access programme at 96% and the excellent progression rate at 92%, for those who complete their programme;
- opportunity for the pre-vocational Access and Access 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;and
- satisfactory or better standards of written work of most of the trainees' vocational portfolios in CCLD.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- retention rates across the range of programmes inspected;
- levels of recruitment to the Traineeship and MA programmes; and
- holistic development of literacy skills in a vocationally integrated manner across the range of programmes inspected.

### 4.3 QUALITY OF TRAINING AND LEARNING

The main strengths are the:

- well planned directed training at levels 1 and 2 across the provision inspected;
- good quality of the workplace training;
- good opportunities for trainees to develop their skills in information and communication technology and to undertake research in their vocational training in the area of CCLD;
- good quality of the provision of careers education, information, advice and guidance in the area of CCLD;
- positive development of the confidence, self-esteem and appropriate attitudes to work of the pre-vocational Access and Access trainees;and
- excellent relationships between tutors and almost all trainees.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- involvement of employers in the setting and monitoring of short term training targets in the workplace;
- planning and quality of provision for the directed training for the very small numbers of MAs on the CCLD programme;
- planning for the effective use of differentiated strategies in the directed training sessions in Retail; and
- embedding of the essential skills in the vocational work.

### 4.4 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The main strengths are the:

- good leadership and management which are underpinned by a distinctive ethos of strong pastoral support;
- good external links with employers;
- effective internal systems across the range of vocational programmes inspected;and
- commitment of management to continuous improvement.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- implementation of the essential skills policy in a more effective manner to improve achievements in literacy and numeracy;
- development of a strategy to address low recruitment and retention across all vocational areas; and
- poor quality of accommodation and limited resources for a small minority of trainees.

### **TABLE OF GRADES**

<b>Overall Grade</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:	
Standards and Outcomes	4
Quality of Training and Learning	3
Leadership and Management	3

<b>Area of Learning Grades:</b>	<b>No of Trainees</b>	<b>Grades</b>
Children's Care, Learning and Development	8	3
Retail	2	N/A
Preparation for Life and Work	All	3
Contributory grades:		
Access	25	3
Pre-vocational Access	5	N/A
Essential Skills Literacy	37	4
Essential Skills Numeracy	44	4
Trainee Support	All	3
Careers education, information, advice and guidance	All	3

## **PART TWO**

### **OVERALL QUALITY OF PROVISION**

#### **5. STANDARDS AND OUTCOMES**

5.1 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 small number of trainees have entered their training programme at O'Boyle's from other training organisations where their experience was poor.

5.2 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. In particular, motivation is good for the small number of trainees on the pre-vocational Access programme.

5.3 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. However, a minority, at level one, require greater support from their vocational and essential skills tutors to help them develop the appropriate breadth and range of occupational and personal skills required for the workplace. Standards of attendance and timekeeping are variable, in CCLD, 40% of trainees do not achieve satisfactory standards; however, follow-up by the organisation is good.

5.4 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.

5.5 The standards of the literacy and numeracy skills for most trainees range from poor to good, and are mostly satisfactory. The standard of written communication and presentation in the portfolios of evidence is mostly satisfactory, 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.

5.6 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.

5.7 Most 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.

5.8 Over the last three years, of the 98 Access trainees who started the programme, 25 completed the programme and 24 gained the full award. Taking into account the 13 still on the programme, this represents a poor retention rate of 42% and an excellent success rate of 96% for those who complete their programme. Over the same period, of the 58 level 3 trainees who started the programme, 14 completed training. Taking into account the 3 still on

the programme, this represents a poor retention rate at 30% and a satisfactory success rate at 72%. Over the same period, of the 116 trainees who started the Traineeship programme, 57 completed training, taking into account the 10 still on the programme, this represents a modest retention rate of 63% and a satisfactory success rate at 72%.

5.9 Over the last three years, progression to further education, training or relevant employment for those who successfully complete their training programmes is excellent on the Access programmes at 92%, satisfactory on the traineeship programmes at 78% and good on the MA programmes at 82%.

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

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

6.2 O'Boyle 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. However, within the provision for Retail, the tutor has responsibility for a composite class which includes four pre-vocational trainees, eight level 1 and two level 2 trainees. This places considerable demands on the tutor in terms of planning, monitoring and evaluating the work of each group and it impacts negatively on the motivation and attitudes to work of a minority of trainees.

6.3 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.

6.4 The quality of almost all of the directed training sessions had more strengths than weaknesses. The quality of the teaching is good at levels 1 and 2 in CCLD and EYCE. Nearly all directed training sessions are well planned. However, in Retail the tutors need to create more effective opportunities for the trainees to work independently, and at an appropriate pace to support their learning and development. Within the essential skills provision, there needs to be a better match between the directed training sessions and the application of the range of these skills to the trainees' workplace experiences.

6.5 The quality of the use of information learning technology (ILT) to support learning, across the vocational courses inspected is variable. Within CCLD and EYCE there is good development of the trainees' information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support vocational research. However, within the Retail and Access programmes the use of ILT needs to be developed to ensure the support and promotion of active learning.

6.6 The Access provision is good; the tutors use a range of teaching and learning approaches in the vocational and essential skills sessions. Within the pre-vocational Access programme the tutors work hard to engage and motivate the trainees. Further attention needs to be paid to the differentiation of learning to ensure that all Access trainees are developing their essential skills to a level commensurate with the requirements of the workplace. All

Access trainees and pre-vocational 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. Trainees on the pre-Access vocational programme have the opportunity to avail of additional short enrichment programmes on money management, financial management, hygiene, personal presentation, jobsearch, mock interviews techniques and health and well-being.

6.7 The essential skills sessions are almost always well planned. However, vocational tutors need to liaise more effectively with the essential skills tutors to ensure the successful integration of the essential skills development in all vocational contexts and in the workplace.

6.8 The quality of the assessment procedures ranges from satisfactory to good and 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.

6.9 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. The development of less generic training plans for all vocational areas, including, the development of short-term training targets, against which progress can be measured and the quality of the monitoring process can be enhanced.

6.10 The trainees are monitored regularly in the workplace. Assessments are well planned and recorded by the tutors and constructive feedback is given to most of the trainees to help effect improvement.

6.11 The tutors in Hugh J O'Boyle Training are mostly appropriately qualified and experienced within their own vocational areas. However, care should be taken to ensure that all essential skills tutors comply, in a timely fashion, with the requirements of the DEL tutor education policy for literacy and numeracy.

6.12 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 ICT equipment. However, some of the accommodation for Retail trainees is cramped and not conducive to learning.

6.13 While the quality of CEIAG is good in CCLD, more needs to be done to ensure the roll out of good quality CEIAG across the full range of provision.

## **7. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The quality of the management and leadership in O'Boyle's Training 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.

7.2 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. Formal feedback is also given to tutors through the team meetings.

7.3 Within O'Boyle Training, appropriate opportunities exist for staff to undertake professional development programmes, including in-service training provided by Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA). However, management need to ensure that all appropriate staff undertake staff development in essential skills in line with DEL requirements.

7.4 The management of accommodation and resources is generally good. However, overall timetabling needs to be revised to facilitate individual learner needs through differentiated training and learning in the case of the composite classes in Retail, Administration and CCLD.

7.5 O'Boyle Training has established good links with a number of external agencies including, support groups, community groups and specialist services.

7.6 The management have supported the implementation of a good CEIAG programme within CCLD. However, this programme needs to be implemented more systematically across the entire range of provision.

7.7 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. The organisation has policies and procedures in place in relation to the protection of young people. However, ongoing review of these policies should and procedures should form part of the quality management process to ensure that they meet the ongoing requirements of the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) order.

7.8 The overall quality of the self-evaluation report and the development plan has improved. The findings of the self-evaluation report are, for the most part, at least a satisfactory match to the findings of the inspection. However, management should consider the implementation of procedures to further involve employers in the self-evaluation process.

## **PART THREE**

### **AREA OF LEARNING**

#### **8. AREA OF LEARNING: CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION**

**Programmes Inspected: Children’s Care Learning and Development NVQ Level 1  
Children’s Care Learning and Development NVQ Level 2  
Children’s Care Learning and Development NVQ Level 3  
Early Years Care and Education Level 2**

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Number registered</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Overall	8	3
NVQ Level 2	7	-
NVQ Level 3	1	-

In the area inspected, the organisation has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified minor areas for improvement which the organisation has the capacity to address.

The organisation’s progress on the areas for improvement will be followed up by the District Inspector.

8.1 The main strengths are the:

- satisfactory or better standards of written work of most of the trainees in their vocational portfolios;
- good standards of occupational competence of most of the trainees, commensurate with their stage of training;
- well planned directed training at levels 1 and 2;
- good quality of almost all of the work placements;
- good opportunities for trainees to develop their skills in ICT and to undertake research in their vocational training;
- commitment and enthusiasm of the tutors and the high standards set for the trainees’ behaviour;
- provision of good quality CEIAG; and
- good success rate at 83% for those trainees who complete the Access programme.

8.2 The main areas for improvement are the:

- planning and provision for the directed training for the very small number of MAs, to improve and extend the depth and rigour of the underpinning knowledge base of the trainees;
- involvement of employers in setting and monitoring short term training targets in the workplace;
- the poor retention rate on the MA programme at 58%; and
- modest retention Traineeship programme at 60% .

## 9. AREA OF LEARNING: PREPARATION FOR LIFE AND WORK

**Programmes inspected: Jobskills Access  
Jobskills Essential Skills  
Trainee Support  
Pre-vocational Access  
CEIAG**

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Number registered</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Overall	30	3
Access	25	3
Pre-vocational Access	5	3
Essential Skills -literacy	37	4
Essential Skills- numeracy	44	4
CEIAG	All	3

In the area inspected, the organisation has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified minor areas for improvement which the organisation has the capacity to address.

The organisation's progress on the areas for improvement will be followed up by the District Inspector.

### 9.1 The main strengths are the:

- high levels of pastoral care and support, including good links with external organisations, provided for trainees on the pre-vocational Access and Access programmes;
- 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;
- good level of confidence, improved self-esteem and positive attitudes to work demonstrated by a majority of Access trainees inspected;

- excellent success rate on the Access programme at 96% and the excellent progression rates at 92%;
- good quality of the work placements for a majority of Access trainees inspected;
- opportunities for the pre-vocational Access and Access trainees to achieve additional short course accreditation; and
- provision of good quality learner support to underpin the trainees' vocational training.

9.2 The main areas for improvement are the:

- overall poor retention rate on the Access programme at 42%;
- success rates in essential skills;
- more effective implementation of the organisation's key and essential skills policy, to address weaknesses in literacy and numeracy across the full range of trainees' work;and
- implementation of a planned programme of sampling for the pre-vocational Access trainees across the full range of vocational areas to support informed career choices.

<b>Grade awarded</b>
<b>3</b>

## **PART FOUR**

### **KEY PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Hugh J O'Boyle 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 overall low recruitment and modest retention rates across the full range of provision;
- the dissemination of the good practice in CEIAG in EYCE across the range of programmes;
- the involvement of employers in setting and monitoring short term training targets in the vocational areas inspected; and
- the more effective implementation of the essential skills policy to ensure better integration with the vocational programmes and to drive up achievement in literacy and numeracy across the range of provision.

**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	38	42%	100%	34%	5%
2004/2005	32	31%	80%	3%	6%
2005/2006	21	57%	100%	19%	0%
Total/ Average	98	42%	98%		

2003/2004 – 0 trainees still on programme

2004/2005 – 5 trainees still on programme

2005/2006 – 8 trainees still on programme

**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	44	73%	69%	23%	20%
2004/2005	28	54%	80%	11%	21%
2005/2006	35	57%	70%	3%	9%
Total/Average	107	63%	72%	13%	17%

2003/2004 – 0 trainees still on programme

2004/2005 – 0 trainees still on programme

2005/2006 – 10 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	36	33%	82%	25%
2004/2005	18	22%	67%	0%
2005/2006	3	33%	0%	0%
Total/Average	57	30%	79%	16%

2003/2004 – 1 trainee still on programme

2004/2005 – 1 trainee still on programme

2005/2006 – 1 trainee 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	118	51%	80%	17%
2004/2005	63	41%	80%	13%
2005/2006	59	56%	79%	5%
Total/Average	240	50%	80%	13%

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