

Real Time Training Group

Inspection report

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Name of lead inspector: Jill Szutenberg HMI

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Information about the provider

1. Real Time Training Group (RTTG) was formed in 2003. Its head office is in Chellaston, Derby. The group works across the North East, North West, Yorkshire and Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England, London, the South West and the South East. The bulk of its provision is in business improvement techniques, a sub-branch of engineering. It contracts with the Skills Funding Agency to deliver Train to Gain and from 2009, apprenticeships; inspectors examined these programmes. RTTG contracts with the University for Industry to deliver **learnirect**, and with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to deliver employability programmes. This part of its provision was not in the scope of this inspection.
2. Since the previous inspection, the provision has changed from predominantly **learnirect**, to Train to Gain. RTTG is currently reducing its Train to Gain and increasing its provision in apprenticeships.
3. RTTG provides training on behalf of the following organisations:
 - Remploy Leeds
 - BMI Sheffield
 - BMI Nottinghamshire
 - Park Cakes, Oldham
 - Intraining
 - Rathbone
 - Castle College
 - Leeds City College
 - Waltham Forest College

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Employer provision:	
Train to Gain	302 learners
Apprenticeships	114 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Grade 3
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	3

Overall effectiveness

4. RTTG's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Learners achieve their learning goals effectively and make satisfactory progress. They improve their economic and social well-being well through learning and development and make a positive contribution to the workplace. They feel safe in work.
5. Teaching, training and assessment are good, and support learning and development well. Learners produce a good standard of work. The provision meets the needs of learners and employers very effectively. RTTG works well with its partners to benefit learners. It informs, supports, and guides its learners effectively to achieve.
6. Leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the company very well. They plan carefully to ensure that provision is supported by appropriate resources. RTTG's board provides effective leadership, direction and challenge. The company promotes the safeguarding of learners satisfactorily. It responds well to learners' concerns and takes decisive action where necessary. Promotion of equality and diversity and the tackling of discrimination are satisfactory. RTTG has successfully closed the achievement gap between disabled and non-disabled learners. However, its support arrangements for learners with literacy and numeracy needs are not fully developed. RTTG engages with employers and learners satisfactorily to support and promote improvement. Its systems and actions to improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners are effective. It uses and manages its available resources to secure value for money well.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. The success rate for Train to Gain learners completing in their planned timescale in 2008/09, is in line with the national average and is satisfactory. The success rate for learners completing in their planned timescale for 2009/10 is almost six percentage points above the 2008/09 national average and is satisfactory.
- Learners make good use of their project work to save their employers time and money. Employers appreciate the new skills and ideas that the learners' programmes generate, and learners are justifiably proud of their contribution to their companies.
- Teaching, training and assessment are good. Trainers use a good range of teaching and assessment methods to promote knowledge and understanding. Trainers use their personal experience well to give practical examples. Good one-to-one tutoring enhances learners' skills.
- Progress reviews are satisfactory overall. However, many short- and medium-term targets are insufficiently detailed and not all assessors record reviews well enough to help learners to progress independently. Some reviews are significantly overdue.
- RTTG meets the needs and interests of learners and employers well. It offers a wide-range of programmes. It identifies employers' training needs and matches these to the training of existing employees very effectively.
- The provider informs, supports, and guides learners satisfactorily.
- Initial screening for numeracy, literacy and language skills is appropriate, and assessors provide learners with support. However, they have received no training on developing learners' numeracy and literacy skills.
- RTTG has good, clear strategic direction. The provider plans realistically to provide a comprehensive service for learners and employers. It promotes and implements national and local priorities well, locating its provision in areas of greatest need, and anticipating trends in provision effectively.
- RTTG develops and deploys its staff effectively to meet the needs of learners and employers. Processes to recruit new apprentices to vacancies are very well structured and are effective.
- The provider has satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding. It keeps a single central record of Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks and ensures that this is up-to-date. It has appropriate policies and procedures and is developing a useful code of conduct for its staff.
- Promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The company analyses the performance of different groups and takes action to ensure that all learners

achieve well. Most learners have a satisfactory understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

- RTTG has generally satisfactory processes for monitoring and evaluating performance and tackling weakness, though these are not always well used to ensure a consistent approach to programme delivery. The provider uses data satisfactorily to monitor progress in most cases. However, RTTG does not have an adequate central record of the progress of each learner.

What does Real Time Training Group need to do to improve further?

- Improve the use of progress review forms to include a detailed summary of all aspects of the review, including short-term targets, equality and diversity and health and safety to properly record learners' knowledge and understanding.
- Introduce a systematic and structured approach to staff training at all levels, especially to develop better practice in reviews and to raise assessors' skills in developing learners' levels of numeracy and literacy.
- Develop processes to enable learners to improve and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity; ensure this is recorded in detail at the progress review.
- Improve quality improvement practices to reduce the variability of learners' experiences across different programmes, assessors and geographical regions.
- Develop an adequate central recording system to track and monitor the on-going progress of each learner, enabling assessors, learners and employers to effectively plan their work so more learners can achieve within their planned timescales.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- developing new skills and having existing skills recognised
- the patient, considerate and helpful assessors
- the support from employers and from RTTG
- gaining qualifications
- the knowledge and expertise of the trainers.

What learners would like to see improved:

- initial assessment results should be shared with learners

- the pace of training: some teaching sessions are rushed.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the training meets company needs; staff gain confidence and skills
- the good relations with, and support from, RTTG staff
- the good support for prospective learners from RTTG.

What employers would like to see improved:

- the insufficient information about the apprenticeship programme.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

7. RTTG has satisfactory capacity to improve. It has a sound record of sustained improvement, with timely success rates currently standing at 70%. It sets appropriate targets to improve outcomes for learners and is reshaping its organisation and provision to give both learners and employers a more comprehensive service. The provider has clear strategic vision and appropriate priorities; it has put in place solid foundations for its future direction by developing existing staff and recruiting additional staff to deliver its new apprenticeship programmes. Its broadly satisfactory processes for self-assessment and quality improvement are under review now that the company has appointed a full-time quality director. The self-assessment report grades were largely accurate. The strengths identified at the provider's last inspection have been maintained and the areas for improvement have been remedied or partially remedied. The company's position paper, which updates the self-assessment report, gives an accurate overview of the effectiveness of the provision. RTTG uses learners' and employers' view effectively to improve the provision. It has an appropriate management structure and sufficient staff to carry through its plans for improvement.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

8. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. The success rate for Train to Gain learners completing within their planned timescale in 2008/09 is in line with the national average and is satisfactory at 70%. The success rate for learners completing within their planned timescale for 2009/10 has increased to almost six percentage points above the 2008/09 national average and is satisfactory at 75.9%. Overall success rates for 2008/09 are in line with national rates and are satisfactory at 86%. Overall success rates for 2009/10 are 10.6 percentage points better than the national average and are at least satisfactory at 93.6%. The success rate for Skills for Life learners completing within agreed timescales in 2008/09 is in line with national rates and is satisfactory at 71.8%. The overall success rate for Skills for Life learners in 2008/09 is five percentage points below the national rates and is satisfactory at 80%. The current overall retention rate for apprenticeships that started after August 2009 is 79%, which is satisfactory.
9. Learners improve their existing skills well to increase their economic and social well-being. They also develop a wide range of new skills and gain in confidence and self-esteem. Employers appreciate and value the increasing contribution that the learners make within their companies. Learners clearly enjoy their learning.
10. Learners feel safe. RTTG's assessors promote health and safety in the workplace thoroughly during assessment sessions and reviews. Site inspections of employers' premises are thorough and identify problems well. However,

documentation does not make it clear that action plans are followed up and improvements recorded.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

11. The quality of provision is good. Teaching, training and assessment are good. Assessors use a good range of teaching and assessment methods very effectively to support learning. However, in a small number of observed sessions, assessors made too few checks on learning and the standard of work within groups varied.
12. Learners on the business improvement techniques programme use projects particularly well to improve production processes, helping their employers to save time and money. Learners are well aware of the positive difference they make to their employers.
13. Assessment is good and provides learners with good, appropriate short-term targets to complete by the following assessment visit. Assessors ensure that learners thoroughly understand the activities on their assessment plan. Assessment promotes health and safety very effectively.
14. Assessors conduct satisfactory progress reviews with learners. They test learners' knowledge and understanding of health and safety, and equality and diversity satisfactorily but do not always record discussions well. They use a bank of questions that are undemanding and lack sufficient challenge. The quality of target setting varies; some targets are challenging and measurable, while others are imprecise and do not support learners' progress well. Some reviews are significantly overdue and some are ineffective. Some assessors have not been trained to conduct sound progress reviews.
15. Internal verification arrangements are satisfactory. Assessors receive clear advice and guidance on the quality of their performance. Assessors do not currently participate in the newly introduced standardisation meetings directly, and do not always gain relevant information from them.
16. Staff thoroughly check health and safety arrangements at employers' premises. They establish clear action plans for companies judged to be non-compliant. However, review dates are poorly recorded and it is not clear that follow-up visits have been made.
17. An extensive range of programmes meets the needs of learners and employers well. Employers appreciate the added benefits that the training has given their organisations. Provision is relevant to learners and is at the right level for them.
18. RTTG informs, supports and guides its learners and their employers satisfactorily. Processes to recruit new apprentices to vacancies are very well structured and are effective. Assessors prepare learners well for their programmes. A detailed skills scan identifies any knowledge gaps before learners start their programmes. RTTG provides a good range of materials to

help the learner develop knowledge and understanding of business improvement techniques and methodologies and to prepare them for their wider national vocational qualification. In most cases, employers have a good understanding of their learners' programmes. However, in one case the provider did not identify that an employer had no knowledge of the apprenticeship framework.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

19. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. RTTG has good clear strategic direction. It plans realistically to provide a comprehensive service for learners and employers. The company promotes and implements national and local priorities well, locating its provision in areas of greatest need, and anticipating trends in provision effectively. It manages change very effectively, maintaining and improving its success rates as it moves from Train to Gain to a larger apprenticeship programme. It develops and deploys its staff effectively to meet the needs of learners and employers.
20. The board sets the mission and strategic direction of the company effectively. It monitors all aspects of performance satisfactorily and provides appropriate challenge.
21. The provider has satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding. It keeps a single central record of CRB checks and ensures that this is up-to-date. New staff who are waiting for CRB clearance are appropriately supervised in all their dealings with learners. The company has satisfactory policies and procedures for safeguarding. Learners have satisfactory understanding of what they need to do if they have a problem and the company takes appropriate action to resolve difficult situations. All staff have had at least rudimentary training in safeguarding and some have had a higher level of training.
22. RTTG's approach to the promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The company has identified that males underperform compared with females and is taking appropriate action to remedy this. It has successfully identified and closed the performance gap between disabled and non-disabled learners. Most learners have a satisfactory understanding of their rights and responsibilities. The company has an appropriate range of equality procedures and policies. Its promotion of equality and diversity to learners through reviews is broadly satisfactory, although it is revising its processes to improve this further. Some assessors have not had formal training in equality and diversity. Some employers are insufficiently aware of the importance of equality and diversity to learners' programmes. Initial assessment of numeracy, literacy and language skills is appropriate. Some learners are informed of relevant external provision, while assessors help others as the need arises. However, assessors have received no training on developing learners' numeracy and literacy skills.
23. The provider engages with users satisfactorily to support and promote improvement. It collects and analyses feedback from both employers and learners and uses this to plan, manage, and improve its provision. RTTG has

satisfactory partnership arrangements with several organisations, such as colleges and other training providers; it works effectively with a number of these as a subcontractor.

24. The provider is revising its broadly satisfactory self-assessment processes to strengthen them further. Self-assessment incorporates the views of users but is not adequately linked to improvement monitoring or operational planning. The company has created the role of a full-time quality director to remedy this. RTTG has generally satisfactory processes for monitoring and evaluating performance and tackling weakness, though these are not always used well to ensure a consistent approach to programme delivery. The provider uses data satisfactorily to monitor progress in most cases. However, RTTG does not have an adequate central record of the progress of each learner. Individual assessors use their own satisfactory monitoring systems. The provider does not monitor reviews sufficiently to ensure that they are on time. The new quality director has introduced company-wide observations of teaching and learning but it is too soon to judge their effectiveness.
25. RTTG uses its resources effectively to secure value for money. Learners progress well. They develop good skills and knowledge and attain their learning goals satisfactorily. The provider considers the views of learners and providers about the suitability and availability of staff. Staff work well to support learners and employers, giving their own time freely to do so.

Information about the inspection

26. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's director of quality, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the local Skills Funding Agency, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
27. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the provider. They also observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Real Time Training Group

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners			
Full-time learners	0	0	0
Part-time learners	416	302	114
Overall effectiveness	3	3	3
Capacity to improve	3		
Outcomes for learners	3	3	3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3		
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3		
How well do learners progress?	3		
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2		
How safe do learners feel?	3		
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well-being?*</i>	n/a		
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	n/a		
Quality of provision	2	2	2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2		
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2		
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	3		
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3		
Leadership and management	3	3	3
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2		
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	3		
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3		
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3		
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3		
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3		
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3		

*where applicable to the type of provision

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