



Rhagoriaeth i bawb - Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

**Report of visit
Level of follow-up: Estyn monitoring**

**Cambrian Training Company
The Office @ Coed y Dinas
Welshpool
SY21 8RP**

Date of visit: September 2013

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

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The monitoring team

Mark Evans	Reporting Inspector
Bernard O'Reilly	Team Inspector
Sandra Barnard	Team Inspector
Steve Bell	Team Inspector
Anne Jones	Cambrian Training Company representative

Outcome of monitoring visit

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Cambrian Training Company is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in March 2012.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales will remove Cambrian Training Company from the list of providers requiring Estyn monitoring. However, Estyn will maintain monitoring of the provider's improvement programme through monitoring visits by the link inspector.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Develop and implement a clear strategy to develop all learners' basic and literacy skills

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Since the inspection in 2012, the provider has introduced or enhanced a good range of policies and procedures to improve learners' literacy and numeracy skills. These include guidance for marking written work, guidance on how to record constructive feedback on work stored on electronic portfolios and comprehensive guidance for staff about how effectively to support learners to improve their literacy skills. However, while these documents contribute to a more systematic approach to developing learners' literacy skills, they do not currently form a coherent strategy which clearly sets out aims and expectations for all staff and learners.

The provider introduced a literacy marking scheme during April 2013. However, it is not yet used consistently across all learning areas and the quality and quantity of written feedback to learners is too variable.

The essential skills team has been strengthened since the last inspection. The provider has challenged its training officers to develop their own literacy and numeracy skills. This has resulted in many training officers developing their literacy skills and using improved strategies when giving learners literacy support. All learners receive an initial assessment for literacy and numeracy when they start their training programme. Learners whose initial assessment indicates they are below Level 1 are offered a more detailed diagnostic assessment. These learners are offered the opportunity to attend essential skills workshops staffed by specialists from the essential skills team. Learners who attend these workshops benefit from good levels of support that helps them to develop their essential skills.

Learners whose initial assessment is above the level required for their framework are encouraged to take a higher level essential skill. The number of learners following ESW qualifications higher than their framework requirement has increased from the last inspection by a small amount. The provider has made good progress in developing and using contextualised assignments for ESW. However, a few training officers do not take enough advantage of naturally occurring opportunities to develop learners' essential skills in the workplace.

Recommendation 2: Improve the quality and consistency of assessing and learning

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Since the inspection the provider has implemented and strengthened a wide range of strategies to improve the quality and consistency of teaching, assessing and learning. The heads of business unit for each curriculum area meet regularly to discuss a wide variety of topics, such as standardisation of assessment and the quality of schemes of work and lesson plans.

All staff have taken part in an accredited professional development day “Excellence in Learning”. This has helped them to prepare and plan effective training and teaching sessions. Training and teaching staff have improved their questioning techniques and now recognise different learning styles and adapt resources and delivery methods to better suit the learners’ needs.

The provider has designed and implemented a standard scheme of work and lesson plan documentation throughout all curriculum areas within the organisation and across the sub-contracted provision. This has improved the consistency of assessment and teaching sessions, and given staff more confidence in their delivery.

The provider has implemented a new peer observation system for all their training officers and sub-contractor training staff and assessors. These observations are based on the Estyn judgement criteria and the findings of the external verifier. Managers’ use of this observation system has resulted in improvement actions being addressed quickly and best practice being effectively identified and shared.

All learners receive constructive, formal feedback following assessment tasks. The provider has a comprehensive tracking system in place and learners know how well they are progressing towards their qualification.

Recommendation 3: Make sure that managers translate the provider's strategic objectives into effective operational activities

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The provider has made good progress in ensuring that their strategic objectives have a positive impact on its operational activities.

The provider has modified its management structure and this has improved the accountability, responsibility and effectiveness of managers and staff across the organisation. The Director of Skills is well supported by a Director of Operations and the Heads of Business Units. These managers work together effectively to make sure that the provider’s key strategic objectives are met. The provider has a sharp focus on key issues, such as monitoring and tracking the progress of learners and the development of training officers.

Communication between managers and staff is effective. An appropriate range of meetings ensures that information is shared successfully and best practice identified. Managers across the provider collect and effectively use a comprehensive range of data and information to monitor their performance against targets and benchmark their performance against other work-based learning providers. Managers share this information with training officers and sub-contractors well during regular team and one-to-one meetings.

Training officers use the provider's intranet site effectively to review learner progress reports and to monitor trends in performance. The provider has developed and implemented a comprehensive learner involvement strategy. This strategy collects the views and opinions of learners, employers and training staff systematically. They use the information from these surveys well to inform self-assessment and quality improvement planning.

Recommendation 4: Improve the management of partnership working with sub-contractors

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The provider's management of its sub-contractors has improved significantly.

The provider has improved the management of its sub-contractors by making sure that quality assurance procedures are used and regularly monitored across sub-contracted provision. This sharper focus is overseen by a fairly recently appointed director of operations who is directly responsible for the management of sub-contractors.

The provider works effectively in partnership with its three sub-contractors who are fully involved in the full range of the provider's strategic and operational activities. This includes the sharing of best practice, the use of standardised policies and procedures, joint staff training and development and good sharing of information and performance data. As a part of its strategy to improve its management of sub-contractors the provider undertakes regular peer observations. Two senior managers make regular visits to all of its sub-contractors to ensure the quality and consistency of teaching and learning.

The partnership with its main sub-contractor has resulted in a wider range of training opportunities for learners including the delivery of higher level apprenticeships. There is regular daily contact between the provider and its sub-contractors to review the progress of learners and current developments. The provider holds monthly meetings with its heads of business units and its sub-contractors. These meetings are effective in sharing the vision of the company, setting performance targets and sharing a wide range of information.

Recommendation 5: Ensure that all quality processes are accurately and fully completed and robustly monitored by managers

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The provider has significantly strengthened its quality systems and practices. Documentation and information are shared well across managers, staff and sub-contractors. Managers review learner and training officer performance regularly against a comprehensive range of key performance indicators (KPIs).

Managers work together well and share information relating to the performance of learners. This strong team working and sharing of information has resulted in much improved consistency in the quality of recorded documentation across the provider. Managers receive regular updates on the performance of groups of learners. They use this information and data well to identify learners who are at risk of not completing their training within the given time scale and to set revised targets for learner attainment. The provider uses performance benchmarking data well, particularly to review and monitor its performance in its areas of specialism.

The provider's system for observing training officers in the delivery of theory, practical and assessments has been strengthened and is now used consistently. The director of skills and the head of business unit undertake all formal observations that feed into the provider's staff performance process. These observations are judged using the Estyn scale and are moderated for consistency by the two managers.

The provider has a greater focus on the quality of teaching and learning activities. It has invested in supporting training officers to develop their skills and knowledge of essential literacy skills, ESDGC and learning styles.

The provider uses a comprehensive range of surveys and questionnaires to seek the views of learners and employers regarding the quality of training.

Recommendation 6: Do more to promote and embed the language and culture of Wales and ESDGC to all learners

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The provider has a very strong focus on this area of its work and has made significant improvements to promote and embed the language and culture of Wales and ESDGC across all learning areas.

A member of the provider's staff has the role of bilingual champion. The bilingual champion co-ordinates and supports training staff to promote bilingualism well across the provider and its sub-contractors. All learners and staff have completed mini-assignments that lead to a certificated qualification that covers Welsh in a bilingual Society and Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship.

The provider has developed a good range of resources with a clear emphasis on creating a strong bilingual ethos. Training officers who work with learners whose first language is Welsh encourage them to complete their written work through the medium of Welsh. The number of learners completing written work in Welsh has increased and learners demonstrate increased enthusiasm to complete work in Welsh. The provider offers an English to Welsh translation service to all learners. This helps them with bilingual menu design, translation of restaurant dishes and glossary of terms in hospitality, food manufacturing, and retail and customer service.

Training and teaching staff make sure that examples of ESDGC and the culture of Wales are integrated fully into schemes of work and lesson plans. In taught sessions, training staff discuss realistic examples of sustainability and Welsh culture and language, for example more efficient buying and cooking techniques, food waste in hotels, and the difficulties in translating culinary terms from English to Welsh.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the provider should continue to work towards meeting the inspection recommendations that have not yet been fully addressed.