



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

A report on

**CITB-ConstructionSkills
Unit 4 & 5 Bridgend Business Centre
David Street
Bridgend Industrial Estate
Bridgend
CF31 3SH**

Date of inspection: June 2011

by

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



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the provider's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

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Context

The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) is a registered charity known as CITB-ConstructionSkills. It is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for construction, providing a means whereby employers can influence the type and supply of education, training and business support for the construction industry. CITB-ConstructionSkills agrees sector priorities and targets with employers and partners to address key goals:

- reducing skills gaps and shortages;
- improving productivity, business and public service performance;
- increasing opportunities to boost skills and productivity for everyone in the sector's workforce, including action on equal opportunities; and
- improving learning through apprenticeships, higher education and national occupational standards.

CITB-ConstructionSkills acts as a managing agency for the delivery of learning programmes funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). The provider manages the delivery of qualification frameworks in construction, planning and the built environment.

In both Modern Apprenticeship (MA) and Foundation Modern Apprenticeship (FMA), the number of learners on programme represents around two thirds of the total number of construction learners in Wales. This means that the provider's performance impacts disproportionately on the national averages. As a result, the provider's performance tends to be near to national averages. However, the provider performs favourably in comparison with the sector generally.

Summary

The provider's current performance	Good
The provider's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

Overall, the standards achieved by learners are good. The rates at which Modern Apprentice (MA) and Foundation Modern Apprentice (FMA) learners achieve their full qualification frameworks are good and above the average for providers of construction training in Wales. The provider's latest unverified data is showing a high achievement rate against national benchmarks. Overall, most learners demonstrate good practical competence and theory knowledge during their on-the-job and off-the-job training.

The provider has good arrangements for monitoring and promoting learners' health and wellbeing. Its policies and procedures for ensuring learners' health and safety in the workplace are particularly strong.

The CITB-ConstructionSkills Director for Wales and senior managers provide a good strategic steer to staff. Good management structures and communication across the provider ensure that all staff effectively contribute to the provider's business.

The provider has very strong and effective partnership arrangements with a wide range of partners and collaborates well in a number of initiatives. Managers take the lead, where appropriate, in developing joint working practices.

Prospects for improvement

The provider's capacity for improvement is good because leaders and managers:

- have a clear vision of what the provider needs to do to achieve excellence in the delivery of training;
- implemented effectively the recommendations from the last Estyn inspection;
- have developed partnership working with key partners and stakeholders;
- places a strong focus on key aspects of provision, including quality improvement and the delivery of training and assessment;
- have developed an inclusive and effective management structure;
- have improved learner outcomes year-on-year for the past three years;
- provide good levels of support to learners; and
- have developed effective communication across the provider.

Recommendations

In order to improve, CITB-ConstructionSkills needs to:

- R1 further improve the rates at which learners achieve their full qualification frameworks;
- R2 make sure all learners with identified additional learning needs (ALN) get appropriate support at the start of their training;
- R3 make sure that all sections of the self-evaluation report (SAR) clearly identify any shortcomings and the remedial actions required; and
- R4 continue to identify and share best practice in training and assessment across staff.

What happens next?

Estyn requires the provider to address the recommendations from the inspection and to integrate their proposed actions into their improvement plan to DfES, as part of the regular improvement planning cycle.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Overall, the rates at which learners attain their full qualification frameworks are good. The number of learners achieving their full qualification frameworks has improved over the last three years. The rates at which learners achieve their key and essential skills are good.

In the period 2007 to 2010, the rates at which MA learners achieve their full qualification frameworks has improved from 61% to 74%. In the same period, FMA rates have improved from 71% to 76%. Unverified data for 2010-2011 shows that learners' attainment rates have continued to improve for both the MAs and FMAs.

Overall, most learners make good progress towards the completion of their full qualification frameworks. Learners demonstrate a good understanding of their training frameworks. They know what they have completed and what they need to do to make further progress.

Most current learners demonstrate good levels of practical competence. Carpentry and joinery learners demonstrate good practical skills when making a wide range of wood fixtures, for example cathedral windows, doors and reception areas in hardwood and softwood. Brickwork learners demonstrate good levels of practical competence when building cavity walls on new residential developments.

Overall, most learners' portfolios are of a good standard. They contain a wide range of diverse evidence including witness testimony and photographs. Most learners' written work contains evidence of improved standards over the period of their training. However, a few portfolios do not have detailed enough written feedback and learners do not always correct their spelling or punctuation errors.

Learners demonstrate good verbal communication skills. Most learners improve in self-confidence and esteem as a result of their training. Learners benefit from detailed individual learning plans (ILPs), which clearly record their individual support needs. Learners receive good formal and informal support from apprenticeship officers and college staff to develop their literacy skills. The majority of learners make good progress. For example, learners have improved their literacy skills from entry level to level 2 during their training.

In the majority of workplaces, learners develop higher level skills and knowledge. They demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm for their work and are well motivated to complete their training. Many are enthusiastic about progressing to the next level of training. The rates at which learners progress to the next level of training are good.

Learners make good progress in developing their essential skills. They are generally contextualised well to the construction industry. However, in a few instances learners do not always gain qualifications in essential skills at levels above those

required for their full-framework qualification, even when they are working at those higher levels.

Learners benefit from good opportunities to maintain and develop their Welsh language skills. The co-ordinator is the first point of contact in the office for any learners who are first language Welsh speakers. In north and west Wales, learners complete NVQ assessment through the medium of Welsh. Learners use their Welsh language skills well in both formal and informal communication with each other and their tutors when appropriate.

Wellbeing: Good

Most learners access high quality learning resources, which encourages them to develop safe and healthy attitudes to work and living. Learners demonstrate these well in both on-the-job and off-the-job activities. Learners demonstrate a very high level of awareness and understanding of health and safety. All learners feel safe in their working environments. They know how to get support on health and safety issues from their employer, the college and their apprenticeship officer. Learners demonstrate a good understanding of what to do if they feel they are harassed in their workplaces or when attending off-the-job training. All learners' reviews include a wide range of health and safety and wellbeing questions that relate well to their working environment.

Learners demonstrate high levels of commitment and enthusiasm to their learning. They speak with enthusiasm about the progress they are making and the new skills they have developed. Learners are confident that these new skills will help to support them in their future careers and enable them to secure good and sustainable employment.

Learners undertake a good range of additional activities when away from their workplaces, for example leading healthy lifestyles by participating in a range of sporting activities. Learners have participated well and been successful in construction craft competitions. For example, a learner won a Welsh Livery award for his trowel work; he also went to South Africa for a week to help build a crèche in the local community. Another learner participated in marketing construction apprenticeships by producing a video as part of a team. He translated the script into Welsh and presented the video bilingually. This impacted significantly on the development of his confidence, oral and other communication skills.

Learners benefit from very good levels of support from their workplace supervisors and trainers. These skilled craftspeople act as very effective role models, mentors and coaches. Learners receive extra additional training, such as the 'tool box talks'. These are training sessions on the use of tools and equipment; they always include information on health and safety, for example in relation to safety awareness, which is linked to workplace safety policies and procedures. Learners benefit from good health and safety training when at college.

Overall, learners' attendance and punctuality are very good.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

CITB-ConstructionSkills meets the needs of learners, employers and the construction industry very well.

The provider offers a wide range of programmes to support the training and development of learners in the construction industry. These programmes have been developed in partnership with local colleges and training providers. Learners have many opportunities to develop additional skills and qualifications in specialist and traditional trades, such as scaffolding, plant maintenance, floor tiling and dry stone walling. A number of learners are involved in the Pathways to Apprenticeship programme. This programme was developed to support the construction industry during the recent recession and enables learners to link with employers for work experience and to gain the necessary skills for employment in the construction industry.

The provider carries out an effective skill scan as part of the learner's interview to determine their suitability for working in the construction industry. Learners undertake a diagnostic assessment for basic skills as part of their college induction.

In response to the Welsh Government's (WG) basic skills strategy, the provider is developing a Basic Skills for the Workplace project. The project aims to introduce and develop vocationally relevant essential skills materials for literacy and numeracy within the new qualification framework. The provider employs a Welsh Language co-ordinator to manage and implement their Welsh Language Scheme.

The provider ensures that colleges make good provision for the assessment, training and development of learners' essential skills. Learners benefit from a well-organised programme of day or block release training sessions at local colleges, which include essential skills training. On-the-job training with employers is of a high quality and develops learners' practical skills well.

CITB-ConstructionSkills promotes education for sustainable development and global citizenship (ESDGC) very well. The provider has embedded aspects of ESDGC into all training programmes. Almost all learners have a good awareness and understanding of energy efficient and sustainable products relevant to the industry.

CITB-ConstructionSkills has developed a number of projects in partnership with industry to provide opportunities for learners to develop their understanding of ESDGC, such as external wall insulation and heritage skills. The provider has developed a web site to raise awareness of ESDGC, with a particular focus on low carbon emissions. The web site offers good advice and guidance to learners and employers. The provider is developing a range of accredited training modules and short courses on low carbon emissions.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching and training is good. All practical training takes place in the college workshops and with employers.

Almost all employers provide very good teaching and coaching in the workplace. Employers provide very good training opportunities, often at a higher level than the qualification framework requires. Apprenticeship officers and employers have up-to-date industry knowledge. They use their expertise well to inform and advise learners about new building technologies.

Overall, the assessment of learners is good. Assessment is both regular and rigorous and meets the requirements of the awarding body. Most assessors provide comprehensive and constructive oral feedback to learners and they know what they need to do to progress. On-the-job learner progress reviews are good. The reviews pay particularly good attention to health and safety, equality and diversity and the wellbeing of learners. They are well structured and detailed. During reviews, apprenticeship officers set learners challenging targets for the collection of National Vocational Qualifications portfolio evidence.

Apprenticeship officers demonstrate very good ability to support and challenge learners' technical knowledge during health and safety inspections and review sessions.

All of the CITB-ConstructionSkills staff interviewed have good industrial backgrounds and they use this knowledge and experience well in their teaching and training sessions.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The provider works successfully with a wide range of partners to give learners effective care, support and guidance. It makes sure that all those involved in learners' training programmes have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to learners and how they can make a positive contribution to learners' overall welfare and development.

The provider has good arrangements for monitoring and promoting learners' health and wellbeing. Its policies and procedures for ensuring learners' health and safety in the workplace are particularly strong. Employers' understanding of health and safety issues is good. Together with apprenticeship officers, they introduce and emphasise health and safety principles well as part of apprentices' learning experiences. The provider has clear guidelines for dealing with bullying and harassment, including providing information and raising the awareness of staff and learners on cyber bullying. Apprenticeship officers and learners understand these guidelines and procedures well.

Apprenticeship officers monitor learners' attendance and punctuality regularly and deal promptly with issues that arise.

The provider gives learners good information, advice and guidance before they start their training and at all stages in their programmes. This includes workshops, coaching and practice tests to help learners complete their application forms to enter training, trial periods to help them decide their suitability for specific construction skills, support to find employment, and 'next steps' when they complete their training. Apprenticeship officers and construction careers advisers work closely with young

people, other organisations and Careers Wales to promote construction as a career path and help potential apprentices to appreciate the range of work and job prospects in the vocational area.

When learners start their programmes, they have a comprehensive induction that covers all aspects of their apprenticeship framework. This helps them to understand their responsibilities and the requirements of their training.

The provider gives learners good personal and learning support. Apprenticeship officers know their learners well and understand their individual needs. They use learners' reviews effectively to help them identify learners who may be at risk of falling behind with their work, or require more support to help them overcome personal or learning difficulties that could prove a barrier to progress and successful achievement.

The provider makes good use of external services and partners to help it meet the additional support needs of learners. It has recently formed a very effective partnership with an organisation in one of its delivery regions to provide targeted additional support to learners who require it, in addition to that provided by the organisations delivering off-the-job training and support.

Nearly all learners with additional learning needs have appropriate support at the start of their training. However, in a very few instances, learners' additional support needs are not met early enough in their programmes.

The provider has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Excellent

The provider has a very strong ethos of inclusion and is committed to fairness and equality for all its learners and staff. It has comprehensive policies and procedures, which relate to all aspects of equality of opportunity and diversity, and it monitors the impact of these well.

It promotes equality and diversity very well and participates in several projects that aim to challenge stereotypical views and pre-conceptions of the industry and break down barriers to construction as a career. The provider is committed to encouraging under-represented groups to enter the industry and has clear and specific recruitment targets for these groups.

All staff have a very good understanding of issues relating to equality and diversity and encourage a culture of respect. Apprenticeship officers reinforce equality and diversity well during review visits with learners. All staff have benefitted from training and awareness raising sessions on equality and diversity that are tailored to their roles and responsibilities. Learners' working and learning environments are of a good standard and meet the needs of learners well. On-the-job learners benefit from good quality workplaces that provide them with a good environment to practise and develop their skills. These workplaces also provide learners with very good opportunities to collect portfolio evidence for their National Vocational Qualifications.

Learners access good quality accommodation for practical and theory training when attending off-the-job training at college. However, on a few occasions, learners report that accommodation is cramped and that hand tools are not well maintained. Most learners have access to good quality resources when attending off-the-job training. These resources include good access to workshop equipment and information and communication technology.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The CITB-ConstructionSkills Director for Wales has established a clear vision and ethos for the provider. These give a strong focus on continual improvement in the quality of the provision. The provider has a clear management and reporting structure. Managers at all levels provide good leadership and set a clear direction and vision for the provider. Managers communicate strategies and targets to staff well through a comprehensive range of documents and meetings. Senior managers effectively link target setting to strategic objectives.

The Board provides good challenge regarding the performance in Wales. An Executive team of directors receives detailed performance data from the region and provides good scrutiny of the performance in Wales.

Strategic and operational plans are detailed and well understood by staff. The provider's priorities and core values are reviewed regularly and shared with all staff and partners through clear strategic and operational plans.

Overall, communication across the provider is good. Monthly management team meetings focus on key operational issues and quarterly meetings with the Director for Wales focus on key strategic issues. Managers and staff share a common responsibility for learners' performance and wellbeing.

Overall, the performance management of staff is good. Managers link individuals' performance to challenging targets well. These targets are clearly linked to criteria that are matched well to their job roles. Managers give apprenticeship officers good levels of personal support to help them to improve their performance.

All staff across the provider benefit from a wide range of opportunities to share good practice and to improve working practices and procedures. However, on a very few occasions, opportunities to identify and share best practice are missed.

The provider has well-developed procedures for the management of its college sub-contractors. The provider has detailed service level agreements (SLA) for its sub-contractors. Managers review and update these agreements annually. These documents clearly define the roles and responsibilities of CITB-ConstructionSkills and sub-contractor college staff.

Managers make good use of management information and data to review, monitor and improve the performance of sub-contractors. Senior managers monitor learner outcome data well and effectively use national benchmark comparators and data to continuously monitor and improve the quality of learning.

The provider has responded well to local and national priorities for education and training. It contributes effectively to the development of construction training across Wales by identifying and meeting the needs of the construction industry and developing strategies to meet future skills requirements.

Improving quality: Good

The provider's quality assurance procedures are effective in improving the performance of the organisation. All staff have the opportunity to contribute fully to the self-assessment process. The standards team encourages staff at all levels to identify their strengths and areas for improvement.

The provider uses evidence from learner questionnaires, learner forums, employer forums and training teams well to inform the self-assessment report (SAR) and to bring about improvement. The SAR is comprehensive, detailed and self critical. However, in a few sections it does not clearly identify shortcomings and remedial action well enough.

The SAR informs the quality development plan (QDP) well. The QDP includes targets that are specific, measurable and resourced, and clearly identifies staff responsibilities for action and monitoring progress.

Staff at all levels work well together, with a clear focus on quality improvement. The provider's staff work very well with a wide range of key stakeholders and partners to make sure that the quality of construction training is continually improving.

The provider uses robust quality improvement processes effectively to monitor the performance of the organisation and identify areas for improvement. These processes include reviewing and evaluating all key processes within the organisation. The standards team supports well the operational management of the organisation.

The provider's staff make good use of management information systems (MIS) for tracking learners' progress and achievement and use a colour coding system well to monitor the performance of learners. Senior managers make effective use of data on learner outcomes and compare these well against national comparator data.

The provider has made good progress in addressing all of the recommendations from the last Estyn inspection.

Partnership working: Excellent

The provider has very strong and effective partnership arrangements with a wide range of partners. It collaborates well in a number of initiatives and takes the lead, where appropriate, in developing joint working practices.

The provider works well with its partners to develop effective joint strategies and working practices. These include the Construction Youth Trust, which provides work experience for young people on real construction sites. The Institute of Civil Engineers bridge building programme provides learners with the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge related to major civil engineering projects.

CITB-ConstructionSkills makes good use of joint projects to provide opportunities for learners to develop their practical skills and contribute within their local communities. For example, groups of carpentry learners have worked closely with community groups and schools, constructing and installing benches and picnic tables.

Training groups and forums developed by the provider, at local, regional and national level, plan, deliver and monitor coherent training programmes successfully to meet the needs of learners and employers. Training groups consist of representatives from the provider, colleges, employers, schools, local authorities, housing associations and the Welsh Government.

The provider is proactive in supporting developments in a number of 14-19 learning networks. It works well with other organisations and stakeholders such as schools, the National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW), the British Association of Construction Heads (BACH), the Prince's Trust, Jobcentre Plus and Careers Wales.

In partnership with Carmarthenshire Construction Group Training Association Ltd and Coleg Sir Gâr, the provider has developed an innovative Shared Apprenticeship Scheme, which won a national training award for partnership working. This is a bespoke training programme in bricklaying, carpentry, plastering, plumbing and electrical that 'shares' apprentices amongst a group of employers with the aim of producing highly skilled craftsmen. The scheme provides an apprenticeship programme that meets the needs of the local companies and addresses concerns, expressed by small and medium enterprises in west Wales, over the lack of a wide range of training experiences for learners.

Resource management: Good

The provider places a strong focus on the training and development of its staff. It has a well documented staff development strategy, which is underpinned by a detailed learning and development charter. This document sets out clearly what the provider expects of staff and what they can expect from CITB-ConstructionSkills. All staff access good opportunities to gain appropriate training to help improve their performance.

All staff are appropriately experienced and demonstrate good knowledge of the construction industry and the requirements of the learners' qualification frameworks.

The provider regularly reviews the resources available to learners at on-the-job and off-the-job training. CITB-ConstructionSkills staff record any shortcomings and bring them to the attention of the supervisor or college staff. Follow-up meetings review the action that the on-site supervisor or college staff have taken.

The provider manages its finances well. The senior management team in Wales effectively manages its financial resourcing. Financial planning is clearly focused on learner achievement and standards.

CITB-ConstructionSkills provides good standards for its learners and provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Learner Satisfaction

Due to technical difficulties the response to the learner questionnaire was low. However, generally those learners who responded were very satisfied with the provision although a small number felt that learning materials were not always of the highest quality.

Appendix 2

T0000029 : Construction Industry Training Board

WBL Provision - Success Rates by Sector/Subject Area and Programme Type

	2007/08						2008/09					
	Construction Industry Training Board			National Comparators			Construction Industry Training Board			National Comparators		
	Attained Learning Activities	Terminated Learning Activities	Success Rate	Attained Learning Activities	Terminated Learning Activities	Success Rate	Attained Learning Activities	Terminated Learning Activities	Success Rate	Attained Learning Activities	Terminated Learning Activities	Success Rate
By Sector / Subject Area												
Health, Public Services and Care	.	.	.	12,145	17,650	69%	.	.	.	14,080	17,900	79%
Education and Training	.	.	.	2,125	2,530	84%	.	.	.	1,930	2,190	88%
Business, Administration and Law	.	.	.	10,070	13,680	74%	.	.	.	9,770	12,120	81%
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	.	.	.	1,140	1,545	74%	.	.	.	360	505	71%
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	.	.	.	9,575	12,715	75%	.	.	.	9,690	12,105	80%
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	1,360	1,695	80%	5,675	8,050	70%	975	1,240	79%	6,785	8,750	78%
Information and Communication Technology	.	.	.	4,080	5,790	70%	.	.	.	4,620	6,070	76%
Retailing and Customer Service	.	.	.	10,100	13,690	74%	.	.	.	9,440	11,775	80%
Hair and Beauty	.	.	.	2,060	2,910	71%	.	.	.	2,140	2,690	80%
Hospitality and Catering	.	.	.	3,425	5,060	68%	.	.	.	2,485	3,420	73%
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	.	.	.	2,175	2,725	80%	.	.	.	1,910	2,285	84%
Arts, Media and Publishing	.	.	.	55	90	64%	.	.	.	10	10	100%
Unspecified Sector/Subject Area	.	.	.	15,495	25,890	60%	.	.	.	20,325	28,125	72%
Total	1,360	1,695	80%	78,115	112,325	70%	975	1,240	79%	83,540	107,940	77%
By Programme												
Foundation Modern Apprenticeships	905	1100	83%	34,830	47,215	74%	750	950	79%	33,200	41,755	80%
Modern Apprenticeships	450	590	77%	20,130	27,750	73%	225	280	80%	21,110	26,460	80%
Modern Skills Diploma	.	.	.	1,525	2,655	57%	.	.	.	1,235	1,675	74%
Skill Build	0	10	0%	21,480	34,160	63%	.	.	.	27,230	36,780	74%
Other WBL programme	.	.	.	155	545	28%	0	10	0%	770	1,270	61%
Total	1,360	1695	80%	78,115	112,325	70%	975	1,240	79%	83,540	107,940	77%

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR)

. denotes not applicable.

Numbers have been rounded to nearest multiple of 5.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Mark Evans HMI	Reporting Inspector
Sandra Barnard HMI	Team Inspector
Christine Hooper HMI	Team Inspector
Bernard Hayward HMI	Team Inspector
Stephen Davies HMI	Team Inspector
Marshall Clayton	Peer Inspector
Rob Davies	Provider Nominee