



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cambrian Training Company
Tŷ Cambrian
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by

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

About Cambrian Training Company

Cambrian Training Company (CTC) has been a long standing private-sector training provider. It is an independent training company based in mid Wales with a network of subcontractors across Wales.

CTC and its network has a range of provision, including foundation apprenticeships, apprenticeships and higher apprenticeships. It has approximately 1500 learners on programme. The current Welsh Government contract value is £4.6m.

The provider works with the following sub-contractors:

Call of the Wild
Haddon Training
Lifetime Training
Progression Training
Sirius Skills
Wiser Academy

The provider and the sub-contractors deliver a variety of programmes in:

Hospitality, including Craft Cuisine and British Institute of Innkeepers
Food and Drink Manufacture
Butchery
Health and Social Care
Children's Early Years
Equine
Financial Services
Team Leading and Management
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
Retail and Customer Service
Sustainable Resource Management
Water Engineering

Summary

Most apprenticeship learners develop strong vocational skills and are able to apply theory to the context of their work environments well. Many have a wide range of practical skills that benefit them in their job roles and help to establish them as valued employees. A few learners show exemplary specialist knowledge and skills, and develop very high professional standards of technical skills in their area of work.

Many learners are self-motivated, resilient and ambitious. They are keen to progress to the next levels of learning, or promotion in their workplace, and a few learners to higher education.

Nearly all training officers plan their sessions well and deliver effective training sessions that develop learners' vocational, employability and life skills well. Training officers encourage learners to think ahead in planning their career progression beyond the qualification they are currently pursuing. The provider uses their specialist food preparation and cookery training centre and the premises of their employer network well to deliver masterclasses to supplement and broaden the learners' experiences.

The provider's senior leadership team have established a successful corporate culture with a strong identity, rooted in the provider's locality and its specialist core provision, developed in response to the needs of local employers. Leaders cultivate a positive culture for professional learning across the main provider and its sub-contractors, where training officers, supported by employers, refresh their technical and occupational knowledge and skills annually.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Recommendations

- R1 Increase learners' use of the Welsh language as an employability skill
- R2 Strengthen staff's and learners' understanding of the distinction between safeguarding and wellbeing
- R3 Improve self-evaluation and quality improvement processes so that they clearly identify both strengths and areas for improvement and allow for effective measurement of progress

What happens next

The provider will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Most foundation and apprenticeship learners develop strong vocational skills and are able to apply theory knowledge to their work environments well. Many develop a wide range of practical skills that benefit them in their job roles and help to establish them as valued employees. A few learners develop higher level skills and successfully compete in national and international skills competitions. A few foundation and apprenticeship learners exhibit exemplary specialist knowledge and skills. For example, foundation apprenticeship learners develop advanced fish preparation and butchery techniques as part of dedicated masterclasses. Many higher apprenticeship learners produce detailed written work of a high standard. They demonstrate higher order thinking skills, which they apply well to solve problems and overcome challenges in their job roles.

Many learners know what they need to do to improve and progress. They understand the feedback provided by training officers and reflect on their own work and practice in the workplace well. They identify strengths and opportunities to improve and are able to discuss these effectively with their training officers. A few carefully reflect on their job roles and provide detailed analyses of their working practices, for example when discussing environmental sustainability in hotels and the wellbeing of dementia patients within care settings.

Many learners are motivated and undertake their work conscientiously. They actively track their own progress and are keen to achieve their frameworks on time or early. Learners progress onto higher level apprenticeships, where appropriate. However, a few make slow progress and complete their frameworks later than scheduled.

Learners complete the Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST) initial literacy and numeracy assessment at the beginning of their programmes. Many develop their literacy and numeracy skills effectively as part of their training programmes studies. A few achieve literacy and numeracy qualifications at a level above the requirements of their apprenticeship frameworks. They integrate these improved skills well within their job roles. For example, a business administration learner produces a useful how-to guide on data collation and input for their work colleagues. Learners who have English as an additional language produce valuable written guides in English for their co-workers on the use of equipment at a food production facility and on how to undertake night desk services at a hotel. Most learners develop their digital skills suitably.

A majority of learners have a positive attitude towards the Welsh language and culture, and a minority of learners develop valuable Welsh language skills. For example, within hospitality settings, learners greet and thank customers in Welsh. A minority of learners engage with online resources to help them learn basic Welsh. However, across the provider, a minority of learners do not develop their use of the Welsh language sufficiently as an employability skill.

The most recent published data for 2017-2018 shows that learners achieve their foundation apprenticeship frameworks at rates equal to the national average.

Learners on the apprenticeship and higher apprenticeship programmes achieve their frameworks at a rate slightly above the national average. Three year trends for all apprenticeship programmes show a rate slightly above the national average, with a significant increase in the achievement of frameworks on the higher apprenticeship programme. Almost all sub-contractors perform slightly above the national average. However, one recently acquired sub-contractor performs below the national average.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all learners feel safe in their workplace and with their training provider. They understand issues relating to bullying and personal safety well, and know what to do if they need to report any safeguarding issues for themselves or in the workplace. Nearly all learners know how to stay safe online. And learners complete a range of online training programmes on topics such as mental health awareness, safeguarding and Prevent.

Nearly all learners can describe what is meant by wellbeing and the opportunities provided by their training provider to support their personal development both in their learning and in their personal lives. Many understand the importance of both mental and physical health. They also understand important practical issues such as how to manage their money.

Most learners know how to keep healthy and fit. For example, learners in equine studies spend much of their time carrying out physical activities in the open air and understand the benefit of regular exercise. One learner explains how to stay physically safe whilst working in a busy warehouse. In hospitality and care settings, learners can discuss how they deal with stress and how to maintain a good work life balance. A learner in a care home can describe, in detail, strategies for staying safe in an environment where residents are sometimes aggressive. The learner is keen to articulate the need for patience, and compassion at work. This learner is proactive in sharing her skills with others in her workplace.

Nearly all learners widen their general knowledge and many are able to discuss topics of current interest, often relating to safety, radicalisation, equality and diversity, and healthy lifestyles well. Many learners become better informed as citizens through completing the wide range of extra learning units available to them.

Nearly all learners are welcoming, friendly, polite, and respectful to colleagues and their training officer. Many learners are proud of their achievements. During group sessions many learners interact positively with each other. They listen to the views of their colleagues, and support each other well.

Most learners attend regularly, are punctual and show a genuine interest in their work. Most concentrate well in sessions and conscientiously prepare work and assignments within given timescales. They are proud of their achievements and can explain how their work is enhancing their employability skills.

Many learners gain additional skills or qualifications that further improve their employability, such as First Aid, Institute of Occupational Safety and Health or Certificate in Dementia. A few learners enrich their lives and broaden their horizons by taking part in specialist skills competitions, where they demonstrate and showcase

their skills. This in turn encourages others to aim higher. A few learners reach very high professional standards of technical skills in their area of work, which boosts their self-esteem. Others gain life-skills by participating in community events and charitable activities, for example with the Young Farmers.

Many learners are self-motivated and work to improve, for example, their levels of literacy and numeracy beyond the requirements of their course. In busy working environments, many learners can prioritise tasks so that they can concentrate on their learning. Most are resilient and self-aware, and have good problem solving skills. They enjoy their learning and are ambitious, and many are keen to achieve promotion in their workplace. Many learners are keen to progress to the next levels of learning, and a few to higher education.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Nearly all training officers plan their sessions well and deliver effective sessions that develop learners' vocational, employability and life skills. Most training officers have a wide range of high level practical skills, subject and vocational knowledge. They are very skilled in supporting learners to make progress in their practical assessments and theory knowledge. For example, one training officer delivering equine qualifications links numeracy learning to vocational tasks well. Learners measure horses, using a specialist weigh tape to calculate the weight of each horse. As a result, learners quickly master the importance of keeping horses at the correct weight in order to participate in dressage events. Training officers delivering hospitality qualifications deliver a series of master classes to enable learners to gain higher level practical skills, such as preparing and jointing an animal carcass in butchery sessions.

Most training officers use a wide range of questioning techniques, for example teaching the subject matter, and questioning and re-questioning to aid reflection and enable the learner to think about their answers in more depth. Training officers often refer to a useful questioning matrix to assist learners in forming their assessment plan. However, in a very few cases, training officers do not spend enough time to probe further to check learners' understanding.

Nearly all training officers who deliver the apprenticeship programme develop learners' vocational skills well. Training officers have a strong and respectful rapport with their learners. They have a good understanding of learners' individual needs and support them well to help them achieve their potential. Nearly all training officers have high expectations for their learners, often encouraging them to achieve higher level qualifications.

Nearly all training officers carry out regular and purposeful progress reviews with their learners and employers to set and agree short and medium term goals. Training officers work well together with essential skills tutors, to provide dedicated support for learners to enable them to complete the necessary essential skills requirements for the qualification framework in a timely manner.

Managers and staff have a sound knowledge of the local economy and are very responsive to the needs of employers. Training officers deliver a range of learning experiences that stimulate and challenge learners and are well matched to their

career aspirations. The provider has developed and delivers a range of bespoke training programmes to meet specific needs of employers well, for example water engineering, craft cuisine and brewery qualifications.

The provider works closely with other training providers and employers to develop useful progression opportunities for learners to progress from traineeship programmes to apprenticeships. Training officers provide effective mentoring support to motivate learners who may face barriers to learning and may lack focus on career aspirations.

The provider has strong relationships with a wide range of well-established national and local employers. The provider works well with employers to ensure that learners whose first language is not Welsh or English benefit from additional support that enables them to improve their communication and literacy skills. Training officers and essential skills tutors have a flexible approach to delivering knowledge based learning. This supports learners who work shift hours in the manufacturing industry and care sector to progress well and achieve.

Training officers provide a range of additional learning opportunities to enhance the experience of learners. The provider encourages learners to participate in a wide range of local, national and international competitions in hospitality and sustainable resource management.

Many training officers encourage and support learners to develop their literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills well, particularly through the use of the Wales Essential Skills Toolkit. A few learners who have previously achieved the necessary essential skills qualifications for their framework undertake the qualifications at a higher level than the framework requirement. Training officers and essential skills tutors work well together when planning provision and embed skills development within the vocational programmes effectively. A few learners who are Welsh first language speakers do not have enough opportunities to improve their Welsh literacy skills.

Many training officers utilise a range of resources to support the development of Welsh language and culture, for example the topic of the week planned activities and the 'duo lingo' on line application. These help to ensure that learners have the opportunity to develop an awareness of Welsh culture and basic Welsh language phrases. The majority of the training officers encourage learners to use basic Welsh terms in the workplace. For example, customer service apprentices use bilingual greetings when answering telephone calls or welcoming visitors to companies, and learners in hospitality know the Welsh terms for fish dishes. However, Welsh speaking learners are not always encouraged enough to develop their written language skills.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The provider identifies the needs of all learners appropriately, ensuring that they have access to the relevant support from the start of their training programme. The provider tracks learners' progress centrally during monthly meetings by monitoring closely individuals' needs and what they have achieved. The provider understands learners' circumstances and what potential learning barriers these may create. They

pay good attention to this during regular discussions of learners' progress, providing tailored support to learners who have additional needs. This ensures that most learners make the best progress in their learning. In a few cases, where additional needs become a barrier, training officers work with employers closely to ensure that learners can progress.

Most learners with additional needs successfully complete their framework at rates similar to other learners. Effective partnerships between the provider, sub-contractors and employers enable most learners to benefit from high quality work environments, which offer appropriate opportunities for learners to develop and use the skills they learn in training. These partnerships enable training officers to work closely with employers to tailor training to best prepare learners for their job roles.

A few learners who had considered dropping out of training identified that their training officer's advice and support had been influential in enabling them to remain on the programme. The majority of training officers encourage learners to think ahead in planning their career progression beyond the qualification they are currently pursuing. They provide helpful guidance based on their up-to-date vocational knowledge. One sub-contractor gives appropriate learners support to gain British Horse Society awards, improving these learners' progression opportunities within the equine industry.

Most training officers promote health and safety in the workplace effectively. They discuss this with learners regularly to ensure that learners take steps to maintain a safe work environment.

Nearly all training officers discuss topics such as mental health awareness, safeguarding and preventing radicalisation appropriately during review sessions, using relevant news items to help explore and extend learners' awareness. Training officers have undertaken useful training on safeguarding and preventing radicalisation. Nearly all staff demonstrate an appropriate understanding about safeguarding procedures. However in a few cases, training officers confuse what constitutes safeguarding as opposed to wellbeing.

The provider manages safeguarding matters appropriately and there are no concerns about safeguarding within the provision. The provider and its sub-contractors have appropriate policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and Prevent.

Leadership and management: Good

The provider has a small senior leadership team, with well-balanced and clear responsibilities. They have established a healthy corporate culture with a strong identity, rooted in the provider's locality and its specialist core provision.

There is sound communication throughout the organisation, which is based in mid-Wales but has provision and offices throughout Wales. Middle managers have manageable workloads. They display and promote the provider's ethos and objectives effectively and know their teams, their performance and the performance of their learners well.

The provider has strong arrangements for monitoring the performance of sub-contractors and its own delivery teams. Regular contract management meetings with useful standing agendas and data sharing arrangements ensure that all partners are aware of their performance. The regularity and level of monitoring are scaled appropriately, depending on the risk associated with each sub-contractor or delivery team. As a result of these meetings and other actions, the provider maintains a helpful balance of challenge and support with sub-contractors and its own delivery teams. Where underperformance is identified, the provider is quick to put in place corrective action.

The provider at all levels is responsive to the needs of its employer base. At a strategic level, senior leaders have developed niche provision, for example in food processing and in waste management, in response to the needs of local employers. At a local level, managers and training officers take into account the business needs of employers and balance these well with the welfare of learners, through careful choice of units for learners and arranging visits to minimise disruption to business activities.

Self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes take into account a suitable range of information, including self-evaluations from sub-contractors and its own delivery teams, and from the regular contract management meetings. While the provider's overarching quality development planning identifies accurately the most important areas for improvement, and sets in place suitable high level targets and success criteria, self-evaluation within the main provider and sub-contractors does not identify areas for improvement clearly enough. Quality development planning of sub-contractors and delivery teams do not focus in enough detail on their specific areas for improvement.

The provider arranges a useful range of professional learning opportunities, which are shared with, and attended by sub-contractors. Leaders cultivate a positive culture for staff development across the main provider and sub-contractors. Training officers benefit from annual 'back to the shop floor' activities, supported by employers, where they refresh their professional technical and occupational skills. As a result, training officers are up-to-date with latest industry practices, which they are able to share with learners. The provider keeps useful records of professional learning activities carried out by its own and sub-contractors' staff and encourages them to use the professional learning passport from the Education Workforce Council.

The provider maintains a worthwhile portfolio of office spaces and teaching rooms, which support its pan-Wales operation. It has a well-appointed off-the-job training centre specialising in food preparation and cookery. It makes good use of this and the premises of its employer network to deliver useful masterclasses to supplement the experiences of learners and broaden their opportunities.

Evidence base of the report

Before the inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the learner and employer questionnaires and consider the views of teachers, trainers and assessors and the governing body where appropriate through their questionnaire responses

During the inspection, inspectors normally:

- meet the principal/chief executive, governors (where appropriate), senior and middle managers and individual teachers, trainers and assessors to evaluate the impact of the provider's work
- meet learners to discuss their work, to listen to them and to gain their views about various aspects of their provider
- visit a broad sample of sessions, including on and off-the-job sessions where appropriate
- observe and speak to learners at lunch and break times
- look closely at the provider's self-evaluation processes
- consider the provider's quality improvement plan and looked at evidence to show how well the provider had taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of provider documents, including information on learner assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body (where appropriate), information on learners' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of learners, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the provider and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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