

Locomotivation Limited

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Background information

Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Engineering
- Sport, leisure and recreation

Description of the provider

1. Locomotivation Limited (Locomotivation) is a private training company based in Poole, Dorset, established in May 1999 as a company limited by guarantee. The company works with employers in the leisure industry throughout the west country, and with four national organisations. Locomotivation contracts with the LSC regions of Dorset and Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, and also receives LSC funding through a national contract. At the time of the inspection, 265 learners were in training, following advanced apprenticeships and apprenticeships in sport, leisure and recreation, and apprenticeships in engineering ground handling aviation, at Luton airport. Customer service programmes are offered, but none were running during the inspection. Locomotivation also offered a Train to Gain pilot programme at Level 2 in customer service during 2006/07, but this was completed before the inspection.
2. The senior management team comprises two directors, an operations manager and a quality development manager and an internal verification manager. The directors retain overall responsibility for strategy and development; one acting as managing director and the other responsible for finance. In the past two years, Locomotivation has expanded rapidly and now employs 28 full-time staff.
3. According to the 2001 national census, the proportion of people in South West England from minority ethnic groups is 2.3%, compared with 9.1% in England.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject area

Engineering	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Sport, leisure and recreation	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

4. The overall effectiveness of Locomotivation is good. Leadership and management of the provision are good as is its capacity to improve. Arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory. Achievement and standards and the quality of provision are good. Provision in sport, leisure and recreation is good and in engineering it is satisfactory. The effectiveness of steps taken to improve since the previous inspection is good, with managers and staff very successful in implementing improvements. Key areas for continued improvement are recognised and are being addressed.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

5. Senior managers set a clear direction for quality improvement. Staff are well trained to meet the current and future needs of learners and the business. The strong team ethos of the organisation successfully drives improvement and the strategic quality team are very effective in monitoring progress towards actions identified in the quality improvement plan. Locomotivation has successfully improved its overall success rates, which were low at the previous inspection. Inspection grades for leadership and management and for sport, leisure and recreation have improved to good since the previous inspections. All the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have been partially or fully rectified.
6. Managers have made significant improvements to quality assurance arrangements, which are now effective. Locomotivation's observation of teaching system is well established and is improving the quality of learning sessions and their planning. Staff and managers regularly identify and share good practice. Internal verification is particularly thorough. Improvements have been made to initial assessment and the structure of learning programmes. Senior managers regularly and thoroughly analyse the performance of the company. Locomotivation has improved its management information system which is now coherent across all contexts. Staff are beginning to use data effectively to manage their own and their team's work.
7. The thoroughness and accuracy of Locomotivation's self-assessment is good. All staff are fully involved in the well established process. The self-assessment report is concise yet comprehensive and very self-critical and accurate in recognising appropriate strengths and areas for improvement. Managers have used data well in making judgements in sport, leisure and recreation, but less well for the customer service programme.

Key strengths

- Good development of learners' personal and practical skills
- Good progress for level 2 learners in sport, leisure and recreation
- Good teaching and learning

- Particularly effective support for learners
- Successful strategies to improve success rates
- Strong strategic decision making
- Very good staff training and development
- Very effective communication and team working

Key areas for improvement

- Insufficiently challenging sport, leisure and recreation programmes for more able learners
- Weak progress reviews on engineering ground handling programmes
- Low success rates on the Train to Gain programme
- Insufficient implementation of some aspects of the quality assurance strategy
- Insufficient reinforcement of equality of opportunity for learners

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

8. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates for apprentices on sport, leisure and recreation programmes have improved consistently, from 42% in 2004/05 to 54% in 2005/06, and 65% in 2006/07. Timely success rates improved over the same period, from 37% to 47%. For advanced apprenticeships, the success rates increased from 33% in 2004/05 to 55% in 2006/07 and are considerably higher than national averages. In engineering ground handling, the programme is too new to judge success rates although learners are all on target to achieve within the planned timescale. Success rates on the Train to Gain pilot programme in customer service are low at 35%.
9. All learners develop good workplace skills. In the sport, leisure and recreation programmes learners undergo challenging team building and outdoor adventure activities. Team working and leadership skills are well developed in realistic working environments. In the engineering ground handling programme, learners demonstrate very good customer relations and care.
10. In sport, leisure and recreation, learners at level 2 make good progress. Many learners are on target to achieve within the planned timescale. Many achieve their key skills and work towards technical certificates early in the programme. In the engineering ground handling programme learners make at least satisfactory progress.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

11. Teaching and learning are good. Learners enjoy their training. In most sessions, learners engage well with the tasks and the teacher and work well together in activities and in problem-solving tasks. Peer support is effective.
12. Support for learners is good and particularly effective. In their regular one-to-one visits for the sport, leisure and recreation programmes, training co-ordinators provide good coaching and mentoring sessions for learners, with whom they develop good working relationships. They establish trust and respect and are very learner-focused. Learners' concerns, including personal and course issues, are discussed thoroughly at training co-ordinator briefing meetings with internal verifiers. Internal verifiers act effectively to resolve concerns. In the engineering ground handling programme the training co-ordinator visits the workplace on a daily basis.
13. The quality of learners' target-setting, progress reviews and individual learning plans are satisfactory in sport, leisure and recreation. However, individual target-setting fails to stretch the more advanced learners to enable them to maximise their full potential. On the engineering ground handling programme, the recording and monitoring of learners' progress through the assessment process is good. Learners and training co-ordinators can easily identify what has been done and what needs to be done to progress. However, on this programme, learners' progress reviews are weak. They do not record the learners' activity in sufficient detail and there is little reference to pastoral issues. Target-setting is

poor; they are not specific and cannot always be achieved in the short- to medium-term. Equality of opportunity is not sufficiently reinforced and learners' understanding is not adequately checked.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

14. Leadership and management are good. Locomotivation's strategic direction is strong. Senior managers have a well researched and clear development plan for the business.
15. Staff appraisal and development are well co-ordinated and very effective. Individual staff needs, national priorities and the growing needs of the business are met well. Training co-ordinators have good industry skills and experience. Internal verifiers provide a high level of support for training co-ordinators.
16. Internal communication is very effective. The company has a clear structure for meetings which is routinely reviewed and staff receive a regular and informative newsletter. Communication with some of the larger organisations is very productive. Leaders promote a strong and effective team ethos for many aspects of work, including target-setting. Staff work productively and flexibly within teams to meet the seasonal pressures of many of the employers. Teams are very effective in driving improvement, particularly in the quality of teaching and learning.
17. Quality improvement and self-assessment are good. The effectiveness of steps taken to improve since the previous inspection and Locomotivation's capacity to make further improvement are both good. The company has introduced successful strategies to improve overall success rates, which were a weakness at the previous inspection. Between 2003 and 2006, these rates increased steadily and are consistently above national rates. However, success rates on the Train to Gain pilot programme, completed before the inspection, were low compared with Locomotivation's overall learner success rate of 63%. Senior managers have a good awareness of the reasons why and are using this in contract negotiations with employers.
18. Some aspects of quality improvement arrangements are yet to be fully implemented. Observations of induction, initial assessment and progress reviews are insufficient in number. Some observed teachers have not received sufficient written feedback to support their development. Response rates by learners to feedback questionnaires are low.
19. Locomotivation's engagement with employers and other external partners is satisfactory. The self-assessment report recognises the need to improve employer engagement, particularly with smaller companies. Some training co-ordinators make insufficient use of evidence from employers, including witness testimony.
20. Locomotivation's literacy, numeracy and language strategy is satisfactory with clear responsibilities and targets. However, the strategy is relatively new and some aspects have yet to be developed fully.

21. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Locomotivation has improved its equal opportunity arrangements during the last year. A full range of policies and procedures are in place and are updated appropriately. Areas for development are accurately identified and measures put in place to address them. A useful equality and diversity group now meets monthly, with a standard agenda and appropriate terms of reference. Staff training takes place regularly and staff understanding of equality of opportunity is good. Good materials are developed to inform learners and employers about equality and diversity issues. Employers are monitored to ensure up to date equal opportunity arrangements and are checked thoroughly for both health and safety and appropriateness. Locomotivation's recruitment and selection practices are satisfactory. The equality and diversity group monitors equality of opportunity data appropriately.
22. Learners' understanding of equality and diversity is insufficiently reinforced. While they receive clear guidance on equality of opportunity at induction, in a well written learner handbook, there is no ongoing strategy for reinforcement of this initial learning. A recently introduced equality and diversity questionnaire, as part of learners' reviews, is not yet used consistently and some learners have poor awareness. Notes of equality of opportunity in reviews are insufficiently detailed.

What learners like:

- Being able to gain a recognised industry qualification
- Support from training co-ordinators
- Being able to learn – ‘it’s opened the floodgates’
- Help in finding suitable work placements in sports centres
- Very practical way of learning
- Mutual respect between learners and training co-ordinators
- The ‘brilliant’ four day induction for outdoor activities learners

What learners think could improve:

- ‘Not enough time for training’
- The frequency of visits from assessors
- The speed of completing the qualification

Engineering

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

23. Some 27 apprentice learners are on engineering ground handling aviation programmes at NVQ Level 2. The typical duration of the apprenticeship programme is nine months. Learners are all employed by one ground handling company. The employer recruits learners directly. All training is carried out in the workplace. Training co-ordinators visit the workplace to carry assessment and progress reviews. Progress reviews are carried out every 10 weeks. Key skills are assessed as an integral component of on-the-job training. The employer and Locomotivation staff carry out a two-week induction, initial assessment and training programme in the workplace.

Strengths

- Good development of workplace skills
- Particularly effective support for learners
- Good recording and monitoring of learners' progress

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient co-ordination of off-the-job training and work
- Weak progress reviews

Achievement and standards

24. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Learners develop good workplace skills and demonstrate very good customer relations and care. They deal well with customers who have special requirements and who are, at times, challenging. Learners develop good skills in relation to the health and safety of passengers when boarding and disembarking aircrafts, managing this potentially hazardous situation well.

25. The programme is too recent to make any overall judgements about learners' success rates, but they make satisfactory progress and are all on target to achieve within the planned timescale.

Quality of provision

26. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The employer carries out specific and appropriate on-the-job training and the training co-ordinator plans off-the-job training to complement this. Assessment procedures and practices are formative, fair and accurate. The recording and monitoring of learners' progress through the assessment process is good. Training co-ordinators maintain up to date progress records electronically, which are amended weekly and passed on to central records. Learners have a copy of their records on a simplified spreadsheet. Learners and training co-ordinators can easily identify what has been done and what needs to be done to progress. Learners making slow progress or those achieving at a faster rate are identified and appropriate actions taken.

27. Suitably qualified assessors, observing practical tasks, assess learners in the workplace at least every four weeks. Resources are satisfactory and staff are well qualified and experienced in the subject sector area.
28. The programme is specific to the aviation industry and meets the needs of learners, employers and the local community well.
29. Support for learners is particularly effective. The training co-ordinator visits the workplace on a daily basis to carry out assessment observations and support the learners' training. Each learner has at least one assessment per month. Telephone, text and email contact is frequent between training co-ordinators, ensuring personalised support. Visits for assessments and reviews are arranged to suit learners' shift and weekend working patterns. Support for training from the employer is good. Training co-ordinators visit learners in the workplace every 10 weeks to review progress, however, interim reviews are arranged more frequently to meet the needs of the individual.
30. Co-ordination of off-the-job training and training at work is insufficient. Too often, off-the-job training is cancelled or learners are prevented from attending because of employer operational requirements. There is a reliance on learners attending on their days off or at the beginning or end of shifts. Sometimes, a two hour training session is ineffectively delivered in four half-hour sessions over a period. The company and the employer recognise this area for improvement and have an improvement plan in place.
31. Progress reviews are weak. Training co-ordinators insufficiently record the learners training journey and in some cases the review document does not contain meaningful records of the learners' experiences since the last review. There is little reference to pastoral issues. Target-setting is poor, with many targets no more than a statement.

Leadership and management

32. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff are well aware of their roles and responsibilities and the operations manager and training co-ordinators hold monthly meetings. Key aspects of training are appropriately quality assured. Internal verification is satisfactory. The staff development programme is good. The two trainers are being placed on an appropriate teacher training programme. Communications with employers are good and they speak very highly of the support they receive. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. It is not sufficiently reinforced and learners' understanding is inadequately checked.

Sport, leisure and recreation

Good: Grade 2

Context

33. Locomotivation provides training for 238 work based learners. Of these, 53 are advanced apprentices and 185 are apprentices. All learners are in full-time employment and are recruited directly from industry. Women make up 40% of learners. Throughout the last year Locomotivation worked with four national organisations. At the time of inspection, 70% of learners were employed with one national contractor operating in five centres across the country. The main area of provision with this contractor is activity leadership. The remaining learners are employed with local authorities and local businesses where the main provision is operational services and fitness instruction.

Strengths

- Good development of personal and practical skills
- Good progress for Level 2 learners
- Good teaching and learning
- Particularly effective learner support

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient challenge for more able learners

Achievement and standards

34. Achievement and standards are good. Overall success rates for apprentices are improving and are above the national averages. They improved from 42% in 2004/05 to 54% in 2005/06, and to 65% in 2006/07. Timely success rates have also improved in the same period, from 37% to 47%. For advanced apprenticeships, the overall success rates for the same period increased from 33% to 55%, considerably higher than the national average. Timely success improved from 21% in 2004/05 to 50% in 2005/06, but fell back to 39% in 2006/07, with very low rates on one national contract, now terminated.

35. Level 2 learners make good progress and many are on target to achieve within the planned timescale. Portfolios are of a good standard, are well structured and contain a good range of work based evidence. Many learners achieve their key skills and work towards technical certificates early in the programme. Assessment is well planned and learners are aware of what is expected of them. Individual target-setting however, fails to stretch the more advanced learners to enable them to maximise their potential during their apprenticeship.

36. The development of personal and practical skills is good. Learners undergo challenging team building and outdoor adventure activities. Team working and leadership skills are well developed in realistic working environments, demonstrated by presentations to their peers, capable self-evaluation and confident execution of work based assessments. Key

skill needs are identified and addressed early in the programme and learners apply their skills well at work.

Quality of provision

37. Teaching and learning are good. Learners enjoy their training and make good progress. In most sessions, learners engage well with the tasks and the teacher. Learners work well together in activities and in problem-solving tasks. Peer support is effective, particularly for less confident learners. In a key skills session, learners took part in an enjoyable and vocationally relevant activity to recap and develop their numeracy skills. Learners respond well to questions testing their background knowledge and show a good understanding of the sport and recreation industry.
38. For learners based at activity centres, residential induction sessions are well delivered and cover all aspects of the programme. Induction for learners in the smaller centres is not as effective.
39. The needs and interests of learners are well met. The apprenticeship programme offers a variety of vocationally relevant qualifications, including sports coaching, first aid, pool life guarding and fitness instruction. Learners also enjoy industry related training delivered by their employer. On outdoor activity programmes learners gain self-confidence and awareness. Employers speak of learners maturing and improving in self-esteem while on the programme. Many of the skills learned during the apprenticeship training are transferable to other vocational areas and learners are aware of the progression opportunities available to them.
40. Support for learners is particularly effective. Regular one-to-one workplace visits by training co-ordinators include coaching and mentoring sessions for learners. They have a good rapport and a successful working relationship with their learners, based upon mutual trust and respect. Learners lacking in confidence or ability can access their assessor at any time, and outside the planned assessment schedule if necessary. Good use is made of telephone, email or text to communicate.
41. Learners receive good support from their employers in providing evidence for their NVQ and in arranging flexible working to meet training needs. Visits by training co-ordinators are arranged to suit both the learner and the employer. Relationships with employers are good. Learners' problems are usually identified early and together the training co-ordinator and employer are able to address any issues to ensure the most effective support is in place for the learner. However, assessors are inconsistent in engaging employers in the assessment process, including the planning of training. The use of witness testimony as evidence of the learner's competence is insufficient.

Leadership and management

42. Leadership and management are good. Staff work well as a team and support each other with their different areas of expertise. Communication between staff and with senior management is good and identified issues are resolved quickly. The professional development and training of staff is particularly effective in ensuring the needs of the programme are met. Staff are well supported in their roles. Training co-ordinators are experienced in the sport and leisure industry and have appropriate qualifications.

43. Quality improvement and self-assessment are good. Staff meet quarterly to evaluate the programme, support each other and evaluate their performance.
44. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory, but insufficiently proactive throughout learners' programmes.

Annex

Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning apprenticeship programmes** managed by the provider 2004 to 2007

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate **	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	45	49%	48%	31%	34%
		timely	47	40%	31%	23%	22%
	05-06	overall	33	76%	53%	52%	44%
		timely	29	62%	34%	45%	28%
	06-07	overall	25	60%	64%	52%	56%
		timely	29	38%	41%	34%	35%
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	451	49%	51%	42%	39%
		timely	460	43%	29%	37%	22%
	05-06	overall	672	64%	58%	56%	52%
		timely	685	55%	38%	49%	34%
	06-07	overall	813	60%	65%	57%	60%
		timely	872	25%	45%	25%	42%

Note 'At the time of the inspection - LSC data for 2006/07 had yet to be fully validated'

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** College/provider and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'