

23. WOOD OCCUPATIONS

Performance Level: Satisfactory

Areas Inspected:

- ApprenticeshipsNI and the Skills for Work and Programme-Led Apprenticeship strands of the Training for Success programme.

CONTEXT

23.1 The provision for wood occupations is delivered across two campuses, Castlereagh and Millfield. Over the past three years, due to the downturn in the construction industry, there has been a significant decline in recruitment to the level 2 and 3 programmes. At the time of the inspection, there were 98 learners registered on the wood occupations programmes: 21 on the Skills for Work strand of Training for Success; 45 on the Programme Led-Apprenticeship strand; 20 on the level 2 ApprenticeshipsNI programme; and 12 on the level 3 ApprenticeshipsNI programme. The qualifications of the learners on entry to the programme are at a low level; only a small number of them have a GCSE grade C or above in English or mathematics.

The quality of the leadership and management is satisfactory.

23.2 The leadership and management team, just recently in post, have identified a range of shortcomings in the provision, in particular the standards and achievements and the curriculum offer. They have reviewed and revised the arrangements for the pre-entry guidance to take account of the mixed ability of the intake and have begun to monitor the effectiveness of the revised curriculum offer to meet the needs of those Programme-Led Apprentices, approximately one-half of them, currently without a suitable work placement. The processes and arrangements for self-evaluation need to be developed further and underpinned by the use of reliable management information and evidence-based judgements in order to create effective action plans with measurable targets for training, learning and assessment that can be used to monitor progress and to demonstrate sustained improvement.

The quality of the provision for learning is satisfactory.

23.3 The quality of most of the teaching, training and learning observed was good or better. In the most effective practice, the learners benefit from well-planned practical sessions that enhance their manufacturing and planning skills, and provide suitable opportunities to integrate relevant aspects from their theory modules, and health and safety training. The tutors use effective questioning and suitable work-based examples to extend the learners' vocational competences. In the less effective practice, the sessions lack pace, challenge and differentiation to meet fully enough the wide range of learning needs in the sessions. Approximately one-half of the learners on the Programme-Led Apprenticeship do not have work placement. As a result, they have insufficient opportunities to develop and apply their practical skills and knowledge to industry standards to achieve the full framework.

Achievements and standards are inadequate.

23.4 In the practical training sessions, the overall standards achieved by the learners are good; they make good progress in constructing scale drawings, using hand tools and manufacturing joints for a range of practical assessments. Over the past three years, while the retention rate on the Programme-Led Apprenticeship strand is satisfactory, the achievement rate is unsatisfactory at 15%. The retention rate on the ApprenticeshipsNI

programme at level 2 is inadequate at 53% but the achievement rate is satisfactory at 70%. The retention rate on the ApprenticeshipsNI programme at level 3 is good at 81% but the achievement rate is unsatisfactory at 53%. Over the same period, the rate of achievement on the Skills for Work programme is good at 79%.

Table of Achievements (over the last three years)

Programme/Strand	Numbers registered who completed 4 weeks training	Retention rate %	Achievement rate %	Progression rate for those who achieved full award %
Skills for Work	55	72	79	97
Programme-Led Apprenticeships	103	67	15	100
ApprenticeshipsNI Level 2	53	53	70	100
ApprenticeshipsNI Level 3	32	81	53	100