



Education and Training
Inspectorate

European Social Fund provision in
RCD/4Rs Reuse Workshop

Active Inclusion Project

Report of an Inspection in
February 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

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1. Context

RCD/4Rs Reuse Workshop is a charitable organisation, and is contracted by the Department for the Economy (Department) to provide the Active Inclusion European Social Fund project. The main aims of the project are to enable participants aged 16 years and over who have a disability to overcome barriers to work, gain appropriate employability skills and experience, and enable them to make the transition into employment. They are provided with opportunities to develop their personal and social skills, undertake employability and professional and technical training, achieve accredited qualifications, and participate in work sampling activities. The participants can also avail of one-to-one mentoring and support.

Almost all of the participants enter the programme with a wide range of physical and learning disabilities, personal and social issues, low academic achievement, and significant barriers to learning and employment.

The manager of RCD/4Rs Reuse Workshop is supported by a team leader, two support officers, a learning support assistant, and an administration support officer to deliver the Active Inclusion project. At the time of the inspection 30 participants¹ were registered on the project. They can remain on the project for up to 26 weeks and attend from one-half day to three full days per week depending on their individual personal support and development needs. Work-related and accredited training is mostly delivered in the organisation's main training facilities; however, this has recently been expanded to a group of outreach participants based in their local community.

2. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all participants, the inspection linked internal and external approaches to evaluate the:

- the outcomes for participants;
- the effectiveness of the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes;
- the quality of provision for learning and development; and
- the quality of the leadership and management.

3. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Outcomes for learners	Good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Good

¹ All performance data in this report was provided by the ESF project promoter at the time of the inspection.

KEY FINDINGS

4. Outcomes for learners

In year one of the project, the number of participants recruited was below the targeted level; only two-thirds of the projected numbers was achieved. However, the retention rate was good (61%), and all of the participants who remained and completed their targeted programme, achieved a positive outcome and made progress in the development of their personal, social and employability skills. Eight participants, out of a target of nine, progressed to further training; nine participants, out of a target of ten, achieved their targeted qualification; however only one participant, out of a target of three, progressed to employment. Almost all of the participants who left the project early achieved at least one element of their targeted programme.

The standards of practical work demonstrated by the participants observed are good. Those in the practical workshops work well and are developing relevant vocational skills and competences in areas such as carpentry and joinery, and painting. The quality of the written work in the participants' portfolios of evidence is mostly good or better; there is evidence of marking for improvement and positive feedback for them from the tutors. The participants observed are making good progress in the completion of their targeted programme.

Recruitment in year two of the programme increased significantly (183%), however, while the current retention rate remains good (62%), it needs to be improved, and the attendance of the participants needs to be closely monitored. To date, the outcomes for year two of the project are positive; those participants who have completed, or who have left the project early have achieved all, or at least one element of their targeted programme. Those participants who remain on the project are progressing well in their learning and training.

The participants interviewed are positive about their experiences and stated that their independence, confidence and self-esteem have increased as a result of being on the project and that it is helping them to improve their life chances. They are making significant progress in the development of their personal, social, and employability skills through their participation on a range of work-related activities including practical workshop training and work-sampling activities.

5. Quality of provision

The curriculum offer is good; in addition to developing their personal and social skills, the participants can undertake accredited qualifications in employability, basic construction skills, and healthy living, and are provided with opportunities to participate in job sampling activities. They are provided with good support and guidance on the progression pathways available to them on completion of their programme. The range of accredited qualifications are offered at award level and are matched well to the ability levels of most of the participants, however, consideration should be given to the development of qualifications at certificate and diploma level to provide more stretch and challenge for the more able participants. Reasonable adjustments have been made to the workshops to support those participants with physical disabilities to undertake practical training.

Effective processes are in place to track and monitor the progress the participants are making in the development of their personal, social, and employability skills, and in their professional and technical training. The personal training plans are of good quality, are individualised, contain appropriate short terms and long term targets, and capture well the participants' previous experiences, qualifications, and barriers to learning and employment. Regular progress reviews take place and appropriate action is taken to ensure that the participants are progressing in line with targets set. The participants are kept well-informed about their progress.

The overall quality of the learning, teaching and training is good. It is well planned and delivered in a flexible manner to support the participants to overcome their barriers to learning and employment. The most effective practice is characterised by the use of very good learning resources, the skilful use of strategies to engage the participants in their learning, the development of their literacy skills, and the good pace matched well to their various levels of ability. In the less effective practice, the learning and teaching in the theory sessions is tutor-led, and there is limited interaction from the participants. There is a need to develop the pedagogic skills of the tutors, to improve further the quality of the learning, teaching and training. The quality of the practical training observed is good.

The quality of the care and welfare provided for the participants impacts positively on their personal development. They are all assigned a key worker at the beginning of their programme and are provided with regular one-to-one support and mentoring. The participants interviewed felt safe in the organisation and knew who to contact if they had an issue or problem. Appropriate support is in place for those participants with additional learning support needs and the organisation works very well with a wide range of statutory and external support agencies to help the participants to overcome their individual barriers to learning, employment, and progression. The staff in the community outreach organisation speak positively about their experiences of the project to date, and in particular, the good level of communication with the management and tutors in RCD/4Rs.

6. Leadership and management

The project is well led and managed at both strategic and operational levels. RCD/4Rs Reuse Workshop is very responsive to external evaluations, for example, a review of leadership and management was carried out to address areas for improvement from previous ETI feedback and new structures were put in place. Management have been successful in increasing the age range of participants entering the project, to include those over 24 years of age who might not otherwise be able to access a similar type of provision.

Good links and partnerships have been established with a range of external organisations, statutory agencies and other community and voluntary groups to support the delivery of the project, however, there is a need to develop links with a wider range of supportive employers to support the transition of a greater number of participants into employment.

The quality of the accommodation and physical resources is very good, particularly the practical training workshops which are well-equipped with a wide range of hand and power tools to support the delivery of the wood occupations programmes. Good quality learning resources have been developed across the range of programmes currently being offered.

The roles and responsibilities of staff on the project are clearly defined and management and staff are well-experienced in the delivery of programmes for adults and young people with learning needs and disabilities. Mutually respectful working relationships have been developed between staff and participants.

Good management systems and processes have been developed to manage the project, including the use of an electronic platform to track, monitor, and report on the progress of the participants. While appropriate processes for self-evaluation and quality improvement planning have been developed, more improvement is needed. There is a need to make use of more evaluative language, identify more clearly key strengths and areas for improvement, further improve the use and analysis of key performance data, and include all key stakeholders in the self-evaluation report, and prioritise key areas for improvement and use more specific targets in the quality improvement plan.

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding participants reflect broadly the guidance from the Department. However, the project promoter needs to:

- introduce an annual risk-assessment of the safeguarding policies and procedures which are currently only carried out on a three yearly basis; and
- communicate the safeguarding policy and procedures to all key stakeholders in a more user-friendly format.

7. Overall effectiveness

RCD/4Rs Reuse Workshop demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the participants. There are areas for improvement that the project promoter has demonstrated the capacity to address. The areas for improvement are:

- to increase the overall retention rate and the number of participants progressing to employment;
- to continue to improve the quality of learning, teaching, and training through the sharing of best practice and the provision of continuing professional development for staff; and
- to further improve the quality of the processes used for self-evaluation and quality improvement planning.

The ETI will monitor how the project promoter sustains improvement.

A. Project registrations

Programme	Numbers of enrolments	% against target
Active Inclusion ESF project 2015/2016	18	67
Active Inclusion ESF project 2016/2017	55	183

B. Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website www.etini.gov.uk.

Two ETI inspectors observed 15 participants in directed training, and spoke to nine participants during their directed and work-related training. Discussions were held with the manager, the team leader, the support officers, the learning support assistant, the administration support officer, and the senior day-care worker in a community outreach centre. The management information systems, including the tracking and monitoring systems, samples of the participants' work and personal training plans, and planning documents were examined. The project promoter's self-evaluation report and other relevant documentation were scrutinised.

C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance levels

The ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on Outcomes for learners, Quality of Provision and on Leadership and Management.

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the organisation:

The organisation has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor how the organisation sustains improvement.
The organisation demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor how the organisation sustains improvement.
The organisation needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The organisation needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

Key Performance Indicators and Definitions	
Retention	The percentage of enrolments measured over the full duration of their programme.
Achievement	The percentage of participants who completed their targeted individual outcomes.
Progression	The percentage of successful completers who achieved positive progression.

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