



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Training for Success and
ApprenticeshipsNI Provision in
People Plus NI (formerly
Hugh J O'Boyle Training Limited)

Report of a Follow-up Inspection
in October 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
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FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION OF PEOPLE PLUS NI (FORMERLY HUGH J O'BOYLE TRAINING LIMITED)

The original inspection carried out in March 2015¹ concluded that the quality of the education and training was satisfactory² and that the organisation needed to address important areas for improvement in the interests of all learners.

The main areas for improvement were the need to:

- raise the capacity of staff to undertake rigorous and evidence-based judgements on the quality of leadership and management, teaching training and learning, and the standards and attainments of the trainees and apprentices;
- improve the retention rates on the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes;
- improve the quality of teaching, training and learning in the directed training sessions, including the more effective use of information and learning technology (ILT) to enhance learning; and
- improve the pace of assessment to better meet the learning and skills development needs of trainees and apprentices.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in January 2016 and a follow-up inspection in October 2016. In the interval since the original inspection, the following key actions which affect the work of the organisation have taken place:

- there have been significant leadership and governance changes due to the acquisition of H J O'Boyle by People Plus NI on 22 August 2016;
- the management structure has been revised, including key staffing changes;
- a revised induction programme has been introduced;
- additional learning support, in small groups or as one-to-one learning, has been introduced within the professional and technical areas; and
- a revised time-table has been introduced which includes a range of recreational activities to engage and motivate the trainees in their learning.

Key findings

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement remains an important area for improvement.

- A new system has been introduced to track and monitor the progress of the trainees and apprentices, although further refinement is necessary to improve the accuracy of the data and the quality of the reports produced.

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/training-success-and-apprenticeshipsni-provision-hugh-j-o%E2%80%99boyle-training-limited>

² From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of an organisation previously evaluated as satisfactory will now be evaluated as important areas for improvement.

- Self-evaluation to inform evidence-based judgements on the quality of leadership and management, teaching training and learning, and the standards and attainments of the trainees and apprentices, remains an important area for improvement, particularly within business administration, hospitality and catering and retail.

The quality of learning, teaching and training remains an important area for improvement.

- There is insufficient time allocated to the delivery of the professional and technical content in a majority of areas and limited work-experience placement opportunities for the trainees to develop fully their employability and occupational skills.
- In the small number of sessions observed the quality of the learning, teaching and training is good though the use of differentiation and ILT to enhance the learning remains under developed.
- Assessment arrangements have improved in a minority of the provision, however the pace of assessment remains too slow to meet the learning and skills development needs of the trainees and apprentices, particularly for the level 1 trainees.
- The level of engagement with employers and external agencies has improved but there remain gaps, particularly in meeting fully the enrichment and work-experience needs of the trainees.

The standards and achievements require the organisation to urgently address the significant areas for improvement.

- Overall retention rates across the provision are 50%, requiring urgent improvement, particularly on the level 1 programmes where the retention has decreased to 30% on the Skills for Life programme and remains at 33% on the Skills for Work programme.
- The progress and pace of assessment to meet the learning and skills development needs of the trainees and apprentices requires significant improvement, particularly for the level 1 trainees to ensure that they are progressing at an appropriate pace through their professional and technical qualifications.

Overall Effectiveness

People Plus NI continues to need to address important areas for improvement identified in the interest of all of the learners. The areas for improvement include the need to:

- further develop the management information system to track and monitor more cohesively the overall progress of the trainees' and apprentices' in achieving all aspects of their training framework;
- improve the effectiveness of the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning process to ensure action planning at both strategic and operational levels is well-targeted and brings about measurable and sustained improvements, particularly in learner outcomes;

- implement a broader range of teaching and learning strategies, including differentiation and the further use of ILT, to better support the learning needs of all of the trainees and the apprentices;
- improve the pace of assessment to better meet the learning and skills development needs of all of the trainees and apprentices; and
- address urgently the poor retention rates on the Training for Success provision, particularly on the level 1 programmes.

Further action will be considered by the Department for the Economy.

FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION OF BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION IN PEOPLE PLUS NI (FORMERLY HUGH J O'BOYLE TRAINING LIMITED)

The ETI carried out an inspection in March 2015, the quality of the business and administration provision was evaluated as important areas for improvement.

The key areas for improvement were the need to:

- strengthen the assessment process and arrangements, particularly for the apprentices;
- improve the quality of the learning, teaching and training to ensure the trainees and apprentices make better progress in their professional and technical work;
- improve outcomes on the Training for Success programme; and
- improve the quality assurance of the provision.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in January 2016 and a follow-up inspection in October 2016.

Key findings

Since the original inspection:

- the assessment arrangements and processes for tracking and monitoring the progress of the trainees and apprentices continue to require further development to ensure overall progress, across all aspects of their training programme, is recorded and monitored appropriately;
- the quality of learning, teaching and training observed was good in the small number of sessions observed; and
- overall retention rates have improved and are now good, however, the retention rate for the Training for Success programme continues to be an important area for improvement.

Overall Effectiveness

In business and administration, the quality of education and training provided by People Plus NI continues to have important areas for improvement. The areas for improvement include the need to:

- put more effective processes in place to increase enrolments on both the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes which remain too low;
- increase the number of trainees accessing work-experience placements;
- plan more effectively for differentiation to meet the diverse range of learning and support needs, and abilities of the current trainees;

- develop effective processes for self-evaluation and quality improvement planning for the business and administration provision; and
- increase achievement rates on the Skills for your Life and Skills for Work level 1 strands of the Training for Success programme.

FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION OF HOSPITALITY AND CATERING IN PEOPLE PLUS NI (FORMERLY HUGH J O'BOYLE TRAINING)

The ETI carried out an inspection of People Plus NI in March 2015, the quality of the hospitality and catering provision was evaluated as important areas for improvement.

The inspection identified the need for further improvement in the following key areas:

- to address the unsatisfactory retention and inadequate progression rates on the Training for Success programme;
- to develop a range of active learning strategies, ensuring differentiation is used effectively to both support and stretch and challenge the trainees and apprentices;
- to strengthen the links with employers to support more effective skills and knowledge development, including more robust initial monitoring of trainees in the workplace; and
- to provide additional learning opportunities to augment the occupational skills of the trainees and apprentices, giving them a broader understanding of the world of work, through the use of industry visits and guest speakers.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in January 2016 and a follow-up inspection in October 2016

Key findings

Since the original inspection:

- the retention rate for the trainees on the Training for Success programmes has dropped to 25%

Overall Effectiveness

In hospitality and catering, the quality of the education and training provided by People Plus NI now has significant areas for improvement. The areas for improvement include the need to:

- address urgently the unsatisfactory retention rates across the hospitality and catering Training for Success programmes;
- review the tracking processes to reflect more fully the trainees' and apprentices' achievements and progress in learning across all aspects of their provision;
- improve the planning for learning, teaching and training, including the use of differentiation, to meet more effectively the individual needs of the trainees and apprentices; and
- develop further, and implement quickly, a careers and employability programme to include the use of industrial visits and guest speakers, to provide additional learning opportunities to enhance the occupational skills and understanding of the trainees.

FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION OF RETAIL IN PEOPLE PLUS NI (FORMERLY HUGH J O'BOYLE TRAINING)

The ETI carried out an inspection in March 2015, the quality of the retail provision was evaluated as satisfactory.

The key areas for improvement were the need to:

- improve the quality of the teaching, training and learning in the directed training sessions;
- improve the retention rates across the Training for success provision; and
- develop more strategic links with employers in retail and extend the range of provision.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in January 2016 and a follow-up inspection in October 2016.

Key Findings

Since the original inspection:

- most of the trainees in year 2 of their training are provided with appropriate work-experience placements that provide them with opportunities to develop their occupational skills and personal capabilities;
- the recruitment to the ApprenticeshipsNI has increased slightly, however it remains low with only four apprentices currently registered;
- the quality of the directed training sessions was good in the small number of sessions observed; most of the trainees engaged purposefully in the learning activities and demonstrated good progress in their learning; and
- the retention rates on the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes remain too low at 44% and 67% respectively.

Overall Effectiveness

In retail, the quality of education and training provided by People Plus NI continues to have important areas for improvement. The areas for improvement include the need to:

- implement the planned strategies to expand and develop the provision, particularly the ApprenticeshipsNI programme;
- tackle more effectively the persistently poor retention rates across the provision;
- review and develop the curriculum to provide a broader range of learning experiences for the trainees, particularly to develop their occupational and employability skills through project work; and
- provide greater levels of differentiation during directed training to meet more effectively the individual training needs of the trainees, particularly for a minority with additional support needs.

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