

Salford and Trafford Engineering Group Training Association 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 and manufacturing technologies
- Construction, planning and the built environment

Description of the provider

1. Salford and Trafford Engineering Group Training Association (STEGTA) Limited is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. It was established in 1966 to act as a training agency for member engineering companies in the Manchester area. STEGTA's offices are in Salford, where it manages training for programmes in engineering and construction.
2. The chief executive is responsible for the operational management of STEGTA and reports to an elected board of six representatives from member companies. The company has nine full-time and one part-time member of staff. A team of training officers are responsible for the recruitment, assessment and review of learners' progress. Additional consultants offer support to learners for specific activities, including training for national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and key skills. Two members of staff are responsible for administration in the company.
3. At the time of the inspection STEGTA had 120 work-based learners. Of these 41 were advanced apprentices and 20 were Level 2 engineering apprentices and 38 were advanced apprentices and 17 were Level 2 construction apprentices. STEGTA funds its training provision through Greater Manchester LSC. It subcontracts off-the-job training for engineering and construction through four local colleges of further education. Although not a contract holder STEGTA is also part of Trafford & Salford Train to Gain consortia and four learners in engineering are currently studying on this programme.
4. Manchester has the fourth highest proportion of non-white population in England, at 19%, while in Salford minority ethnic groups make up only 4% of population, compared with a national rate of 9.1%. The unemployment rate for Greater Manchester in 2005 was 2.5% compared with a national rate of 2.9%. Within the Greater Manchester area Salford had the highest rate of unemployment in the 16-24 age range and Manchester has the second largest unemployment rate nationally. In both Manchester and Salford progression rates into further education and training are low.

Subcontractors visited

subcontractors	Visited on inspection
Salford College	*
Trafford College	*
Manchester College of Art and Technology	
Wigan and Leigh College	

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Outstanding: Grade 1
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Sector subject area

Engineering and manufacturing technologies	Good: Grade 2
Construction, planning and the built environment	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

5. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. More specifically, leadership and management, equality of opportunity, and provision in engineering and manufacturing technologies and construction, planning and the built environment are good. STEGTA's capacity to improve is outstanding.

Capacity to improve

Outstanding: Grade 1

6. STEGTA has demonstrated that it has an outstanding capacity to improve. Since the previous inspection STEGTA has proven that it can successfully convert weaknesses into strengths. It has implemented a range of very successful initiatives to improve initial assessment and support arrangements with the aim of reducing early leaver rates and improving success and timely success rates. It has achieved all these objectives with outstanding apprenticeship success rates, much improved timely success rates and virtually no early leavers from any programme. Over the same period STEGTA has made good use of the Standards Unit training and learning materials and the dult Learning Inspectorate's Excalibur good practice database to redesign carefully its quality improvement arrangements to monitor and improve all aspects of the learner journey.
7. STEGTA has been particularly successful in establishing a set of very challenging targets for success and engaging outstanding support for learning from its employers. STEGTA's self-assessment process is inclusive. The self-assessment report and quality improvement plan are accurate, critical and lead to improved achievement and support.

Key strengths

- High apprenticeship success rates
- Good development of workplace skills
- Well planned programmes that meet learners' and employers' needs
- Very good support arrangements
- Highly effective strategic leadership and management
- Outstanding partnership working
- Good strategies to improve success rates

Key areas for improvement

- Insufficient training to improve assessment capacity in engineering
- Weak target-setting in some construction learner reviews
- Insufficient development of effective widening participation initiatives
- Slow embedding of some quality assurance processes

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

8. Achievement and standards are good overall and outstanding on all apprenticeship programmes. Apprenticeship success rates have improved across all programmes from 70% in 2005-06 to 91% in 2006-07 and are significantly above national rates. Nearly all apprentices succeed in a timely manner. Employers benefit from the high skill levels of their employees. Advanced apprenticeship success rates are satisfactory and have improved from 30% three years ago to 63% in 2006-07. They are broadly in line with national rates. Over the same period timely success rates have improved from 20% to 63%. STEGTA has a small but very successful Train to Gain provision with success rates around 90%.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

9. Learners demonstrate well developed technical and workplace skills. STEGTA closely monitors qualification progression and works closely with employers to plan workplace learning carefully. Employers often provide additional skills training. Learners routinely work on complex tasks requiring high levels of skill. They are highly valued employees. College staff provide good support for learners to develop vocational skills, technical certificates and key skills qualifications. STEGTA also provides successful key skills training for some learners. Resources for training, learning and assessments are good. The quality of learners' progress reviews and of target-setting is satisfactory.
10. STEGTA provides a practical range of learning programmes which match the needs of learners, employers and the regional skill requirements. For example, construction programmes are closely aligned to the skill needs of its member organisations and focus on building and engineering service apprenticeships such as heating and ventilation and plumbing. An initial six month probationary period is highly successful in allowing learners to make the transition from school onto an apprenticeship programme. Few learners leave training or employment early. Learners are constantly encouraged by STEGTA and their employers to progress and aspire to higher levels. Many learners progress to supervisory positions and are successful in achieving higher education qualifications. STEGTA offers a range of enrichment that improves learners' confidence, skills, enjoyment and motivation, including additional occupationally relevant qualifications, team building events and driving lessons.
11. STEGTA provides learners with a very effective support package. It is careful to ensure that all support is focused on maintaining learner motivation and qualification progression. This includes a period of probationary employment, careful initial assessment and career advice and guidance to ensure learners are suited to their chosen programme. Specialist literacy and numeracy support for

those who need it is available with good pastoral support that helps learners to identify and overcome any barriers to their progress. Close collaboration with college tutors and employers supports qualification progression and STEGTA provides flexible and well planned assessment opportunities.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

12. Strategic leadership and management of STEGTA is highly effective. STEGTA's executive council has significant involvement in developing, planning and monitoring performance. Senior managers provide strong overall leadership. Performance indicators that are closely linked to business targets have been introduced for all staff. Apprenticeship success rates have improved significantly over the last three years. The Train to Gain programme has been managed very successfully. Management information and data systems are robust, with clear information provided to board members, managers and staff. STEGTA staff manage the learning programmes and subcontractors well. Staff training and development is frequent and aligned to business and learner needs.
13. Equality of opportunity is good. STEGTA treats its learners with respect, sensitivity and care irrespective of their background. It responds quickly to meet individual learner needs and addresses their barriers to learning. STEGTA has a broad range of relevant equality and diversity policies and procedures.
14. STEGTA has developed a good range of activities to promote inclusion, equality and diversity, including staff development, pre-apprenticeship and school link programmes. Learners understanding of equality and diversity issues is particularly well developed during learner induction and further promoted during their progress reviews.
15. STEGTA monitors employers' equal opportunity arrangements. However, little further analysis takes place to identify any further employer development needs. All STEGTA training officers have, or are in the process of undertaking, Criminal Records Bureau checks. STEGTA carefully monitors participation in learning by people from different groups. However, few effective activities have been developed that widen the participation rates from under-represented groups.
16. The management of health and safety is good. STEGTA strongly emphasises health and safety through all its actions. Staff are trained in the skills needed to make health and safety checks in the workplace.
17. Partnership working is outstanding. The chief executive officer is enthusiastically involved in a range of regional quality improving initiatives. Good practice from a range of sources has been successfully adapted to meet STEGTA's own requirements and is effective in improving quality processes and learner success rates. One subcontractor has improved its own provision by

adopting systems developed by STEGTA. STEGTA has very strong links with employers. These links have been crucial in developing learning and assessment programmes and improving success rates. Employers are fully involved in the learning process and they receive good advice about further training and business development.

18. Overall support arrangements are very effective in helping learners to identify and overcome barriers to their progress. Learners get good support from college tutors, employers and STEGTA staff. STEGTA provides good key skills and specialist literacy and numeracy support where needed, enrichment through team building, additional qualifications and awareness raising about healthy living. Employers are outstanding in their support for learning and assessment. STEGTA provides useful information, advice and guidance for learners and employers and encourages parents to be fully involved in the apprenticeships.

19. STEGTA has introduced a range of very good strategies to improve success rates. The most effective of these include new recruitment and initial assessment arrangements that better match learners to programmes and employers. The proportion of early leavers has reduced from 40% in 2004-05 to 14% in 2006-07. One key engineering qualification is now delivered completely at work, providing a more flexible programme for learner and employers. New review arrangements are more effective in the monitoring of learner progress. Success rates for apprentices, in particular, are now outstanding, exceeding national rates at over 90%. These improvement strategies are supported by a good quality assurance system and effective use of learner and employer feedback. An observation system has been recently established, which is still subject to review, full implementation and development. The self-assessment process is inclusive.

What learners like:

- The relevance of the training
- 'Key skills was good'
- The individual support
- 'The help – it's like a little family'
- The staff are so helpful
- 'It was great, they helped me progress and find a new employer'

What learners think could improve:

- 'I would like more lectures'

Sector subject areas

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Good: Grade 2

Context

20. STEGTA has 65 learners on engineering apprenticeships and Train to Gain programmes. Of these 41 are advanced apprentices, 20 are Level 2 apprentices and four adults are on a Train to Gain programme. Learners undertake training in a range of engineering occupations including engineering production and manufacturing. Manufacturing learners take a range of qualifications including business improvement techniques. Training and assessment is provided both on- and off-the-job by STEGTA and college staff. STEGTA has subcontracting arrangements with four local colleges. Recruitment of most learners is through direct referral from employers, with a small number being referred through the Connexions service.

Strengths

- Very high apprenticeship success rates
- Good skills development
- Well planned programmes which meet the needs of learners and employers
- Very effective induction and initial assessment

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient training to improve assessment capacity in engineering

Achievement and standards

21. Success rates on apprenticeship programmes are very high and have improved from 80% in 2005-06 to 92% in 2006-07. They are significantly above the national rate of 62%. Timely success rates for apprenticeships are now excellent having improved from 36% to 92% over the same period. The overall success rates on the advanced apprentice programme have improved well from 24% in 2004-05, to 65% in 2006-07 and are now broadly in line with the national rate. Timely success rates for advanced apprentices have increased significantly from 0% in 2004-05 to 50% in 2006-07. Train to Gain learners are making good progress towards achievement.
22. Learners develop good vocational skills in the workplace and the standards of their practical and written work is generally very good. Many learners are working on projects well above the normal standards and levels required at their current stage of training. Learners are given positions of responsibility early and often work independently with minimal supervision. Some apprentices design fault-finding test equipment to be used in production departments and another learner is identifying modifications at a major engineering construction site to reduce energy consumption.

23. Learners are successful in achieving relevant additional qualifications. Some learners' complete health and safety qualifications and advanced apprentices are also studying higher national technician programmes while completing their apprenticeship frameworks.

Quality of provision

24. Training at work and college is well planned and the standards of tuition, skills coaching, training and assessment are good. STEGTA works very successfully with employers and colleges to produce relevant on-the-job training plans for apprentices. The current range of engineering qualifications is closely aligned to meet employer and learner training needs. The skills developed at work provide learners and assessors with invaluable evidence for assessment purposes.
25. STEGTA provides good progression advice and guidance to learners and employers. Current qualifications are relevant to the work patterns of each company without compromising the learners' ability to learn new skills and progress.
26. STEGTA has developed a comprehensive range of initial assessment material and it uses the results to produce individual learning plans and identify any additional learner support needs. Appropriate arrangements exist to provide any specialist learning support using external providers. A local Learner Agreement Pilot initiative aimed at employed 16 and 17 year olds is used successfully as a pre-apprenticeship access provision onto engineering apprentices.
27. Learner induction is comprehensive and very effective. STEGTA includes interactive role-play and quizzes throughout its induction programme. Induction is interesting, memorable and emphasises key learning points around health and safety, diversity and respect for others as well as identifying individual learning styles. STEGTA strongly emphasise the importance of health and safety throughout all phases of the training programmes.
28. Workplace assessment arrangements are good. Assessments are always well-planned and learners are routinely encouraged to use a wide range of diverse evidence to demonstrate skill levels and competency. Learner portfolios are completed to a good standard with extensive use made of photographs and supervisor witness statements. STEGTA assessors are flexible and regularly provide assessment on demand when opportunities occur for observations. Some employers have trained assessors on site and STEGTA works closely with these assessors to maximise assessment opportunities.
29. Learner progress reviews are satisfactory. Most reviews have progress targets set and contain realistic action plans that are agreed between the learner and the training officer. Training officers visit learners at work and in college every four to six weeks where any previously set targets are carefully reviewed with any action points agreed between all parties. Employers attend the progress review meetings and are very effectively involved in all aspects of the learning

programme, including the review and target-setting process. Learners and employers are fully aware of their progress so far and understand what they still need to do to complete their apprenticeship.

30. Learners receive very good support from their training officers and employers. Training officers respond very quickly to resolve any matter that creates a barrier to progress or motivation, including the resolution of problems that occur at work, college or home. Employers receive valuable information and guidance from STEGTA, which particularly benefits those employers whose apprentices require additional learning support. Most apprentices are supported in the workplace by a supervisor.
31. Learners attend a residential leadership development programme. The course is designed to build self-confidence and team spirit. Learners are encouraged to use their experiences as evidence for their key skills qualification. Learners enjoy this course as well as the other enrichment activities including sponsored driving lessons.

Leadership and management

32. Leadership and management are good. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced and are strongly committed to improving learner success rates. Several members of staff with good vocational experience and qualifications have been recruited since the previous inspection and are still being provided with extra support and training. STEGTA has developed a strong sense of team working and they all have individually set performance targets that are regularly and closely monitored.
33. The most recent self-assessment report is accurate, inclusive, and appropriately self-critical and it uses a good range of evidence to form its judgements.
34. Internal verification and assessment arrangements are robust, well structured and include good arrangements for sampling assessors' work across all of the programmes. STEGTA is introducing a range of additional qualifications from two new awarding bodies and further assessor training is required to improve and develop their assessment capacity.

Construction, planning and the built environment

Grade: Grade 2

Context

35. STEGTA has 55 learners on construction apprenticeship programmes. Of these, 38 are advanced apprentices and 17 are apprentices. All apprentices are employed. Learners undertake qualifications in building services, which include gas fitting and plumbing. All learners attend college for one day each week for off-the-job training. College staff are responsible for the internal verification and assessment of learners work. STEGTA's training officers review learner progress every six weeks, either in the workplace or in college. Recruitment for most learners is through direct referral from employers, with a small number being referred through the Connexions service.

Strengths

- Very high apprenticeship success rates
- Good development of workplace skills
- Good planning of training, learning and assessment
- Very effective induction and initial assessment

Areas for improvement

- Weak target-setting in some learner reviews

Achievement and standards

36. Success rates on apprenticeship programmes are very high and have improved from 60% in 2005-06 to 90% in 2006-07. They are significantly above the national rate of 60%. Timely success rates for apprenticeships are now very good having improved from 13% to 86% over the same period. The overall success rates on the advanced apprentice programme have improved well from 40% in 2004-05, to 61% in 2006-07 and are now just above the national rate. Timely success rates for advanced apprentices have increased significantly from 0% in 2004-05 to 75% in 2006-07. No significant variations exist in the performance by different groups of learners.
37. While at work learners are closely supervised by qualified engineers who ensure they experience a wide range of skills development on different construction projects. Learners quickly develop good workplace skills and many are given the responsibility for managing their own jobs. Some advanced learners are responsible for designing water systems and supervising less experienced learners. Learners are highly valued by their employers and they are very pleased with their abilities and skill levels. Learners on gas programmes successfully complete additional domestic appliance and other accredited training. These awards are highly valued by employers and greatly enhance learners' future employment and progression opportunities. During induction,

and as an ongoing feature of work and training learners develop a good understanding of health and safety practices.

Quality of provision

38. Teachers plan training, learning and assessment well. Work activities are planned in close cooperation between STEGTA training officers and college tutors. This partnership has produced programmes that quickly develop learners' skills, closely align with college training and meet awarding body assessment requirements. Employers have a good understanding of all aspects of the training programme and they routinely arrange work patterns to maximise assessment and qualification progression opportunities. STEGTA's training officers use a detailed qualification progression sheet to closely monitor development and set progress targets.
39. Teaching and learning are good. Learners preferred learning styles are identified during induction and used well to plan learning programmes and teaching activities. Learners are very satisfied with their tutors. Learners' portfolios are compiled to a good standard and include an adequate range of evidence.
40. The current range of construction qualifications is closely aligned to meet employer and learner training needs. STEGTA has worked closely with their employers to ensure that programmes reflect the demands of the local industry and community without compromising the learners' ability to learn new skills and progress. STEGTA provides good advice and guidance to learners and employers.
41. Learners receive very good support from their training officers and employers. STEGTA's training officers respond very quickly to resolve any matter that creates a barrier to progress or motivation, including the resolution of problems that occur at work, college or home. Additional support is also available to help with personal and professional development, including financial support to access driving lessons and sponsoring enrichment opportunities including residential outdoor activities. Employers value the information and guidance they receive from STEGTA, particularly those employers whose apprentices require additional learning support from specialist tutors.
42. Induction and initial assessment are very effective. Through a very well prepared two-staged induction programme learners develop a good understanding of their role and responsibilities as apprentices. Induction develops good awareness of equality, diversity and health and safety issues which are further reinforced through the use of focused questioning by training officers at each progress review. Initial assessment includes the assessment of key skills and literacy and numeracy levels and a vocational aptitude test. The test results are used to help learners make an informed choice about the apprenticeship options available as well as providing information to allow STEGTA to develop an individual support programme. Learners are provided with specialist support where needed.

43. Progress reviews are satisfactory. The review process adequately monitors health, safety, equality and workplace activities. Training officers make good use of reviews to question and probe understanding of these activities. However, the progression targets that are set for learners are done outside the review process when learners agree the planning of workplace activities. As a result, review forms do not include the same demanding targets set during other activities and employers are not always fully aware of some qualification progress targets that have been set.

Leadership and management

44. Leadership and management are good. Staff are well qualified and experienced and strongly committed to improving learner success rates. They have personal performance targets that are linked to retention and achievement. These targets are closely monitored by managers and staff appraisal systems are closely linked to training, development and learner performance. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory. Learners understand their role in the assessment process and routinely gather workplace evidence for assessment purposes.
45. Since the previous inspection STEGTA staff have started to observe training in the workplace. Workplace supervisors and employers are observed coaching and training learners and are provided with clear, accurate feedback from training officers. This has helped to improve workplace training and better engage employer participation in the learning process.
46. Communications are satisfactory. The operational team meets weekly to discuss performance and to share information. A quality forum is in place to review any new documentation and procedures and all staff are involved in self-assessment process team meetings and workshops. The most recent self-assessment report is accurate, inclusive, and appropriately self-critical and it uses a good range of evidence and management information, including learners' views, to form its judgements.

Learners' achievements

Success rates on Engineering work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes managed by the STEGTA 2004 to 2007

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/ College NVQ rate **	National NVQ rate**	Provider/College framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	24	24%	56%	24%	47%
		timely	25	0%	33%	0%	26%
	05-06	overall	36	55%	55%	55%	49%
		timely	33	11%	34%	11%	30%
	06-07	overall	21	N/A	N/A	65%	67%
		timely	18	N/A	N/A	50%	N/A
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	2	N/A		0%	42%
		timely	3	N/A		0%	19%
	05-06	overall	9	N/A		80%	51%
		timely	9	N/A		36%	32%
	06-07	overall	16	N/A	N/A	92%	N/A
		timely	15	N/A	N/A	92%	N/A

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'

Success rates on Construction work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes managed by the STEGTA 2004 to 2007

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/ College NVQ rate **	National NVQ rate**	Provider/College framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	4	60%	55%	40%	40%
		timely	3			0	23%
	05-06	overall	27	70%	63%	70%	51%
		timely	37			30%	27%
	06-07	overall	38		N/A	61%	56%
		timely	35		N/A	75%	N/A
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	0				
		timely	0				
	05-06	overall	7	60%	61%	60%	55%
		timely	11	13%	32%	13%	28%
	06-07	overall	28		N/A	90%	N/A
		timely	9		N/A	86%	N/A

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'