

Commercial in Confidence



TTE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE



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1. Organisation – Information, Introduction and Overview

The TTE Technical Institute (TTE) was established in 1990 through a collaborative venture between British Steel and ICI, and is a charity limited by guarantee. The organisation continues to specialise in engineering, process, oil and gas sectors, delivering bespoke commercial training to companies in both the UK and internationally, either on location or within the TTE Training Centre. Government funded areas include; Apprenticeships under a prime contract with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Study Programme delivery on a subcontract basis with Derwentside College, South Tyneside College and Redcar and Cleveland College. There is a 70/30 split between its commercial and Government Funded elements of the business.

There have been a number of ongoing challenges for the organisation, not least the ongoing reductions in Government funding, Government changes to qualifications and programme delivery, the economic environment both within the UK and internationally and with specific industries e.g. oil and gas.

Since the previous review there have been a number of significant changes:

- In addition to TTE Apprenticeships Ltd and TTE International Ltd a new subsidiary has been developed; Quantech Competence Development Ltd. This strengthens the organisation regarding its involvement with Trailblazers and independent assessment requirements. Plus it creates opportunities for wider assessment services, including organisation gap analysis and competency assessments.
- A major restructure took place in November 2015. This has included new positions and movement of existing staff into different or enhanced roles. Additionally, a new HR department has been introduced, headed up by the new post of HR Manager.
- The organisation has grown in size and currently has 113 staff compared with 100 at the previous review.

The scope for this matrix Assessment is focused upon the Information, advice and guidance (hereafter referred to as IAG or support) provided to learners and employers from their initial contact and throughout their time with the organisation.

IAG is provided as part of the recruitment process, for example to ensure that employers are clear on the support which will be provided and for learners to ensure they are engaged on the right programme. IAG continues to be delivered on an ongoing basis to ensure learners are progressing through their programme and as part of exit discussions to provide support with progression. An integral part of this is offering informed, comprehensive, information, advice and guidance to enable people to explore options and support them to access learning, training and employment opportunities that meet their individual needs.

2. Areas of Particular Strength

A number of strengths were identified during the assessment. These are detailed below. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the matrix Standard.

- Colleges were complimentary regarding the working relationship they have with the organisation. They highlighted the strengths of the work carried out by TTE staff; providing support, which has helped to improve and change people's lives. The organisation has maintained its good reputation within its area of delivery for providing good support – “excellent relationship – the staff we work with are professional and caring – *very good*.” (1.8)
- There were some good examples of supportive management styles and positive feedback from staff who felt supported by their line manager/senior manager, which in turn assists them to provide positive support to their learners. (1.2)
- The organisation is at the forefront for the delivery of Trailblazers and excellent partnership working was highlighted by both staff and employer organisations. Employers described the good reputation that the organisation has in the area and described how the working relationships worked effectively and proactively, particularly the effective communication processes. This positive feedback was not just received for work with Trailblazers, but covered all aspects of delivery and Employers gave very positive feedback regarding the high levels of service they received from the organisation. Examples were provided which demonstrated how staff explore employers specific needs and bespoke their support specifically to their needs. The detailed tenders provided for commercial training provides employers with the confidence that “they go the extra mile” to ensure they are providing the best possible support. (1.8, 4.4)
- TTE has been successful in gaining recognition from the UK's professional body for chemical scientists, the Royal Society of Chemistry for its Laboratory Technician Apprenticeship. This is in recognition of the high calibre/standard of the qualification /programme provided by the organisation and demonstrates the skills and experience gained by learners of TTE. (3.2)
- The Learner Forums were described by class representatives as a useful mechanism to provide feedback, be informed of changes that would affect learners and provide the opportunity to discuss any improvements to the programme and support they receive. At the most recent forum fundamental changes have been made, and the forums are now learner led as opposed to TTE led, with a learner chairing the meeting. This new approach has been well received and learners confirmed that they felt more comfortable to air their views which creates a more two way process. (1.7, 4.2, 4.3)
- Staff outlined the new approach to utilising e-learning. A member of staff has been placed on a specific project to enhance the delivery of training through e-learning. The first area will be Health & Safety and an educational video game is being developed. The aim is to create greater engagement with learners. (2.2, 3.2, 4.7)
- Learners feel staff are open and accessible, knowledgeable and committed, showing a willingness to provide encouragement and support appropriate to needs. Learners described how they develop good relationships with staff who are approachable, have industry experience, are non-judgemental, enabling them to progress through looking at their needs and providing access to appropriate support. Learners welcomed the small

group approach, which allows for greater one-to-one support, enhanced by good training facilities and also being treated as an adult. (3.4, 3.5)

3. Areas for Continuous Improvement

A number of areas for continuous improvement were identified during the assessment which may develop or enhance the service delivered. These are detailed below and for the organisation to consider as part of its ongoing continuous quality improvement actions. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the matrix Standard. These will form the basis for discussion at the Continuous Improvement Checks (CIC) conducted twelve and twenty-four months from the date of this Assessment, along with any other notable developments.

- The senior team outlined how the organisation is going through a process of change and how its business strategy is being refined and developed on an ongoing basis. Managers also confirmed that Self-Assessment processes and the subsequent development of the organisation's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) also needs to be updated. Moving forward, it may be timely for greater staff involvement in the development and monitoring of the process to create greater 'buy in', and focus for staff – *"it's not just a management tool, it is a staff tool, more of our involvement would be good"*. (1.1, 1.2, 4.5)
- Staff highlighted how the IAG provided was fully embedded within the organisation, being implicit throughout the whole learner and employer journey, so much so that at times it was difficult for staff to articulate what it actually means within the organisation. The aims and objectives for the IAG are outlined within the IAG policy, this highlights the IAG it delivers against a code of principals, but these are from several years ago produced by the National IAG Board which no longer exists. Consideration could be given to reviewing the information supplied "what does IAG actually mean to both staff, learners and employers"? What help and support is provided by TTE from the learners' and employers perspective? Could the information be written in a language that is more user friendly and understandable to learners and employers? A review of current information to ensure it fully depicts what IAG is provided, across all areas, could also be used to ensure that all staff, including any new staff to the organisation are clear on the aims and objectives of the IAG. This would not only provide greater clarity on what IAG means and what is provided within TTE but, would also create stronger linkages to the feedback being collated as part of learner and employer surveys. (1.7, 3.1, 4.1)
- Aligned to the above consideration could also be given to producing a visual presentation of the learner journey from its beginning to end to highlight the different points of contact and support that can be available. This may help with consistency as it appears that different approaches are provided by different members of staff e.g. support from staff to help learners with their CV or interview skills. Some staff do not appear to take the opportunity to refer to other organisations e.g. the National Careers Service and the wealth of support it can provide. (1.7, 3.1, 4.1)
- Staff described how the PDR process is a mechanism which allows two way discussion regarding performance and includes looking at things that have gone well and things that could have been improved. To strengthen this process and provide a confidential way for staff to provide their views and give feedback, consideration could be given to undertaking a full staff survey. Undertaken on an annual or every other year, it could provide benchmarks to measure the staff understanding of organisational aims and

objectives, direction and support received from leadership, management, involvement in planning and communication at all levels including between departments etc. (1.2)

- As highlighted within the strengths of this report, staff generally feel supported by management and enjoy working at TTE. However, there are some frustrations at Instructor levels due to staff feeling there is a lack of time which impacts upon planning, preparation, time for marking and time to undertake reviews. Factors include communicating process, e.g. standardisation meetings are not always happening and communication meetings are not providing opportunities for in depth discussions. Additionally, the information on the Planner can be vague and is difficult to read on the Tablets. Aligned to the greater opportunities to be involved in the Self-Assessment process, it may be timely to undertake a SWOT analysis with staff to identify key areas which staff feel need to be addressed. (1.2)
- Additionally, staff feel that not all resources e.g. hand tools are fit for purpose. They appreciate that a vast number of learners use the resources and the logistics of monitoring usage is difficult. However, they would like to explore ways of alleviating these issues. (2.1, 2.2)
- Staff described how the Learner Support Role is being developed within the organisation and there are a number of areas for consideration:
 - As the role is new there is the opportunity to define what it entails, as the different aspects of the role are not clear to staff at all levels.
 - Added to this staff involved would welcome time to develop the role e.g. support for dyslexia and all areas of learning disabilities.
 - Plus, greater clarity regarding the support provided for learners with employability skills, e.g. CV and interview skills development and the links with the development of the Technical Careers Centre.
 - Examples, were provided of one-to-one support provided with interview skills for learners who were ahead of their learning programme and therefore have the time, but does this mean that those who are on target or behind are disadvantaged in this area? (3.6)
- There were several examples of how the organisation obtains feedback from employers. This included comprehensive reviews of projects, Trailblazers and Apprenticeships, where staff meet with employer representatives and monitor all aspects of delivery. To strengthen these qualitative processes, it may be timely to gather more quantitative information by re-introducing employer surveys. Undertaken, particularly with 'new' employers to ensure that the full range of support is being provided. Also, as outlined within the TTE Strategy to "continuously Improve Learner & Employer Engagement & Satisfaction", consideration could be given to establishing KPI's to measure satisfaction results, not only for employers, but learners as another means of benchmarking performance. (4.2, 4.3)
- Positive feedback was received by learners regarding the resources stored on the VLE, including course information, assignment information etc. To enhance the use of the VLE further, learners would appreciate access to all their programmes up front. This would

allow them time to prepare in advance of them starting a particular programme, if they wished. (3.2, 3.4, 3.5)

- Learner handbooks are in existence as a reference and to enhance information, which is provided verbally, and as part of induction presentations. Similarly, to strengthen the information provided to employers, particularly new employers, consideration could be given to developing an employer handbook which would strengthen the verbal information provided, make explicit expectations of all parties involved, provide an outline of the Apprenticeship framework and generally act as a reference guide. (3.1)
- The new approaches to the delivery of Trailblazers were outlined by both staff and those employers involved. A key element of the programme includes developing behaviours and the areas of addressing personal responsibilities, communication, impact of work, team work, change management etc. were outlined. As part of measuring the impact of the support provided in these areas, consideration could be given to the creation of questionnaires both pre and post support to establish a starting point for each individual, which would be revisited to gauge the 'distance travelled'. Additionally, positive outcomes could be used to support the organisation's key marketing messages, and entered on literature, notice boards and the website. (1.5, 3.1, 4.2, 4.3)
- Consideration could also be given to highlight some of the positive feedback obtained using the format of 'this is what you said about us'. This information could be entered on literature and on the website etc. to promote some of the great feedback received and take the opportunity to 'shout' about the organisation's achievements. (4.3)
- The organisation have used the matrix Standard to demonstrate the effectiveness of the IAG provided and this has been recognised with the successful review of the Standard. As part of the organisation's continuous improvement process, consideration could be given for future reviews to explore the opportunities available for a '**matrix plus**' assessment. This would provide the opportunity to be assessed against additional elements e.g. relating to Leadership and Management and would allow the organisation to not only demonstrate that it provides effective IAG but also demonstrate that it has effective leadership and management practices in place. (4.8)

The annual matrix Continuous Improvement Check will allow the organisation to demonstrate on an ongoing basis the developments they are continuing to make in order to support individuals <http://matrixstandard.com/continuous-improvement-checks/> . These may include the Areas for Continuous Improvement above.

Please note that annual Continuous Improvement Checks are mandatory and non-completion within the required timescale will impact on your organisation's accreditation.

4. Methodology

The following methods were used to gather evidence against the matrix Standard during the assessment process.

- Visits to the TTE Training Centre in Middlesbrough.
- Interviews were held with 32 staff including the Group Operations Director, Group Finance Director & Company Secretary, International Sales Manager, Training Operations Manager, Business Manager, Partnerships Manager, Group Health, Safety, Security, Welfare & Environment Manager, Vocational Instructors, Engineering Services Manager, Placement Officer, Workplace Assessors/Verifiers, Apprenticeships Sales Manager, Process/Labs Service Manager, Co-ordinators, Compliance Manager and Compliance Adviser.
- Telephone Interviews were held with representatives from Derwentside College, South Tyneside College and three employer representatives.
- Small group interviews were undertaken with twenty learners.
- Review of documentation including plans, policies, procedures, evaluation questionnaires, website, ILPs and promotional information.
- Informal feedback was provided at the end of the first two days, and a formal feedback session was held at the end of the Assessment with the Group Operations Director, Partnerships Manager, Compliance Manager and Compliance Advisers.

5. Aims, Objectives and Outcomes

The Mission of the organisation is “*to deliver training that improves industry’s performance and enhances lives*”, its Vision “*is to be the instinctive first choice for training*”

The Mission and Vision are underpinned by a set of objectives and values which set the scene for TTE to achieve ‘outstanding’ performance. The organisational objectives are:

- HSE – Health, Safety and the Environment is a fundamental priority. Drive forward a proactive culture across the business where everyone know that HSE is their responsibility.
- Employers – Build trust and life time loyalty with all our customers. Always meet client and customer expectations and aim to exceed them. Work closely with businesses to deliver solution to training and development needs.
- Learners – Develop highly employable learners who are confident, skilled, safe members of society.
- Products and Services – Deliver bespoke innovative solutions responsive to customer business needs. React quickly to new opportunities, markets and funding streams.
- Business Growth – Grow the business in a profitable and sustainable manner by securing repeat and new business.

The organisation develops Strategic Plans, which outlines its Strategic Goals as highlighted above. The organisation also has a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPI), which provides a range of measures to support the achievement of its objectives of both equipping young people with skills for productive, sustainable employment and also supporting employers to develop their staff and business. Senior managers also described plans to expand the business and maintain ongoing sustainability through exploring opportunities to diversify and continuously developing the TTE offer.

Delivering the key strategic priorities for Government funded programmes includes the focus on improving learner retention, achievement and success rates with a pivotal role in the delivery of the IAG service. Staff described the work undertaken to achieve key targets e.g. for Apprenticeships, of overall framework success rates of 95% and Franchise learner retention rates of 90%. Examples of other targets included female learners as a % of overall learners of 4% and ethnic minorities as a % of total learners of 5%.

Staff described how data is available to analyse and is aggregated down to programme level and is compared with both national data and previous year’s results. Where there has been a drop in performance this has been analysed and more data is gathered as to the possible causes e.g. with maths and English where overall achievement rates have been below 40%.

Staff described how outputs including achievement and progression for learners are measures of success as part of the targets and contracts. Progress Measures are established with learners and form part of an agreed Individual Learning Plan for each learner and include Initial Assessment for Functional Skills and working on Personal Learning and Thinking Skills. Examples of individual outcomes provided included completing the qualification and achieving maths and English. Staff also highlighted the importance of achieving ‘softer’ outcomes including personal, social and welfare goals, undertaking group

work, producing an updated CV, developing interview techniques, to give learners the skills to achieve the ultimate outcome of obtaining a job (as appropriate) were highlighted. Other examples included the emphasis on improving maths and English which will help learners to progress with the outcomes of improving their chances of moving to an Apprenticeship, into further training or education or a job. The organisation also holds celebration events that recognise individuals' achievements.

The support is reviewed against its impact on targets and was acknowledged as contributing to figures relating to achievement, success and progression, through the initial contact, initial assessment, induction, progress monitoring and performance review. Monitoring and review takes place including self-assessment, tracking and monitoring. As a result of these processes ongoing changes have continued to develop and examples of changes that have been implemented included:

Two Student Success Co-ordinator roles have been introduced to cover both technical and non-technical areas. Close monitoring of attendance for learners takes place to ensure that high learner retention rates are achieved. On-Track has been developed to facilitate progress.

Investment is taking place to update and introduce new technology to improve the learner experience, improve achievement and achieve operational effectiveness. Examples were provided of the development of the website, introduction of OneFile and VLE which is providing a more consistent and effective service.

An Equality & Diversity Committee has been established in recognition of the importance of Equality & Diversity and the Committee will create an even greater focus. Examples were provided of the work undertaken by Learner Recruiters who had visited local schools to try encourage female learners.

As highlighted within the areas for development within this report, the support with progression and exit advice is an area which is currently being developed and strengthened further. Specific welfare advice is available and is being continuously reinforced to learners. Current SFA Learner satisfaction results stand at 8.4 with the introduction of improvements should increase further.

Staff gave examples of the link between effective IAG support and the targets linked to project and contractual requirements, which are critical to the organisation's financial viability and success. Examples of the IAG support provided as outlined in the TTE IAG policy includes:

- Recruitment/Employer Engagement/ Marketing staff provide initial information and advice to help potential learners and their parents where appropriate to choose the course that suits their needs and to access any financial and learning support.
- Specialist staff provide IAG on careers, welfare, primary care, health matters, child protection and finance.
- Assessment Centre Staff provide guidance to learners to assist them choosing the course that is right for learners.
- Commercial Sales staff provide IAG to employers.

- Assessors ensure that learners on employers and sponsoring company sites are able to access IAG. Individual interviews enable guidance to be tailored to the learner's specific needs and are available through the training/assessment duration. 1

Learners could describe the difference the support had made to them through the interventions at differing points of the journey, from first point of contact through to exit. They were able to describe the 'softer outcomes' they had achieved and examples were given including improving confidence and motivation.

6. Findings Against the matrix Standard

1. Leadership and Management

The way in which the organisation is led and managed to develop an effective service

Leadership and direction is provided by the TTE senior management team and Board of Directors. Staff feel that managers are effectively leading and supporting them to deliver the service. This is through involvement in planning and communication, which encourages staff to contribute ideas and input either through a range of meetings, through one-to-ones or less formally through emails and day-to-day contact. Staff appraisals are also being carried out in which information regarding training needs linked to performance and contract delivery is reviewed and reflected upon.

Staff are clear of the objectives that relate to their roles through the communication processes where the objectives for the forthcoming year have been discussed with staff, along with key changes and ideas to strengthen contract delivery and achievements. Organisational targets are disseminated and staff have a number of individual outcomes to work towards, and as a result have a good understanding of what they need to do to achieve organisation objectives. For example, recruiting the right people onto the programme and ensuring that ongoing support is provided to both learners and their employers. Performance is monitored through meetings, analysis of progress, reviews and tracking to ascertain outcomes, underpinned by the level of IAG given and the commitment of staff to the service provided.

Staff described how they aim to deliver an effective learning experience that is more than just the learning goals of a programme. They also highlighted how important health, safety, Equality & Diversity, safeguarding and fostering British Values are in the achievement of the organisation's aims and objectives. These are addressed at all stages of the learner journey from initial induction and ongoing throughout reviews and Tool Box Talks. The Equality & Diversity Committee and the Senior Manager for Health, Safety, Environmental and Welfare oversee the implementation of a range of policies and procedures which ensures that areas such as equality and diversity are embedded for both staff and learners. Staff talked about the efforts to ensure confidentiality and security of information. Complaints, Equality & Diversity, Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies are all updated on a regular basis and used within the learner and staff handbooks and for both during induction. Learners were also able to confirm that Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity policies were covered as part of their inductions. Additionally, examples of training in Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity were described by staff and they were able to explain the importance of supporting learners in a safe environment not only in terms of Health & Safety but also safety for vulnerable people. The organisation has maintained its British Safety Council 5 Star Award and Prevent training and awareness has been provided to ensure that the organisation meets the requirement that all FE institutions comply with the Prevent Duty in the Counter Terrorism Act.

The organisation uses a variety of mechanisms to make learners and empowers aware of its services. Staff work with schools, attend careers events and hold open evenings and parents evenings to promote the whole range of programmes and promote the TTE offer. Staff work with employers to support them as part of their recruitment processes and to

develop their existing workforce. Staff also reported that word of mouth and repeat business is a key contributor of the way people are made aware of the support available and this is also backed up with information provided on the organisation's web site, which is currently being updated. Much use is now being made of social media including LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. Contact can be made with the organisation via telephone, email or the website where people can obtain general IAG and support, plus information to help them decide on an appropriate course of learning.

Staff interviewed could describe how they have constant opportunities to influence the service through team meetings, standardisation, one-to-ones, as well as ad-hoc meetings. The processes also includes feedback from learners and employers during on-going reviews and questionnaires that contains reference to the support given as well as the delivery of the training and its impact. Examples of changes made or planned as a result of these approaches has been the development of standard templates on OneFile, new procedures for tenders, improved ILPs, updating of the Learner Handbook to include areas such as British Values and changes to the Equality & Diversity policy. Also, the replacement of the MIA document with improved Learner review documentation with an additional section added to gauge understanding of the IAG provided and new tutor groups and registration periods have been included within the daily work regime for learners.

The organisation demonstrated they have established partnerships and networks with both strategic and operational links with the three Colleges as a sub-contractor in the delivery of Study Programmes. TTE has worked hard to successfully find new employers for the Apprentices that were previously employed by SSI. An additional benefit has been a number of new working relationships with employers that TTE have not previously worked with. The organisation is an active member of the Tees Valley Learning Provider Network and staff attend regular meetings to obtain updates and share good practice. Staff are members of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) and work with Tees Valley Unlimited (Local Enterprise Partnership) in the Tees Valley to ensure that their offer meets the needs of the area. Additionally, review opportunities are undertaken with a variety of providers based in the North East and nationally around the UK as part of membership of the Group Training Association of Training Providers. Also, staff work with employers to support learners in developing their skills and working with employers and the Science Industry Partnership to provide tailored learning opportunities.

2. Resources

The assets invested and applied in providing an effective service

An essential part of the planning process is the commitment to staffing levels and to ensure there are sufficient people resources to deliver the service; this is also a key element to meet business and contract requirements. The organisation also uses an external organisation, EEF for support with its HR and has a number of HR policies and procedures in place which provide the structure for consistent and effective actions and behaviour. Training is delivered at the Middlesbrough site which is fully equipped to industry standards and creates realistic learning environments. Training is also delivered on employer premises and assessment is generally undertaken on employer premises/sites and staff have access to the tools to assist them in their role. Work is being undertaken to strengthen the organisation's IT infrastructure with investment in new PCs, laptops, development of the website, continued developments with social media and data systems to improve tracking and management information.

The organisation has access to a range of information that supports learners and employers. Staff ensure that information is current, accurate and quality assured with the use of the BSEN ISO 9001 management system, course profiles have been developed which are issued to potential learners/employers that provides information to help them make decisions about whether courses or programmes are suitable for them. Learner handbooks have been developed which provide information of the support available. Information is regularly updated by Awarding and Certification Bodies, the Colleges and SFA. Learners are provided with a range of information both paper based and electronic as appropriate and examples were provided of information on how to apply for a job, including filling in applications, CV completion, interview techniques and typical sector specific interview questions. Learners confirmed that the information they were given was up to date and comments were made about the knowledge of staff and their ability and desire to provide additional information when requested in a timely manner to meet their needs.

The development needs of staff are considered on an ongoing basis in order to maintain and deliver the service. Staff described how training and development, needed in order to maintain their ability to deliver the service, is made available. Progress and performance reviews, audits of files and observations as well as awareness of what is impacting on the labour market and legislation and the PDR's are the formal ways of identifying any gaps in the skills, knowledge and behaviours expected from staff in their roles, as well as any necessary qualifications. Staff confirmed they are aware of the boundaries of their respective roles and know when to refer to colleagues. Staff, partners and learners all demonstrated a clear understanding of who to go to for what aspect of the support. There were examples of staff being supported through PCGEs, Assessor and IQA qualifications and IAG qualifications as well as ongoing updates relating to Safeguarding and specific course delivery training such as Chanel Prevent General Awareness, in order to effectively support learners. In line with the move towards a more sales oriented approach staff described sales training that had been undertaken. The CPD opportunities provided by partner Colleges are also utilised and staff described attending sessions on embedding British values, embedding maths and English and managing challenging learner behaviours, which continues to develop their skills and knowledge.

There was an abundance of examples where staff have commenced with the organisation and have gained several promotions, with examples of staff gaining senior management positions within TTE. This approach adds to the flexibility of staff and increases the skills within the organisation. Staff described how job roles and responsibilities are discussed and reviewed ongoing and more formally as part of the PDR process. Staff also confirmed that they share good practice through more regular standardisation meetings, which is an area which could be strengthened, one-to-ones and emails and updates on performance of learners. Staff described how they are encouraged to suggest development they think would benefit themselves on an ongoing basis and do not have to wait for the PDR to take place.

New staff described the induction process including the issue of a Staff Handbook provided for reference of key information. The induction includes an overview of the organisation, its policies and practices and an induction programme developed specific to their role and responsibilities. Shadowing an experienced colleague can also be part of the process. Staff new to the organisation were very positive regarding the induction process. Staff, who had changed roles or taken on new responsibilities, commented on the support they had had, through shadowing to become effective.

3. Service Delivery

The way in which the service is delivered effectively

Staff described how IAG is a crucial part of the offer and is provided from the first point of contact. Learners and employers are given information about what is on offer as part of the service and time is spent with them deciding on the most appropriate route for each learner based on needs and wants. Very detailed project proposals are developed in conjunction with organisations which are bespoke to the specific needs of the client. There was a number of factors which 'helped' learners to decide to join TTE, some were based on word of mouth, the organisation's reputation, being sent by their employer but also some learners explained that it was the outline of the support and the options and possible outcomes that contributed to them getting involved. Staff described the service and how it supports learners and employers and includes:

- Discussions around individual circumstances of potential learners.
- Discussions during proposals for commercial and international clients.
- Skills Gap Analysis for organisations.
- Inductions which covers all aspects of support.
- Initial assessment.
- CV and interview skills support.
- Signposting.
- Setting and agreeing aims and objectives and progress measures.
- Information regarding qualifications, training and learning in order to pursue the most relevant.
- Specific welfare support provided throughout all learning programmes.
- Reviews of performance and progress relating to learning progression and outcomes.

Potential learners are given information about the support as part of the initial contact e.g. open evenings, parents evenings, careers events and via the website, plus ongoing if the offer is taken forward. The initial contact is used to determine what the learner needs. Staff described how they talk through the options and look at whether what is on offer suits the needs of the learners. Learners were complimentary regarding the support provided:

"Great support they treat us like adults, it's a nice place to learn"

"They don't talk down to you, they make you feel like an equal - support has been excellent"

"The help and support has been spot on!"

"Relaxed learning environment with the advice and guidance you need"

Service delivery is monitored on an on-going basis and this information is used to ensure that targets in line with aims and objectives are being achieved, and several examples were highlighted of how the achievement of targets are monitored including one to one reviews, observation discussions, review of impact data through the tracking systems plus the on-going audits undertaken which evaluates the effectiveness of service delivery by programme area. Examples were also provided of monthly reviews taking place with employers where

staff provide a detailed update for each Apprentice and regular reviews and update reports produced for commercial training. Information is collected from both learners and employers regarding the quality of the service received and whether it has met Individual learning plans or proposals. This information is then used to compare whether the service aims and objectives have been achieved as planned.

The impartiality of the service was described as very important by staff, who understand that recruiting learners inappropriately will have a negative impact on the subsequent achievement, whilst also impacting on the reputation of the organisation. Staff described how impartiality is essential, and that, by giving the appropriate information both potential learners and employers will make the best choice. Several examples were also provided of employers who are very clear on the career pathway they wish their staff to undertake, and in these instances examples were provided of discussions taking place to identify the relevant routes to be undertaken for qualifications. Alternatively, staff outlined the discussions which take place to develop bespoke packages of support. Learners valued the advice they had been given, particularly during initial contact and explanations. Learners described how staff were proactive in offering support, using the resources and confirmed that being able to ask for help and support, from knowledgeable, approachable and patient staff, who have an understanding of the needs of undertaking the programmes and the challenges, was invaluable.

Visits are undertaken at employer premises as part of the assessment process and examples were provided for learners to choose the assessment methods which fit into their working patterns. Other examples were provided for support for learners with dyslexia where additional support is provided. Learners get the opportunity for enrichment activities. Much charity work also takes place which supports the organisation's charitable objectives, provides additional enrichment for learners and also valuable work experience.

Staff use a range of resources to support learners when providing IAG; these include the resources described earlier, such as course information forms, brochures, the use of the VLE and OneFile, access to other learning providers, other websites and wider support services, initial/diagnostic assessment and a range of learner focussed information. The organisation uses social media such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn and Assessors keep in touch with on-site learners through phone calls and text messaging. Residential learners receive a handbook detailing information on the area which includes useful contact numbers, public services and media/advisory contact details.

Where appropriate referrals would be made to alternative organisations if it becomes clear their needs cannot be met with the organisation. All learners are provided with information which covers useful contact numbers e.g. drugs and alcohol, public service and career information. These also include, Cleveland Police, Cleveland Fire Brigade, CREST for drug, alcohol, counselling and referrals, Talking Therapies, for mental health counselling, as well as the National Careers Service for careers advice and Jobcentre Plus for employment information.

4. Continuous Quality Improvement

The way in which the service provided is reviewed and improved on an ongoing basis

Staff described the processes which are used to collect feedback from learners and employers and how the resulting information is reviewed and reflected on to inform planning and future ways of working. The results of questionnaires from learners, plus information, gathered through reviews and regular contact is analysed. Employer project monitoring meetings and regular Apprenticeship review meetings ensure that information is obtained upon which to continually address any areas for improvement. Learner forum meetings held with representatives of the Apprenticeship and Study programmes are held to gather views and feedback. Learners interviewed felt able to comment and give feedback on all areas of the delivery through the many intervention opportunities with staff. There was evidence of changes being made to the parent and open evenings and the organisation is looking to have separate feedback forms for parents and learners so that specific feedback is gathered. Latest interim SFA learner satisfaction survey results show a learner satisfaction rate of 8.4 with 88% of learners stating they would recommend TTE to friends and family. This is an improvement on previous results of 7.4 and 76% respectively.

Surveys include the IAG support where learners are asked to evaluate their satisfaction with the process. Learners expressed good satisfaction with the aspects of the support they had received to enable them to achieve their qualification and progress further. The advice and guidance provided through open evenings and parents evenings surveyed also ensures that appropriate information and support is being provided.

Although some learners interviewed struggled to describe the written complaints process, they were clear on which member of staff they would go to with any complaints, and information was provided to demonstrate how issues/concerns would be dealt with in a prompt and supportive manner.

The organisation has a range of partnerships in place, including employers that are highlighted earlier in this report. The organisation described positively how they work with partners/employers. As a result of ongoing College audits, examples of changes that have been made include Equality & Diversity and Health & Safety questions on Learner feedback reports to test understanding. Flexible arrangements have been developed for employers to reflect their recruitment processes and employers engaged as part of the Apprenticeship delivery are encouraged to be involved in shaping and supporting delivery. Good examples were also provided of programmes being made bespoke to the needs of commercial delivery.

Staff described the Quality Improvement processes and how they are applied, The Self-assessment process is a key element of the organisation's planning processes e.g. the production of the SAR and Quality Improvement Plan. Feedback from audits and inspections as part of the quality assurance processes supports the ongoing commitment to improvement, which underpins the delivery. The organisation's policies and processes are reviewed annually through the ISO 9001: Quality Management system. Quality is also assured through learner and employer reviews, informal feedback, one-to-one discussions, partners' reviews and performance against targets through the reports processes linked to the learners' progress measures.

PDRs that includes both reviewing individual performance and the opportunity to identify any development needs are undertaken. Staff described the support as positive and felt that reviews were used to consider performance, identify development needs and provide the opportunity for feedback. Staff described how, although this was the formal process, review of performance and providing support to staff to develop happens informally on an on-going basis through conversations with managers and through team meetings. Observations are also undertaken and for greater objectivity is carried out by an independent team of observers, as well as partner Colleges. Feedback highlights how staff are providing high quality, impartial IAG to learners and this has been confirmed by learners.

There were several examples of continuous development of technology that supports the IAG service. This is through social media including Twitter, OneFile (e-portfolio) which is now used for all 3rd and 4th year learners across all sectors, the website, BKSB assessment for maths and English, texting and email. Staff discussed the ongoing development of the VLE which provides resource information and the equipment which is strengthening the way they can support learners e.g. Tablets. Additionally, improvements to MIS systems continues to be developed. As part of Trailblazer delivery, OneFile has been developed so that training plans and activities are electronically monitored and reviewed. The development of e-learning packages will enhance the delivery mechanisms and provide greater blended learning opportunities. Additionally, the development of the Technical Careers Centre will offer services such as CV writing, mock interviews, job search, vacancy board and provide specific advice to the long-term unemployed around the opportunities for up skilling or re-skilling.

Through the organisation's planning processes, TTE is able to demonstrate that it continues to improve. Success rates and benchmarking data against other providers are examples that planned service deliverables are being closely monitored and changes are planned or have been made to improve achievements e.g. the re-structure, further development of Trailblazers, changes to the QCF framework, diversification and work with the LEP and the SFA.

7. Conclusion

TTE provided evidence to support all of the criteria of the Standard. However, some development issues have been identified in the course of this report. These do not indicate any substantial weakness; rather, they are suggestions to help the organisation improve further.

IAG support is being provided both discreetly prior to people embarking on learning programmes along with IAG being embedded into programmes. Throughout the assessment, the importance of the learner and the focus on learner and employer needs was consistent. The organisation also demonstrated how continuous quality improvement is part of its ethos. In addition to the matrix Standard, the organisation has continued to maintain its quality standards, both with ISO, British Safety Council and Ofsted.

Staff also provided some good quotes which demonstrate positive elements of the organisation e.g.

“We are a very good company, we’re not perfect, but we’re always striving to get there.”

“Our co-ordinator is approachable and flexible - we get full support – very very good”

“I love the people I work with, we have a great rapport – I love to see the learner’s progress”

“We have integrity and do a great job, we do it for the kids.”

NB: Continued accreditation is subject to annual Continuous Improvement Checks at twelve and twenty-four months following assessment and three-yearly on-site accreditation reviews. If checks/reviews are not undertaken in a timely way this will have an impact upon the organisation’s accreditation.

Assessment Type	REVIEW
Assessor’s Decision	STANDARD MET
Assessor’s Name	ANGIE PEACOCK
Visit Date	15/03/2016 - 18/03/2016
Client ID	C12189
Assessment Reference	PN101415

8. The matrix Standard Evidence Grid

Element 1 Criteria		Met	Not Met	Strength	AfCI
1.1	The service has clearly defined measurable aims and objectives which link to any wider organisational strategic aims.	✓			✓
1.2	The service is provided with clear leadership and direction	✓			✓
1.3	The organisation implements policies to promote equality and diversity, impartiality, confidentiality and professional integrity in all aspects of service delivery	✓			
1.4	The organisation complies with existing and new legislation which might impact upon the service	✓			
1.5	The organisation defines client outcomes and uses them as a measure of success for the service	✓			✓
1.6	The organisation promotes the service in ways which are accessible to all those eligible to use it	✓			
1.7	Clients and staff influence the design and development of the service	✓		✓	✓
1.8	The organisation establishes effective links with other appropriate partnerships and networks to enhance the service	✓			

Element 2 Criteria		Met	Not Met	Strength	AfCI
2.1	The organisation uses its resources effectively to deliver the service	✓		✓	
2.2	Clients are provided with current, accurate and quality assured information which is inclusive	✓		✓	
2.3	The organisation defines the skills, knowledge, competencies and qualifications, in line with current national recognised professional qualifications and frameworks, for individual staff roles, linked to the aims and objectives of the service	✓			✓

2.4	Staff are supported in undertaking continuous professional development and provided with opportunities for career progression	✓			
2.5	Effective induction processes are in place for all staff	✓			
Element 3 Criteria		Met	Not Met	Strength	AfCI
3.1	The service is defined so that clients are clear about what they might expect	✓			✓
3.2	The service is delivered effectively to meet its aims and objectives	✓		✓	✓
3.3	The service provided is impartial and objective	✓			
3.4	Clients are given appropriate options to explore and understand that they are responsible for making their own decisions	✓		✓	✓
3.5	When exploring options, clients are provided with and supported to use appropriate resources including access to technology	✓		✓	✓
3.6	Clients benefit from signposting and referral to other appropriate agencies or organisations	✓			✓

Element 4 - Criteria		Met	Not Met	Strength	AfCI
4.1	The organisation measures and evaluates the service against its stated aims and objectives and identifies improvements	✓			✓
4.2	The organisation monitors and evaluates client outcomes to support and improve service delivery	✓		✓	✓
4.3	The organisation evaluates feedback on the service to build upon its strengths and addresses any areas for improvement	✓		✓	✓
4.4	The organisation evaluates the effectiveness of its partnerships and networks to improve the service	✓		✓	

4.5	The organisation defines quality assurance approaches which are used to improve the service	✓			✓
4.6	Staff performance, linked to their role within the aims and objectives of the service, are reviewed and evaluated to improve the service	✓			
4.7	Effective use is made of technology to improve the service	✓		✓	
4.8	The organisation continually reviews improvements to help inform the future aims and objectives of the service	✓			✓