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Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

Quality and standards in education and training in Wales

A report on the quality of work-based learning programmes

in

Building Engineering Services Training Limited (BEST)

September 2009

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**



INVESTORS | BUDDSODDWYR
IN PEOPLE | MEWN POBL

The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:

- ▲ nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local authorities (LAs);
- ▲ primary schools;
- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community-based learning;
- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ local authority education services (LAES);
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies;
- ▲ offender learning; and
- ▲ the education, guidance and training elements of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) funded training programmes in Wales.

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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Introduction

Building Engineering Services Training Limited (BEST) was inspected as part of a six-year (2004-2010) national programme of inspections. The purpose of the programme is to identify good features and shortcomings in order that the provider may improve the quality of education and training offered and raise the standards achieved by learners. Inspection is also designed to give learners more information about the quality of providers of work-based learning programmes, and the learning options available.

All inspections conducted under the arrangements apply the following principles:

- the use of a common inspection framework which is common to all sectors of education and training in Wales;
- an emphasis on the provider's evaluation of its work;
- the involvement of a provider nominee who works with the inspection team; and
- the inspection of a sample of provision.

The inspection took place from 28 September 2009 to 01 October 2009. A team of Her Majesty's Inspectors from Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, undertook the inspection. The team included four additional inspectors.

The team was required to report on standards achieved by learners, the quality of education and training provided, the quality of leadership and management and to judge if the company provides value for money.

The report was produced in accordance with Section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act (2000).

Estyn's reports follow its guidance for the writing and editing of reports, which is available on the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk). The table below shows the terms that Estyn uses and a broad idea of their meaning. The table is for guidance only.

Nearly all	with very few exceptions
Most	90% or more
Many	70% or more
A majority	over 60%
Half/around half	close to 50%
A minority	below 40%
Few	below 20%
Very few	less than 10%

Grade descriptors

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

- Grade 1** good with outstanding features
- Grade 2** good features and no important shortcomings
- Grade 3** good features outweigh shortcomings
- Grade 4** some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
- Grade 5** many important shortcomings

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires the company to prepare a written statement of the action that it proposes to take to address the recommendations in the inspection report and the timescales for completing the proposed actions.

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Context

The nature of the provider

- 1 Building Engineering Services Training Limited (BEST) was established in 1990 by the Heating and Ventilating Contractors' Association (HVCA) to provide work-based training for the building services engineering sector. The providers head office is located in Buckinghamshire, England. The main functions of the provider, including learner recruitment, administration, finance, quality assurance, human resources and business development are located at this site. BEST uses a local further education college in Cardiff as its sub-contractor for delivering training in Wales.
- 2 BEST provides training for apprentices working towards qualifications in heating and ventilation, service and maintenance, refrigeration, air conditioning, plumbing, electrotechnical, ductwork and gas contracts.

Types of inspection

- 3 Under the current inspection arrangements, there are three types of inspection available to Estyn for the inspection of providers of work-based learning. These are full, standard and short inspections.
- 4 The designation of a particular type of inspection is based on clear criteria that determine the level of risk presented by the provider. The criteria are set out in the Work-Based Learning Guidance Handbook on the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk). As a result of the application of these criteria, Estyn identified that BEST Ltd required a full inspection.
- 5 During a full inspection, inspectors evaluate and report on:
 - all seven key questions across the provider; and
 - all of the learning areas which have significant learner numbers.
- 6 The learning area for the inspection of BEST Ltd:
 - Construction, Planning and the Built Environment.

The provider's priorities and targets

- 7 BEST Ltd mission is:

“to be the preferred choice training provider for our sector, achieving through a committed team striving for excellence in training, equality of opportunity, higher retention of learners and increased percentage of qualifications”.
- 8 Its vision is:

“to become the benchmark state of the art training and development service for the building services engineering industry, from craft trainee to chartered engineer so helping to build a better environment”.

Summary

Table of grades awarded

- 9 The inspection team judged the provider's work as follows:

Key Question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	2
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	2
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	2
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	2
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

- 10 The standards achieved in the learning area inspected are as follows:

Learning area	Inspection grade
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	2

Standards

- 11 Overall, the rate at which learners achieve their full qualification frameworks is very good. Most learners achieve very good standards in developing their theory knowledge and practical skills. Overall, most current learners are making very good progress towards achieving their full qualification frameworks. All learners benefit from good and sometimes very good workplaces. Most learners develop their personal, social and learning skills well. Most learners are enthusiastic and well motivated.

The quality of education and training

- 12 Overall, the quality of teaching, training and assessment is good. Assessment is well planned, regular and effective. Working relationships between training advisers, college tutors, assessors and learners are good and sometimes very good. Training advisers have developed very good working relationships with a wide range of employers. All training advisers and college tutors and assessors give learners constructive written and oral feedback on their progress and achievements.
- 13 The learning experiences offered by BEST meet the needs of learners and employers well. The quality of workplaces is good. There is good progression from the Foundation Modern Apprenticeship to the Modern Apprenticeship framework.

Training programmes are well structured. The provider has effective partnerships with the college, employers and a college-based training providers' group. Training advisers work effectively with learners, employers and college tutors to ensure that learners make good progress. The college has effective strategies for the delivery and assessment of key skills. BEST takes good account of the culture of Wales. However, it does not have a bilingual website. BEST has a good equal opportunities policy, which it shares with the college and employers.

- 14 Overall, the provider's quality of care, support and guidance for learners is good. Employers appreciate the good level of support their employees receive while in training. The induction programme is thorough and effective. Training advisers assess the individual needs of learners well and there are effective systems in place to provide learners with extra specialist support.
- 15 BEST gives high priority to the healthy development and safety of all learners. The provider has appropriate policies and procedures for the protection of young people and vulnerable adults. BEST monitors learners' attendance, punctuality and behaviour well. The provider's information material promotes equality well. However, there are very few female learners or learners from minority ethnic groups in training.

The quality of leadership and management

- 16 Overall, leadership and strategic management are very good. The Chief Executive and senior management team set out the company priorities clearly in their strategic and business plans. These take good account of Welsh Assembly Government priorities and are involved in many building service initiatives in Wales. BEST has an effective system for staff appraisal and places a high priority on continuous professional development.
- 17 Overall, the provider monitors the performance of its provision well. The provider has detailed policies and procedures that cover most aspects of its operations. The provider uses a good range of quality assurance systems and procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of its training. Overall, the provider manages its college sub-contractor well. The provider collects the views of learners and employers on the quality of training well. Overall, the provider's self-assessment process is good. All of the provider's staff have a strong focus on improving the quality of the training.
- 18 Overall, the provider uses enough suitably experienced staff to carry out their roles effectively. The provider's managers and staff demonstrate a very good understanding of their job roles and responsibilities. The provider deploys its staff well. The provider's staff development programme matches the priorities of the organisation and individual well. Overall, accommodation is of a good standard. The provider's board of directors and managers monitor the cost-effectiveness of training programmes well. BEST gives good value for money.

Recommendations

- 19 In order to improve, BEST Ltd needs to:
- R1 maintain and improve the rates at which learners attain their full qualification frameworks;
 - R2 incorporate peer reviews of college sub-contractor staff into the quality process;
 - R3 continue to address the shortfalls in the recruitment of under-represented groups; and
 - R4 continue to promote bilingualism and the culture of Wales.

Standards achieved by learners in Construction, Planning and the Built Environment

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Summary of provision in Construction, Planning and the Built Environment

- 20 The provider delivers work-based learning to 67 Building Services learners. Learners follow the Modern Apprenticeship or Foundation Modern Apprenticeship programme in heating and ventilating (industrial and commercial), heating and ventilating (domestic), refrigeration, air conditioning and electro technical. All learners are employed by national and local contractors throughout Wales. All training takes place on-the-job with employers and off-the-job at a further education college.

	Number of learners in training
Modern Apprenticeship	30
Foundation Modern Apprenticeship	37

- 21 The training frameworks for the Modern Apprenticeships include key skills at the levels indicated in the table below. Learners also have to complete the appropriate technical certificate in order to achieve the qualification framework.

Framework	Application of Number	Communication	Information Technology
Modern and Foundation Modern Apprenticeship	2	2	1

Success in attaining agreed learning goals

- 22 Overall, the rate at which learners achieve their full qualification frameworks is very good. In the period August 2008 to July 2009, 60% of Modern Apprenticeship learners achieved their frameworks. In the same period, 89% of Foundation Modern Apprentices achieved their full qualification frameworks. However, in this period, 18% of learners took between 56 and 84 days longer than expected to complete their qualifications. In the period August 2007 to July 2008, 50% of Modern and Foundation Modern Apprenticeship learners achieved their full qualification framework.
- 23 Most learners achieve very good standards in developing their theory knowledge and practical skills. In heating and ventilating (industrial and commercial), many learners show the ability to work confidently without close supervision. Most learners' portfolios contain a wide range of diverse evidence including witness testimony and photographs. Most learners' complete key skills early in their training programme when attending the further education college.

Progress in learning

- 24 Overall, most current learners are making very good progress towards achieving their full qualification frameworks. Most learners are well motivated and able to carry out tasks unsupervised. They participate fully in their progress review and assessment process.
- 25 Most learners have a very clear understanding of their own progress and performance. They know what they need to do to achieve their goals. They agree clear goals and targets with their training advisers.
- 26 Most learners benefit from good and sometimes very good workplaces, which support their development of good quality occupational skills and knowledge. Many learners are encouraged by their employers to take responsibility for problem solving and challenge their progress and development in their workplaces.
- 27 On one site, a learner in heating and ventilating (industrial and commercial) was carrying out maintenance work on a systems heating burner with little supervision. On another site, a learner in heating and ventilating (industrial and commercial) was taking part in the testing and starting of a heating plant for the client during the hand over process.

Development of personal, social and learning skills

- 28 Most learners develop their personal, social and learning skills well. They are able to work independently. Many demonstrate the ability to plan and organise their work to meet review and assessment deadlines.
- 29 Many learners demonstrate good communication and problem solving skills. Most learners develop very good relationships with, training officers, employers and college staff. Learners work well with their peers and workplace supervisors. Most learners are enthusiastic and well motivated. Most demonstrate good levels of self-confidence. Learners' attendance and punctuality on-the-job and off-the-job is good.

The quality of education and training

Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 30 Overall, the quality of teaching, training and assessment is good. Training advisers and college tutors and assessors demonstrate very good subject knowledge. They demonstrate up-to-date and detailed knowledge of the requirements of the apprenticeship frameworks. They use their knowledge and understanding very well to effectively support most learners.
- 31 Working relationships between training advisers, college tutors, assessors and learners are good and sometimes very good. These relationships encourage and motivate learners to complete their apprenticeship frameworks as well as improving their confidence and practical competence in their workplaces.
- 32 College tutors and assessors encourage learners to effectively participate in their learning and discuss their work and the progress they are making. They set clear objectives for sessions which they share and agree with learners and employers. This helps learners to understand the requirements of their training programme and to successfully achieve the goals in their individual learning plans.
- 33 Training advisers have developed very good working relationships with a wide range of employers. Training advisers visit learners frequently in their workplaces. They review learners' progress and update learners' action plans well. Training advisers and assessors set realistic and clear assessment targets with learners. Assessment is well planned, regular and effective. College tutors and assessors use a wide range of appropriate assessment methods that suit the different needs of learners and the demands of the qualification.
- 34 For example, in a portfolio building session with a group of learners, the assessors took an active part in coaching and guiding the learners in completing their portfolio evidence. They reinforced their assessment decisions on the evidence collected by learners by using a good range of questioning and discussion techniques with them.
- 35 All training advisers and college tutors and assessors give learners constructive written and oral feedback on their progress and achievements. Training advisers routinely keep employers well informed of learners' progress. Assessment and tracking documentation are clear, detailed and up-to-date. Training officers and assessors make sure that all learners have access to, and use, good training resources that meet the requirements of the awarding body.
- 36 In electrotechnical, refrigeration and air conditioning, assessment of the learners is carried out by BEST assessors in the learners workplaces. This has occurred as a result of a college strategy not to replace their assessor following retirement. BEST also carry out this service for the college for non-BEST learners.

Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 37 The learning experiences and the range of programmes offered by the provider meets the needs of learners and employers well. All learners have good opportunities to develop their skills in their workplace. There is good progression from the Foundation Modern Apprenticeship to the Modern Apprenticeship framework.
- 38 Training programmes are well structured. Most employers have a good understanding of the content of the training framework. There is a good balance between on-the-job and off-the-job training. BEST places a strong and appropriate emphasis on the need for learners to attend off-the-job training at the college. Most learners develop a good understanding of how theory relates to practical work.
- 39 Training advisers work well with learners, employers and college tutors to ensure that learners make good progress. Training advisers effectively review each learner's progress at least every eight weeks and often more frequently.
- 40 The current downturn in the construction industry means that it is difficult for employers to provide as wide a range of assessment tasks for learners to develop their skills. However, training advisers provide good support and link learners to other employers who can provide appropriate experiences. College tutors work well with employers to bridge this gap.
- 41 Training advisers help learners to consider how they will develop their career in the industry. They help learners to understand the need to update their skills at regular intervals to take account of changes in legislation, technology and energy saving techniques.
- 42 The college has effective strategies for the delivery and assessment of key skills. Tutors use the context of learners' workplaces well to suit the vocational training learners are undertaking. Very few learners have basic skills needs. When these are identified, the college provides appropriate learning support.
- 43 The provider has very effective partnerships with the college, employers and a college-based training providers' group. Managers, employers and staff at all levels in the partnerships are committed to meeting the education and training needs of all learners. Partnership staff work well together to monitor learners' work. BEST and college managers meet regularly to plan, manage, review and evaluate the provision and to make sure all learners make good progress towards achieving their framework.
- 44 BEST has started to take account of the culture of Wales and Welsh language. Application forms, initial assessment tests and basic skills assessments in numeracy and literacy are available in Welsh. However, currently no learner has indicated they wish to learn through the medium of Welsh. BEST has set up a working group to take forward its short, medium and long term aspirations in relation to the Welsh Language. These include developing BEST staff's Welsh language skills and cultural

understanding. It is planned to update the provider's website and publications to provide materials bilingually. These aspirations are appropriate and are clearly set out in BEST's Welsh Language Policy.

- 45 BEST has a good equal opportunities policy, which it shares with the college and employers.
- 46 BEST pays good attention to sustainable development. The training adviser for Wales chairs the BEST sustainable development working group. The working group is providing a lead in this area across BEST provision in the UK. There is a good practical emphasis on sustainable development in course content. Learners are strongly encouraged to recycle, and to repair items rather than replace them when appropriate.

Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 47 Overall, BEST provides a good level of care, guidance and support for its learners. As a result, all learners develop their occupational and personal skills well.
- 48 The provider's training advisers have regular progress reviews with learners and give consistently good support. NVQ assessors, college tutors and workplace supervisors provide good support to learners. The provider's staff gives good guidance to workplace supervisors. This support enables them to support learners well in their workplaces.
- 49 BEST works well with the college and employers. Training advisers communicate regularly with employers and take good account of their views. Employers appreciate the good level of support their learners receive while training.
- 50 The learner induction programme is thorough and effective. Learners gain a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities as learners and as employees. The provider's high quality induction workbook is a good reference document for learners. It includes assignments and group activities on a variety of topics including, health and safety, complaints procedure and equality and diversity. Learners are very satisfied with the induction process.
- 51 Training advisers assess the individual needs of learners well. There are effective systems in place to provide learners with extra specialist support. However, very few learners require this additional specialist support to complete their programme.

Good practice on reinforcing health and safety to learners

BEST gives high priority to the healthy development and safety of all learners during their training. Training advisers reinforce health and safety issues well at every learner progress review. They make effective use of BEST's learners' accidents and near misses that have occurred in Wales to involve learners in discussion and to develop their understanding and awareness of health and safety practices.

- 52 The provider has appropriate policies and procedures for the protection of young people and vulnerable adults. Training has taken place for managers with responsibility for this area. Staff know who the designated officer is they need to contact if they identify an issue. However, training advisers have not yet received any formal training on this topic. All BEST staff have Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks.
- 53 BEST monitors learners' attendance, punctuality and behaviour well. They work effectively with the college and employers to take prompt, appropriate action to address any issues if they occur.
- 54 All staff receive appropriate training on equality of opportunity and diversity. Training advisers regularly reinforce learners' understanding of these issues at progress reviews. BEST's information material promotes equality well. However, there are very few female learners or learners from minority ethnic groups in training. BEST has recently set up a working group to plan ways to address this issue.
- 55 BEST encourages learners to enter for national awards. In 2008, a learner won the junior apprentice category in the Welsh Training group awards. BEST distributes a newsletter to employers, learners and staff. This celebrates learners' achievements and shares information about BEST activities well.

Leadership and management

Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 56 Overall, leadership and strategic management of BEST are very good. The Chief Executive and senior management team set clear strategic direction. BEST has an appropriate mission statement to “be a preferred choice training provider for the sector and are committed to striving for excellence”. The company communicates this well to learners, staff, and employers.
- 57 Directors and managers set out the company priorities clearly in their strategic and business plans. The provider’s three year development plan for Wales from 2009 to 2012 takes good account of the priorities of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). The plan has key objectives, such as increased employer engagement; develop, implement and promote policies for Welsh language and culture; and work positively to engage under representative groups.
- 58 The provider is involved in many Welsh building services initiatives, such as a local regeneration programme, social housing refurbishment and the renewable energy initiative in Torfaen.
- 59 BEST has a good schedule of meetings for all directors, managers and staff. They meet regularly to monitor contract performance, learners' progress and to improve the quality of training and the learner’s experience. Learner’s attainment and achievement has recently improved in Wales, and the Welsh delivery model is used in England to share best practice with other staff.
- 60 All training advisers work from home. The provider holds regular company-wide team sector meetings and training days to make sure all staff feel part of the company, keep up-to-date and are not isolated. Communication across the company is very good and the ethos is one of openness and honesty.
- 61 The recently appointed regional manager is responsible for all training in Wales. He gives good leadership and support to the training advisor and assessors. The general manager supports them well and keeps them informed of strategic issues and priorities. The Chief Executive officer, regional and general manager at head office provide very good strategic direction to the team in Wales.
- 62 BEST has an effective system for staff appraisal. However, the system is generic and performance competencies do not always match the employee’s job role. The system is being revamped to meet each job role and a phased roll out of the new system is on target for later in the year. All staff complete a useful self-assessment prior to meeting their line manager. They discuss their progress and agree appropriate targets. Staff development needs are linked well to personal and organisational objectives for the following year.
- 63 The board of directors meet quarterly and are well informed about the performance of the Welsh contract. They bring a wide range of knowledge and experience of the

building services industry into the company. Three of the directors have progressed through a Modern Apprenticeship programme and have a very good understanding of learners' experiences.

Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 64 Overall, the provider monitors the performance of its provision well. Directors, managers and staff are well informed about the performance of the provider and demonstrate a good understanding how their learners are progressing towards achieving their full qualification framework. The provider has developed an effective quality framework which covers the key training and assessment processes.
- 65 The provider has detailed policies and procedures in place that cover most aspects of its operations. These include equality of opportunity, bullying, harassment and disability. All information is readily available to all staff on the company's intranet.
- 66 Managers and staff at all levels demonstrate a good understanding of the corporate objectives of the provider. There is a company-wide culture of continuous improvement. All staff are committed to improving quality and standards.
- 67 The provider uses a good range of quality assurance systems and procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of its training. The board, managers and staff use data well to evaluate trends in performance of the provider. They have a good understanding of where they need to improve. The provider's managers set and monitor clear and challenging targets for learner success rates. As a result, over the last three years learner attainment has significantly improved.
- 68 All managers and staff make good use of peer observations to monitor the quality of learner reviews and assessments. Staff value the observation system and see it as a good opportunity to identify and share good practice. The provider's managers undertake comprehensive quality checks on a wide range of documentation completed by the provider's staff.
- 69 Managers and staff are well informed by useful data and tracking systems to monitor the performance of its learners. However, not enough use is made of this information to maximise the effectiveness of learner reviews. For example, assessors do not always have an overarching record of how well all learners are progressing. However, at the time of inspection the provider is developing a revised tracking system.
- 70 Overall, the provider manages its college sub-contractor well. The provider uses a well-developed system for monitoring the performance of its sub-contractor college in the Welsh region. A comprehensive service level agreements (SLA) clearly records the terms of the contract.
- 71 The provider's staff carry out regular quality monitoring visits to its sub-contractor college. Monitoring visit activities include reviewing learners' attendance and punctuality. The progress learners are making towards achieving their technical

certificate and key skills and external verification reports. However, the provider's staff do not undertake classroom observations to monitor the quality of teaching, training and assessment.

- 72 Overall, the provider's self-assessment process is good. The provider produces a useful annual self-assessment report. The report identifies strengths and issues to address, but is largely descriptive and not always evaluative enough. All of the provider's staff have a strong focus on improving the quality of the training experience for the learner and improving the rates at which learners achieve their full qualification framework. The provider achieved the Investors in people award (IIP) in 2005.
- 73 Overall, the provider collects the views of learners and employers on the quality of training well. The provider takes good account of learner and employer views. They use a good range of questionnaire to seek the views of learners and employers on the quality of training provided by BEST. The provider undertakes a useful analysis of the responses and takes suitable action to resolve any shortcomings.

Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?

Grade2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 74 Overall, the provider uses enough suitably experienced staff to carry out their roles effectively. The provider has the capacity to deliver and assess training in many of its programmes using their own staff from their 'assessment centre'. This is a staff resource the provider can use, throughout the regions it is contracted in, to deliver training. All trainers and assessors have appropriate assessor qualifications. The provider's procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff are detailed and robust. Staff induction is comprehensive. All staff have current and detailed job descriptions. The provider's managers and staff demonstrate a very good understanding of their job roles and responsibilities. The provider deploys its staff well. Managers and staff work together well and carry out their job roles to a good standard. Most employers and sub-contractor college staff give learners good levels of support.
- 75 The provider's staff development programme matches the priorities of the organisation and individual well. All staff are required to take part in 30 hours of professional development each year. For example, staff have taken part in preparing for teaching in lifelong learning (PTLLS), information technology (IT) users and the Institute of Safety and Health (IOSH) managing safely training.
- 76 The provider places a high priority on the health and safety of its learners and staff. The provider's systems and procedures for monitoring health and safety are good.
- 77 Overall, accommodation is of a good standard. Learners have access to good resources and accommodation in the workplace and in the sub-contractor college. Most classrooms and workshops in the college are of a good standard.
- 78 The providers staff are home based and have access to a good range of resources to make sure they complete their work role to a good standard. For example, they are supplied with a vehicle, laptop computer and mobile telephone.

- 79 All learners have access to good quality learning resources when attending off-the-job training in the college. These resources include specialist practical workshops and information and communications technology (ICT) hardware and software. Many learners work in a wide variety of good quality workplaces and benefit from a wide range of on-the-job assessment opportunities. However, the provider's resources for Welsh-speaking learners are limited.
- 80 The provider's board of directors and managers monitor the cost effectiveness of training programmes well. The general manager, business services is responsible for day-to-day financial decisions. This allows the regional training manager to focus their attention on quality and standards.
- 81 Standards are good in the learning area inspected. Overall, BEST gives good value for money.

Provider's response to the report findings

The management of BEST has analysed this report and found it to be consistent with their current self assessment report.

The strengths and recommendations for improvement identified in the report will reinforce the framework for our quality development plan and are captured in our three year development plan for Wales.

In particular, with respect to the listed recommendations;

- 1 BEST will continue to establish higher targets for learner achievement rates and will incorporate project management of milestone achievements to ensure achievement within timely objectives
- 2 BEST will introduce classroom observations and peer review of college sub contractor staff into their sub contract quality monitoring procedures
- 3 BEST will continue to encourage participation and application from under represented women and BME groups and evaluate the impact of pilot initiatives undertaken.
- 4 BEST will continue to work with college partners in Wales to promote and make available bilingual delivery materials consistent with the culture of Wales and continue to raise aspirations with ongoing development.

These actions will be regularly reviewed by BEST management and board directors.

Appendix 1

The evidence base of the inspection

Inspectors visited:

- a sample of learners in the workplace and during off-the-job training in a partner college and at the provider's training centre.

Members of the team held meetings with:

- board members, the Chief Executive, senior and middle managers, training advisers and other members of staff;
- learners in on-the-job and off-the-job locations; and
- employers.

The team also inspected:

- a comprehensive range of documentation provided before and during the inspection;
- a selection of learners' work and records of achievement; and
- a range of statistical data of learner performance.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Mark Evans HMI	Reporting Inspector
Sandra Barnard HMI	Team Inspector
Eugene Brennan	Additional Inspector
Zena Cooper	Additional Inspector
Rob Osborne	Additional Inspector
Roger Cope	Provider Nominee
Bernard O'Reilly (MHMI)	Moderation