

MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of Provider: Kita Ltd
Date of visit: 4 November 2008

Context

Kita Ltd (Kita) was established in 1967 and is registered as a not-for-profit company. The provision includes apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships in engineering and manufacturing technologies, business administration, customer services, contact centre operations and leadership and management. The engineering apprentices attend college for either one or two years. This is achieved through working in partnership with Mid Kent College and learners attend to study key skills and technical certificates. Kita delivers the on-the-job training elements of these qualifications. Kita also offers Train to Gain provision through a partnership with Train to Gain London and Train to Gain South East.

Kita was inspected in 2006 when it was judged to be inadequate overall. Leadership and management, equality of opportunity and quality improvement were inadequate as was business, administration and law. The provision for engineering and manufacturing technologies was judged to be satisfactory. At the reinspection in 2007, all areas were judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

What progress has Kita made in improving timely and success rates for learners?	Reasonable progress
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Kita's latest data for 2007/08 indicates that both success and timely success rates have improved since the previous inspection. Overall success rates for business administration apprentices have improved well from 57% in 2005/06 to 67% for 2006/07 and 82% in 2007/08. The timely success rate during the same period also shows a significant improvement from 47% to 66%. Engineering learners' overall success rates have improved satisfactorily during this period with Kita's data indicating a rise from 59% to 64%. Timely success rates have improved satisfactorily from 21% to 64%. The number of engineering apprentices in training during this period was very low.

Following the previous inspection, Kita has implemented effective measures to improve success rates. They have rectified areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection, including improving their assessment practice.

Quality of provision

How well have assessment practices been improved for all learners?	Reasonable progress
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At the previous inspection, inspectors found that Kita made insufficient judgements about learners' knowledge and understanding of their area of learning. Observation was not used sufficiently to assess engineering learners. Since the previous inspection, Kita has made reasonable progress with assessment practices. Regular standardisation meetings are more successful in identifying areas that need improving and in setting and reviewing actions. The provider has introduced new and extended preliminary induction procedures which are used to plan the learners' assessment schedules more effectively. It has developed and implemented a curriculum development manual which explains how knowledge and understanding, and literacy and numeracy are assessed. Action plans record clear and specific targets relating to evidence that learners need to collect. Arrangements for observations in the workplace of engineering learners by Kita assessors have increased to a satisfactory rate. Some witness testimonies undertaken by workplace supervisors do not have value judgements relating to learners' knowledge and understanding. Assessors have identified this issue and are currently developing plans to improve this process. Kita is also currently piloting a project where portfolio evidence is collected and assessed through electronic formats.

How well has target-setting improved for learners?	Reasonable progress
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Kita has made reasonable progress to improve the target-setting for learners. Targets are now precisely set out in learners' individual learning plans (ILP) and include detailed short-term and interim targets, for example, key skills achievement dates. The quality of targets has improved with good examples of targets recorded that are specific, measurable and timely. During the regular learners' progress meetings, targets are reviewed, amended and updated. Employers now participate more fully in learner progress reviews and receive copies of the learner review documents.

Leadership and management

What progress has been made in implementing the skills for life strategy?	Significant progress
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Kita's strategy and arrangements to identify and support the skills for life needs of learners is much improved. Staff are well qualified and experienced with three members of staff holding skills for life qualifications, one at level 4 and two at level 2. All assessors receive intensive individual support in the delivery of skills for life. Additional staff development needs are identified very well through the observation of training and assessment process. Learners' needs are assessed thoroughly. All learners are initially assessed and, if appropriate, continue to diagnostic assessment.

Re-testing takes place towards the end of the learner's programme where progress is clearly demonstrated. Kita has modified and developed the structure of their individual learning plans which now include a section for recording assessment results and skills for life targets. However, the recording of progress against targets is not consistent. The provider produces a very useful series of curriculum development skills for life and key skills booklets for communications and application of number. They also produce an ICT booklet for engineering learners. These booklets are used to monitor progress against targets. They include formal session plans and worksheets to assist with individual coaching.

What progress has been made to ensure management information is now accurate?	Reasonable progress
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At the time of the previous inspection, Kita had introduced a new electronic database and was having difficulties in providing accurate data on learners' achievements. It has made reasonable progress and data is now accurate. The management information system produces a wide range of learner information. This includes more reliable data on learners' success and achievement rates. Kita also collates and analyses comparative achievement data for gender, ethnicity and disability very well. Numbers for learners from minority ethnic groups and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very small.

How well has Kita continued to develop its quality improvement system?	Reasonable progress
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Since the previous inspection, Kita has placed a strong focus on improving learners' experience. Reasonable progress has been made to further develop the organisation's quality assurance and improvement systems. A clear quality improvement strategy and related procedures are implemented. A comprehensive quality calendar formally records the procedures which check the quality of all learner activities. Arrangements for monitoring and observing assessments and training are well planned and take place regularly. However, there is too much focus on teaching and not enough on learning. Kita has identified improvements required for the format of the observation records. Actions from the observations for staff to develop their professional skills are clearly recorded. These are reviewed during their regular meetings with management.

Self-assessment and improvement planning

What progress has been made to ensure the self-assessment process and development plan drives forward improvements?	Reasonable progress
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The self-assessment process is inclusive of the views of learners, employers and staff. Staff contribute fully to the production and evaluation of the self-assessment report. The annual quality improvement plan identifies clearly the organisation's targets and uses a traffic light system to indicate progress against targets. It links

well to the self-assessment report. Thorough procedures are in place to review the self-assessment report. Formal reviews take place twice a year and the quality improvement plan is reviewed regularly through formal management meetings, quality meetings and bi-monthly standardisation meetings.