

# Pure Innovations Limited

---

Inspection date

13 December 2007

---

Inspection number

317193

## Contents

Background information .....	3
Inspection judgements .....	3
Scope of the inspection.....	3
Description of the provider .....	4
Summary of grades awarded.....	5
Overall judgement .....	6
Effectiveness of Provision.....	6
Capacity to improve .....	6
Key strengths .....	6
Key areas for improvement .....	6
Main findings.....	7
Achievement and standards .....	7
Quality of provision .....	8
Leadership and management .....	9
Equality of opportunity .....	9
What participants like.....	11
What participants think could improve .....	11

## Background information

### Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

#### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

### Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on participants and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Preparation for life and work

Pure Innovations work in partnership with three organisations to deliver the Workstep programme. These subcontractors are Training into Employment, Oldham, Wigan Supported Employment Service and Bury Supported Employment Service.

Training into Employment, Oldham was inspected in November 2007 and was therefore not included in this inspection.

## Description of the provider

1. Pure Innovations Limited (Pure Innovations) is based in Stockport. It is a not-for-profit company that supports vulnerable people with a wide range of disabilities to move into paid employment. The company was formed in 2005, and took over responsibility from Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council to develop and improve supported employment. Work Link, part of Pure Innovations, is a Supported Employment Service, and is the lead provider in a consortium to deliver the Workstep programme. Three subcontractors are also involved in the delivery. Delivery of the programme is based upon the supported employment model. The occupational fields in which the participants work are mainly retail, cleaning, catering and administrative roles. All jobs are in open paid employment with public and private sector employers within the local authority areas covered by the consortium. This provision accounts for approximately 6% of the company's overall business. The company has a board of directors responsible for strategic direction and policy, and are supported by a team of senior managers and staff at an operational level to deliver the programme.
2. Currently 156 participants are enrolled and are funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Of these, 88 participants are full-time and 68 are part-time. Around 60 of the participants are attached to Pure Innovations in Stockport, 20 are with Training into Employment, 46 are with Wigan Supported Employment Service and 30 with are with Bury Supported Employment Service. Pure Innovations works with participants who have experienced particular difficulties in accessing the employment market. Approximately 59% of participants have a learning disability, 19% have a mental health disability and the remainder have physical health disabilities including visual, hearing and neurological conditions.
3. In Stockport unemployment is 2.5%. Approximately 4.3% of the population are from minority ethnic groups. In Wigan unemployment is 3.2%. People from minority ethnic groups account for around 1.3% of the population. In Oldham the unemployment rate is 3.7%. Oldham's population includes 13.8% of people from minority ethnic groups. More than 14% of the population have an illness or disability. In Bury unemployment is 2.8%. Some 28% of the population have no qualifications. Approximately 6% of the population are from minority ethnic groups.

## Summary of grades awarded

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

## Sector subject area

Preparation for life and work	Outstanding: Grade 1
-------------------------------	----------------------

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of Provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

4. The overall effectiveness of Pure Innovation's Workstep provision is outstanding. Achievements and standards, the quality of the Workstep provision and guidance and support are all outstanding. The leadership and management of Workstep are outstanding as is equality of opportunity and social inclusion.

### Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

5. The provider has not been inspected previously but has demonstrated it is in a good position to make improvements. Pure Innovations has a clear and strong commitment to continuously improve the quality of provision. Initiatives have been introduced to foster the right ethos and culture among staff, to engage employers and encourage partnerships and networking, to provide relevant training for senior managers to monitor and manage performance, including that of the subcontractors, and training for staff at an operational level to improve aspects of programme delivery. Many of these actions have had a positive impact on progression into unsupported employment, and the development of good employability skills. The quality improvement arrangements are effective, and staff have a good understanding of them. Regular audits are used effectively to identify improvements, and actions are put in place quickly. The self-assessment arrangements are very thorough and inclusive. All staff are involved in the preparation of the self-assessment report and the use of data and evaluations from a range of sources is particularly good. The report is highly evaluative and critical. Action plans are detailed and monitored closely. Self-assessment is regarded by staff as an important tool for improving the quality of provision, and staff are proactive in identifying areas for change, and introducing improvements.

## Key strengths

- Very good progression into unsupported employment
- Good development of participants' employability skills
- Outstanding individual development planning
- Very good matching of participants' and employers' needs
- Excellent support to overcome barriers to employment
- Very good strategic and operational management
- Highly effective employer engagement
- Very good promotion of equality of opportunity

## Key areas for improvement

- No significant areas for improvement identified

## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

#### Outstanding: Grade 1

6. Progression into open sustained employment is very good at 23% since the contract started in 2002-03. Progression into open employment for 2007-08 is excellent at 48%. This represents nine months of the current contract year. Over the previous three years from 2005-06 to 2007-08, 61% of participants have progressed into unsupported employment. Achievement of employment opportunities for participants is outstanding. On average participants spend only seven weeks in the pre-employment jobsearch and development planning stage before progressing into a placement or employment. The provider monitors the performance of different groups of participants effectively. The self-assessment report also identified achievement and standards as good.
7. Attendance is very good and closely monitored by employers and employment officers to ensure participants develop the right attitude and work ethic. Participants enjoy their work and demonstrate much enthusiasm and high levels of motivation. The health and safety of participants is central to the risk assessment procedures that are carried out before a participant begins a work placement or employment.
8. Development of participants' employability and personal skills is very good. Staff work hard to identify work placements and employment opportunities that are relevant to participants' job goals and work aspirations. Volunteering placements and work trials are used very successfully to develop participants' skills relevant to their ambitions and to enable them to gain employment. Short courses such as first aid, fire training, ladder use, resident welfare, manual handling and food hygiene are used very well to improve and develop participants' occupational skills, confidence, motivation, team working and communication. The training courses provided are highly appropriate to participants' job needs and enable them to progress towards sustainable employment. Many participants achieve a wide range of accredited qualifications relevant to their employment role such as customer service, care, electrical installation and business administration. Particularly effective use is made of employers' training programmes. Employers are sensitive to the needs of participants and where necessary ensure that training is carried out individually for participants rather than in a group. Participants make good progress within work roles and develop skills well. In one employer the participant had progressed to the extent of providing training to newly employed participants. Participants are actively encouraged to develop their literacy, numeracy and language skills. Employment officers effectively signpost participants to relevant local support and encourage them to gain qualifications to help them further progress in their job role.

## Quality of provision

### Outstanding: Grade 1

9. Individual development planning is outstanding. An extensive job analysis is undertaken which goes beyond core work routines and addresses wider issues related to participants such as physical and sensory demands, potential health and safety aspects, flexibility of employers to change work routines, productivity targets and social needs of employees. Staff follow this by carrying out a detailed job analysis of specific duties and tasks of the participants' job role. Details from the job role analysis are then used to plan clear and concise action points against which participants are trained and assessed as part of a detailed training plan. Employment officers provide highly effective coaching to participants in the workplace, working alongside and assessing participants daily. Assessment documents clearly show if participants are able to complete tasks independently, through verbal and physical prompts and gestures. Assessment documents are used very effectively as part of review processes with employers to indicate participants' abilities to meet job specifications. Most staff have been trained in the processes of systematic instruction which has been adapted by Pure Innovations. The review process is particularly thorough and details actions related to performance, training and career development and targets for development. However, not all subcontractors have review procedures in the same depth. Job analysis is also used to develop relevant learning resources to aid learning of job roles.
10. Programmes and activities are very good at matching and meeting both participants' and employers' needs. Pure Innovations place equal priority on both employers' and participants' needs. Pure Innovations and subcontractors have contact with a very good range of employers and vocational areas. Detailed initial assessment and job analysis activities ensure that participants' needs are met in both seeking and finding employment. Staff make good use of initial assessment results for both advising participants on jobsearch activities and for approaching employers for potential vacancies. Staff have excellent relationships with employers and build productive links with employers' staff. Staff negotiate with employers to make adjustments to work roles to better match participants' existing health conditions and disabilities, enabling them to sustain employment. Work attendance patterns are planned in specific detail, with incremental attendance in accordance with development of confidence and skills. One subcontractor uses three measures of information disclosure as part of their development planning process for sharing with others although this good practice has not been shared across the consortium.
11. Support is excellent at breaking down barriers and providing access to permanent employment. Staff routinely work with carers, family members and other support workers to overcome barriers to employment. Some employers also have very good links with participants' families. There are frequent examples of home visits initially and throughout the period of supported employment. Staff support participants by liaison with doctors, solicitors and other external support agencies where necessary. Staff use some of this information to support participants' continuation of employment. Pure Innovations improve employers' knowledge of

participants specific disabilities by bringing in specialists to talk to employers and to improve their knowledge of how certain conditions may impact on training needs and work routines.

12. Staff provide particularly good vocational support to participants new to an employment role by acting as buddy coaches. Employment staff are trained in the participants' job roles by the employer and provide training to participants' in the workplace from as little as one day to three months' support. Some staff work shifts in employer's premises to gain greater insight into the job role which helps to better inform the job analysis before participants' enter employment. Staff use working interviews very well to provide participants with the opportunity to demonstrate their attributes for the job. Workplace supervisors provide very good support to participants by developing their essential work skills for example, telling the time. Excellent use is made of photographic job prompts to enable participants with memory retention issues to learn and consolidate job functions. Staff undertake a travel assessment and accompany participants on journeys until they are appropriately familiar with differing transport methods and routes. Staff provide personal taxi services also, where required. Staff provide good initial advice and guidance enabling participants to make effective job seeking decisions. Highly effective use is made of accessibility funds such as access to work. The ratio of staff to participants is high, particularly in the early stages of supported employment. Many of the positive features of provision have been improved through the self-assessment report and action plans.

## Leadership and management

Outstanding: Grade 1

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1

13. Strategic and operational planning is very good. The direction and objectives of the company are clear and well communicated to all staff. Strategic objectives are translated into meaningful individual and team targets for staff, and the performance of staff in meeting these targets is managed effectively. A participative board supports senior managers with direction and decision-making. The values and culture within the company provide a clear focus for all staff to embrace social responsibility and support disadvantaged people to gain work. The company is represented locally, regionally and nationally, and uses all forums particularly well to inform and influence policy and practice. Good initiatives have been introduced to encourage the subcontractors to work together, share best practice and take ownership and responsibility for improvements. Communication both internally and externally is good. The management information system is particularly well used to monitor and manage progression and performance. It generates meaningful reports that are used effectively to plan actions. Senior staff have completed management training to enhance their skills and performance management techniques. A relatively new staff appraisal scheme, supplemented by established supervision practice, takes place to support and monitor staff performance. Most staff have completed some very relevant training to support them in their role, for example, advocacy and protecting vulnerable

adults. Positive changes have been made to the staff induction but these are fairly new and the process is still evolving.

14. Engagement of employers is highly effective. Through the induction process staff complete training in sales and marketing, which helps them to communicate effectively and better understand the needs of the employers. Employers value and benefit from the commitment and expertise of the staff, and the very good working relationships that are developed through regular contact and support that is provided on the employers' premises. Employers have also been supported to network and share good practice.
15. Promotion of equality of opportunity is very good. Several initiatives to raise awareness, widen participation and promote social inclusion are particularly effective. For example, a project was implemented to encourage large national employers to embrace diversity and employ people from a range of disadvantaged groups. Some of these employers have since changed their recruitment and retention policies to enable them to more easily employ people with disabilities. Positive imagery is used to challenge stereotypes and promote anti-discriminatory practice. Equal opportunities data is very well analysed and trends are monitored thoroughly. The provider has good evidence of engaging participants in activities relevant to staying healthy, keeping safe and contributing to the community.
16. Arrangements for quality assurance are comprehensive. Most policies and procedures are in place and thorough, although some are relatively new. The subcontractors are monitored effectively and quality performance reviews are carried out annually. These are used very well as a tool to improve the quality of provision. Audits and checklists are used well to monitor compliance and ensure consistent practice. Feedback from participants, carers, employers, supporting agencies and staff are collected, analysed and used to inform improvements. Observations of staff completing a range of tasks are carried out and linked to staff development, although no clear criteria for making graded judgements are in place, and the exercise does not involve cross collaboration between the subcontractors. The self-assessment process is inclusive and the resulting report is critical, evaluative and action focused. Inspection findings confirmed most of the strengths but did not match the areas for improvement.

## What participants like:

- Support
- Being trained by employment officers
- 'Increase in my confidence'
- Making friends at work
- Earning money
- 'I can think about getting my own place now'

## What participants think could improve:

- Nothing