

TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT
DECEMBER 2000

ADULT LEARNING INSPECTORATE REINSPECTION MAY
2002

University of Derby, High Peak College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based training within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- ◆ work-based training for all people over 16
- ◆ provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- ◆ the University for Industry's **learnirect** provision
- ◆ adult and community learning
- ◆ learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
- ◆ education and training in prisons, at the invitation of her majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Grading

In summarising their judgements about the quality of provision in curriculum or occupational areas and about the quality of leadership and management, including quality assurance and equality of opportunity, inspectors use a five-point scale. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- ◆ grade 1 – outstanding
- ◆ grade 2 – good
- ◆ grade 3 – satisfactory
- ◆ grade 4 – unsatisfactory
- ◆ grade 5 – very weak.

SUMMARY

The original inspection of University of Derby, High Peak College was carried out by the Training Standards Council's inspectors. The inspection resulted in less than satisfactory grades being awarded for business administration, foundation for work, equal opportunities, trainee support, management of training and quality assurance. These areas have been reinspected against the requirements of the *Common Inspection Framework* by the Adult Learning Inspectorate, which replaced the Training Standards Council on 1 April 2001. The sections of the original report dealing with business administration, foundation for work, equal opportunities, trainee support, management of training and quality assurance have been replaced with the findings of the reinspection. Also, the report summary, report introduction and introduction to the inspection findings have been updated and reflect the findings of the reinspection. Sections of the report, dealing with areas which have not been reinspected, have been left in their original form. The amended inspection report is published on the Adult Learning Inspectorate's website (www.ali.gov.uk).

The University of Derby, High Peak College provides satisfactory training in engineering and hospitality. Resources for off-the-job training are good, but employers are not sufficiently involved with training in hospitality and internal verification is poor in engineering. Training in business administration was less than satisfactory at the original inspection, with insufficient assessment in the workplace. At reinspection, business administration training is satisfactory. There is well-planned off-the-job training and learners work in good well-resourced working environments. Training in hair and beauty is well planned and there are good progress review and assessment practices. At the original inspection, training in foundation for work was less than satisfactory. There was insufficient work-based assessment and training did not meet learners' individual learning and support needs. At reinspection, foundation for work training is satisfactory, with good well-planned teaching. At the original inspection, equality of opportunity was insufficiently promoted to employers. Although equality of opportunity is now satisfactory, there is poor monitoring of employers' equal opportunities arrangements. In most occupational areas, learners received inadequate progress reviews and individual training plans were not used effectively. At reinspection, trainee support is satisfactory. At the original inspection, co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training was less than satisfactory. Management of training is satisfactory at reinspection, with good staff development and involvement in strategic and management decision-making. Arrangements for quality assurance at both the original inspection and reinspection are inadequate for work-based learning. Although there has been some progress made since the original inspection, this has been slow in rectifying the weaknesses in quality assurance.

GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Engineering	3
Business administration	4
Hospitality	3
Hair & beauty	2
Foundation for work	4

GENERIC AREAS	GRADE
Equal opportunities	4
Trainee support	4
Management of training	4
Quality assurance	4

REINSPECTION	GRADE
Business administration	3
Foundation for work	3

REINSPECTION	GRADE
Equal opportunities	3
Trainee support	3
Management of training	3
Quality assurance	4

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ good off-the-job training in most areas
- ◆ very good work placements in foundation for work
- ◆ good systems for assessments and progress reviews in hair and beauty
- ◆ particularly effective complaints procedure
- ◆ wide range of pastoral and specialist support

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor monitoring of employers' equal opportunities arrangements
- ◆ weak progress reviews for some learners
- ◆ inadequate use of data
- ◆ lack of an established system for quality assurance
- ◆ insufficient monitoring of work-based learning and assessment

INTRODUCTION

1. High Peak College became part of the University of Derby in August 1998. The youth and adult training division is based at the Buxton campus and administers all the work-based learning programmes. The division is staffed by a head of division, who reports to an assistant dean of the University. At the original inspection, the head of division was supported by three field officers, a work-placement support officer and two administrators. The staff are responsible for finding and maintaining work placements. At the original inspection, field officers carried out monitoring visits for learners on these work placements. At reinspection, the field officers have been replaced by a team of assessors and trainers who work for the relevant schools of the university. The team of assessors assess and monitor learners in the workplace. In total, there are over 5,000 further education students at the Buxton campus. At the original inspection, the contract for work-based learning was with Stockport and High Peak Training and Enterprise Council (TEC). The university also had contracts with the Employment Service for the New Deal in Stockport, Buxton and North Derbyshire. At reinspection, the contract with the former TEC had been taken over by Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). There were no New Deal clients in training at the time of the original inspection or at reinspection. At the original inspection, there were 123 young people on work-based learning programmes in engineering, business administration, hospitality, health and beauty, retailing and warehousing and foundation for work. At reinspection, there are 86 young people on work-based learning programmes. Retailing and warehousing did not form part of the inspection, as there were too few learners in these areas.

2. Derbyshire is a rural area, with some large centres of population, the biggest of which is the city of Derby. The total population of Derbyshire is just over 728,000. The population of the High Peak area is 88,900. Just over 10 per cent of the population works in agriculture. Jobs in property and business provide work for 17 per cent of the local community, with retailing providing work for 13.4 per cent and production for 13.1 per cent. In November 2000, unemployment rates stood at 3.8 per cent in Derbyshire and 2.6 per cent in the High Peak area, compared with the national average of 3.3 per cent. The unemployment rates for Derbyshire and the High Peak area in October 2001 are 3 per cent and 2.1 per cent, respectively, compared with the national rate of 3.6 per cent. Less than 1 per cent of the population of High Peak, and approximately 4 per cent of the population of Derbyshire, are from minority ethnic groups.

3. At the original inspection, 64 per cent of 16 year olds in Derbyshire were in full-time education and training, with 66 per cent in High Peak. This compares with an average of 69 per cent across England. This has increased in 1999-2000 to 68 per cent of 16 year olds in Derbyshire being in full-time education and training. The national rate has also increased to 71 per cent. In 2000, the proportion of school leavers in the High Peak area achieving five or more general certificates of

secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 50 per cent, compared with the national average of 49.2 per cent. The proportion of school leavers achieving five or more GCSEs at grade C or above in the High Peak area in 2001 was 50 per cent, compared with the national average of 47.9 per cent.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

4. The University of Derby, High Peak College revised its self-assessment report immediately before the original inspection, as the original report did not take sufficient account of the work-based element of training. The second report was drawn together by the head of the work-based learning division, in consultation with heads of further education programmes. A draft report was circulated for additional comments, which were incorporated into the report. The self-assessment report did not follow the guidelines in *Raising the Standard*. At the original inspection, strengths and weaknesses were allocated to inappropriate areas of the report in many instances. Most of the grades in the self-assessment report were inaccurate. An updated self-assessment report was written in February 2002 by the head of division. At reinspection, inspectors judged self-assessment to be satisfactory.

5. The original inspection was carried out by a team of seven inspectors, who spent a total of 28 days with the university in December 2000. The team worked with a team of Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) inspectors during this time, sharing information and each other's findings. They jointly inspected the occupational areas of business administration, hospitality and foundation for work. Inspectors interviewed 46 learners and 35 workplace supervisors and other employers' staff. They visited 32 work placements. Fifteen interviews were conducted with managers at employers providing on-the-job training and 27 had taken place with staff from the university. Forty-eight learners' files and 39 portfolios of evidence were reviewed. Other documents reviewed included contracts with the TEC, external verifiers' reports, health and safety and equal opportunities policies, paperwork relating to quality assurance, minutes of meetings and promotional materials. Inspectors observed and graded nine learning sessions and observed one learner's assessment.

6. At reinspection, a team of four inspectors spent a total of 16 days at the University of Derby, High Peak College in May 2002. Inspectors interviewed 14 learners and 10 workplace supervisors and other employers' staff. They visited 11 work placements. Twenty-one interviews were conducted with staff from the university. Twenty-two learners' files and 20 portfolios of evidence were reviewed. Inspectors examined other documents, including external verifiers' reports, equal opportunities policies, paperwork relating to quality assurance, minutes of meetings and promotional materials. Inspectors observed and graded four learning sessions.

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Grades awarded to learning sessions at the original inspection

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Engineering		1				1
Business administration			1			1
Hospitality		2				2
Hair & beauty		1				1
Foundation for work		2	2			4
Total	0	6	3	0	0	9

Grades awarded to learning sessions at reinspection

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Business administration		1	1			2
Foundation for work	1		1			2
Total	1	1	2			4

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Engineering

Grade 3

7. There are 37 trainees in engineering. Of these, seven are working towards a national vocational qualification (NVQ) at level 2 in engineering manufacturing, 24 are working towards NVQs in vehicle mechanical and electrical systems at level 2, and six are working towards NVQs in vehicle and electrical systems at level 3. Nineteen trainees are foundation modern apprentices, 16 are on other work-based learning for young people and there are two advanced modern apprentices. Thirty of the trainees are employed, in a range of small and medium-sized companies. Several local employers provide on-the-job training. Trainees attend the university on day release for training in specific skills, assessment and training in theory. In engineering manufacturing, training for the level 2 NVQ is provided and assessed within the university. In motor vehicle work, training for NVQs at levels 2 and 3 is given and assessed both on and off the job, and supplemented by evidence of competence gained from the workplace. Most motor vehicle trainees are able to obtain evidence for their level 3 NVQ in the normal course of their work. Retention rates have been low in motor vehicle training, but are improving. Of the 1998-99 intake, 40 per cent left early without a qualification. In 1999-2000, this proportion had decreased to 25 per cent. There are five staff involved in work-based learning. The self-assessment report failed to identify strengths and weaknesses accurately. Inspectors agreed with one strength, regarding trainees' portfolios, and one weakness, regarding internal verification. Other strengths and weaknesses were considered to be more relevant to generic areas or to represent no more than normal practice. Inspectors identified other strengths and weaknesses and awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ excellent portfolios of evidence
- ◆ good resources for off-the-job training

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ inadequate internal verification in motor vehicle training
- ◆ late introduction of key skills
- ◆ insufficiently demanding targets for trainees

8. Motor vehicle trainees who have no employer or work placement when they join undertake a 19-week full-time training course at the university, during which efforts are made to find them work placements. A large number of trainees are offered a job by their work-placement provider later in their programme. Employers are involved in the training programme and give good training, although this is not always effectively planned and fully recorded. Most employers have well-equipped workshops, with good resources. Trainees are visited every six

weeks in the workplace by the field officer for monitoring, and have a formal progress review carried out by university staff every three months. Trainees and employers expressed satisfaction with the training. Portfolios are of a high standard. Time is available for trainees to work on portfolios both at the university and at work. At the university, individual learning sessions are available for trainees who need assistance with their portfolios. Records of tasks undertaken are neatly written out and the trainees add details to substantiate their knowledge and understanding of the evidence. In some portfolios, trainees have made innovative use of digital photographs to record particular aspects of evidence. Portfolios are up to date and contain monitoring documents which accurately reflect trainees' progress. Trainees' evidence has been cross-referenced to the appropriate units of the NVQ.

9. Resources in engineering are good. The university's workshops are well equipped and there are enough well-qualified staff to give the training. In the motor vehicle department, trainees work on both modern and older vehicles, and the department has up-to-date diagnostic equipment and other specialist equipment. The practical training focuses on equipment and processes which are not available at the trainees' places of work. There is a well-equipped department for the engineering manufacturing foundation course, with additional resources for electrical appreciation, robotics and welding. There are appropriate classrooms which are used for training in theory, for study and for portfolio-building.

10. In motor vehicle training, there is no detailed sampling plan for internal verification which covers all units of the NVQ and all trainees. There are no records of some observations. There is little internal verification of any observed assessments which take place in the workplace. Portfolios are all sampled at the end of the programme, which can result in insufficient time for trainees to remedy any problems or for staff to correct any poor assessment practices. Assessors are not given written feedback on their assessment procedures. There is insufficient assessment through workplace observation.

11. Key skills were introduced to the training at a late stage, and some trainees have had to cover key skills at the end of their programme. There were further delays when the university changed to a new awarding body and trainees were waiting for new paperwork and standards. Trainees have missed many opportunities for gathering evidence for key skills both at work and at the university. Some modern apprentices left the programme after achieving their NVQ, without ever having started their key skills. Key skills are now covered more appropriately.

12. Trainees are expected to obtain their NVQ in the length of time the university plans that they will be on the programme. There is little opportunity for more able trainees to achieve the NVQ more quickly. At progress reviews and monitoring visits, the university's staff do not set targets for the trainees or discuss in detail the progress the trainee is making towards the NVQ. Trainees who can achieve their qualifications more quickly are not encouraged to do so, nor are they given

support to enable them to do so from those involved in the process of training and assessment.

Business administration

Grade 3

13. At the original inspection, there were six foundation modern apprentices and eight advanced modern apprentices, working towards NVQs at level 2 and 3 in business administration. At reinspection, there are five foundation modern apprentices and three advanced modern apprentices. At the original inspection, three members of staff recruited learners onto the learning programmes, provided induction and arranged suitable work placements. They also visited learners in the workplace every three months to carry out progress reviews. At reinspection, a work-placement officer arranges the work placements. Learners are recruited onto the programme when a suitable job or work placement is secured. Learners receive an induction into the university and the occupational area. An assessor visits learners in the workplace every three months to monitor their progress, and monthly to carry out assessments. Employers are spread over a wide rural area and cover a broad range of occupations, including a public school, a firm of solicitors and a bakery. All learners attend day-release training every week at the Buxton campus for NVQ and key skills assessment and training. In addition, they take information-technology courses as part of their key skills training. Training and assessment are provided by a team from the university's business and technology unit. At the original inspection, 64 per cent of learners were employed. At reinspection, none of the foundation modern apprentices and all three advanced modern apprentices are employed. At the original inspection, the self-assessment report identified strengths and weaknesses which were more appropriate to the generic areas or were no more than normal practice. Inspectors identified two strengths and two weaknesses and awarded a lower grade than that given in the self-assessment report.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ insufficient assessment in the workplace
- ◆ lack of involvement by employers in NVQ training

14. Following the original inspection, the university appointed an assessor to conduct assessments in the workplace through direct observation of learners' activities. These visits take place each month and the observation records provide significant evidence in learners' portfolios. The original weakness relating to assessments in the workplace no longer applies. The regular assessor contact with employers has improved employers' awareness and understanding of the NVQ and modern apprenticeship programme. Employer involvement is now satisfactory.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ well-planned off-the-job training

- ◆ particularly flexible training programme
- ◆ good well-resourced working environments

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor achievement rates
- ◆ weak assessment planning

15. There is well-planned off-the-job training, which is carried out on a day-release basis. The day is divided into a computer training session, NVQ training, portfolio development, key skills sessions and a personal tutorial. There is a clear and detailed syllabus for each term, which identifies the NVQ units to be achieved and the theory sessions to be provided. Trainers have written individual learning packs for each of the NVQ units to support the learners in developing their portfolios. They have also produced key skills workbooks which are used in the weekly sessions on key skills development. These workbooks and learning packs are well presented and cover all the required material appropriately. Trainers have recently developed a website which holds NVQ information and training materials. This can be accessed by learners from the university site, from their work placement or from home. Learners have good access to computers and training materials are of a high standard. All learners work towards additional computing qualifications as part of their NVQ framework, and a customer service training package.

16. The training is flexible to meet the learning needs of individual learners. Particular training requirements identified by employers or the assessor can be tackled quickly and effectively. Relevant training was provided following a request by employers for training in telephone techniques for learners required to use the telephone as part of their job. Another learner has taken the customer service training package earlier than planned to help develop confidence in dealing with difficult customers at work.

17. Learners are employed or are on work placements in excellent well-resourced working environments which provide a wide range of administration activities. Learners are able to carry out work which covers all the NVQ requirements. Advanced modern apprentices are all employed at a supervisory level. Learners are well supported by their colleagues and workplace supervisors. Learners are encouraged and trained to take on responsibilities to further their development, such as planning a customer event or setting up and maintaining a spreadsheet of specific information. Employers support the learners both in their work role and through their qualification. Learners make valuable contributions to their company. One learner who could not afford the expected standard of dress in the company, was provided with a suit by the employer.

18. The average retention rate for the last three years is 72 per cent though this figure does fluctuate widely throughout the year. Learners' reasons for leaving the training programme are analysed and many leave to gain employment. No learner has achieved the full advanced or foundation modern apprenticeship framework

over the last three years. While there has been satisfactory NVQ achievement, learners do not achieve their key skills qualifications. All learners are entered for the application of number key skill at level 2, despite many being assessed at level 1 or below in the key skills assessment. Some learners make slow progress.

19. Assessment planning is weak. Learners collect evidence for all their units at the same time rather than individual units. Assessors do not encourage learners to work towards or complete individual units. There is insufficient planning of the assessment of individual units until late into the training programme. Many learners are near their completion date with insufficient units having been assessed. One learner working towards an NVQ at level 3 has been on the training programme for 18 months and has had only three units assessed. Other learners working towards NVQs at level 2, who are on a one-year training programme, have had only one unit assessed after seven months.

Hospitality

Grade 3

20. There are 18 trainees in hospitality, taking NVQs in food preparation and cookery at levels 2 and 3. Six trainees are on a modern apprenticeship programme, 11 are national trainees and one trainee is on a further training option. Ninety per cent of trainees are employed. They work in hotels and catering establishments, spread over a large geographical area. Training is carried out both on and off the job. Trainees attend university on day release one or two days each week during term time and attend classes with other part-time students. The off-the-job training facilities include two production kitchens, two training kitchens, a pastry kitchen, a larder and three restaurants. All assessment is carried out in the university. Some witness testimony from the workplace is used. The university has staff who understand the hospitality industry, and who are suitably qualified to carry out assessment and internal verification. Trainees are offered additional support for identified training needs. Trainees are visited in the workplace every six weeks by a field officer. The retention rate over the past three years has risen from 50 per cent to 75 per cent. The achievement rate, based on past years when recruitment was low, has been between 40 and 45 per cent. This year, the number of trainees recruited has increased significantly and the current retention rate is high. The self-assessment report identified several strengths and weaknesses. Inspectors agreed with some of the strengths and considered that some of the weaknesses were being dealt with by appropriate action plans. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ excellent off-the-job training resources
- ◆ good work placements

WEAKNESSES

◆ insufficient work-based assessment

21. The trainees benefit from excellent training facilities within the university. The kitchens provide a realistic working environment and there are good opportunities for trainees to be assessed there. The training is well planned and the standard of the training is good. Trainees are given constructive feedback from training sessions and appropriate advice on planning for the next session. Trainees move between the different kitchens, including a classroom-training kitchen, to gain the experience required for different units of their qualification. Trainees are taught to work in a safe, hygienic and professional manner and they learn to work to deadlines by providing a service in three restaurants. There is a good range of learning materials, including recipe sheets and detailed, well-illustrated handouts. There is also a well-equipped learning centre where trainees can use books, periodicals, computer packages and the Internet to help them with their theory work.

22. Trainees work in good work placements, which provide suitable experience. The work placements have high standards of customer care and are frequently monitored by the university's field officers to ensure that health and safety requirements are met. Many of the employers have in-house training programmes and offer trainees useful qualifications which complement their NVQ training. Employers are supportive of trainees in terms of providing appropriate equipment and in arranging work rotas to ensure that trainees can attend off-the-job training sessions.

23. There is no work-based assessment. Individual training plans are, in most cases, planned around the start and end dates of the university's year and do not recognise that trainees can progress at different rates. In some workplaces, there are qualified assessors and staff who have expressed an interest in assessing but the university has not responded to this. Employers provide some witness testimony. In some workplaces, trainees carry out tasks which require them to show advanced skills but there is no mechanism to use this as evidence of their competence. There are poor links between the training which takes place within the workplace and that given by the university. Some trainees have structured training schedules and others are taught as opportunities arise in their day-to-day work. The university is not fully aware of these learning opportunities. Visits to the workplace are carried out every six weeks by a field officer, who talks with both the trainee and the employer. These visits are adequately recorded on a tick-box sheet and there is some reference to the progress review undertaken by the trainer each term. The field officer is not occupationally competent to assess in the workplace.

Hair & beauty

Grade 2

24. There are 17 hairdressing and beauty therapy trainees, of whom seven are advanced modern apprentices and ten are foundation modern apprentices. Fifteen

are working towards level 2 NVQs in hairdressing, one towards a level 3 in hairdressing and one towards a level 2 in beauty therapy. Most trainees attend off-the-job training once a week. The rest of their time is spent in their salons, where they receive on-the-job training. The programme is managed and taught by a team of two programme co-ordinators, three trainer/assessors, two facilitators, and a field officer who visits the trainees in their salons to carry out progress reviews every six weeks. Trainees are also visited in their workplace, at least every four weeks, by a trainer/assessor, who carries out work-based assessments. Trainees are given additional learning support. The self-assessment report was accurate in identifying internal verification procedures as a strength. Other strengths were found to be no more than normal practice or were more appropriate to generic areas. Inspectors identified three other strengths. One of the weaknesses identified in the report has been rectified. Other weaknesses were more appropriate to generic areas. Inspectors awarded a higher grade than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ well-planned off the job training
- ◆ flexible training programme
- ◆ highly effective work-based assessments and progress reviews
- ◆ thorough procedures for internal verification

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor conditions in training salons
- ◆ poor retention rates

25. Off-the-job training is well planned, with a suitable balance of demonstrations and practical workshops. The theory sessions take into account the individual learning needs of trainees. Two well-equipped training salons are used, each containing an adequate range of portable equipment. The salons' reception area has retail facilities and there is an appointments system, both of which are used for training and assessing reception skills. The salons are busy, with a good range of clients for trainees to practice on. Trainers, employers and cutting specialists give interesting demonstrations as part of the practical workshops and manufacturers sometimes hold seminars in the use of their products, which reinforce trainees' learning and keep staff updated on new developments and techniques. Some innovative training methods are used, which link theory to practical skills effectively. Group sizes are small and there is both an assessor and a facilitator in attendance. The facilitator provides appropriate individual support to trainees as required. Trainees' progress towards achieving their qualifications is shown on a chart in the salon area and they receive a certificate for each unit of the NVQ they achieve, which improves their motivation. Key skills are fully integrated with the coursework and trainees are given workbooks which encourage them to gather evidence from their regular activities in the salon, such as the handling of stock.

26. The programme is flexible and meets the needs of individual trainees well. For example, some trainees do not attend the university for off-the-job training, as their salons provide training sessions which include both practical skills and theory. Others attend the university less frequently than one day every week. In such instances, the university's assessors make more frequent visits to ensure satisfactory training is being given and to check on trainees' progress. Additional support is provided for trainees who require it. The type of support varies according to individual needs, and includes extra practical training and help with written work or with key skills. This is provided either as part of the off-the-job training, or through additional on-the-job training. Specialist support is provided to trainees with dyslexia or those who need help with reading and writing. All assessors are undertaking key skills trainers and assessors' training. Two members of staff are working towards qualifications in teaching basic skills and have received training in dyslexia awareness. Trainees are encouraged to participate in national hairdressing competitions and opportunities for practice are offered through practical workshops. Additional courses are available free of charge to trainees and include barbering, Indian head massage, fashion and photographic work, long-hair workshops, aromatherapy and make-up and manicure. However, there is a low take-up of these opportunities by trainees.

27. Trainees are visited by their assessors at least every four weeks and by the field worker at least every six weeks. Opportunities for assessment are planned with the trainees and employers are told when assessments will happen. The university's assessors work flexibly with employers to use on-the-job training sessions for assessment purposes. Following each assessment, a detailed action plan is drawn up to identify progress, highlight areas for development and set targets for the next progress review. Employers are aware of their trainees' progress and provide extra training with clients or models in the salons. They provide good on-the-job training, but, in general, it lacks structure and is not well co-ordinated with the off-the-job training. More time has now been allocated to the university's assessors for visits to the salons, to improve the links between on- and off-the-job training.

28. Internal verification is well planned and co-ordinated. A co-ordinator ensures that internal verification covers assessments by all assessors, across all trainees, all NVQ levels and all NVQ units and elements and that evidence for assessment contains the correct range and quality of evidence. All assessors are monitored on a regular basis, carrying out all types of assessment activity. The system includes both the university's and the work-based assessors. Verbal and written feedback is provided, together with action points where appropriate. The system also includes monthly standardisation meetings where issues relating to assessment are raised and discussed. This helps to ensure consistency in assessments and assessment practice between assessors.

29. The salons are in need of some modernisation and refurbishment. Working space is limited and the fixtures and fittings are in need of replacement to bring them up to a commercial standard. The hairdressing salons are situated on the first

floor, with no access for wheelchair users. The resource centre is cramped, with limited working space for trainees.

30. Trainees' retention rates are low. During 1998-99, 40 per cent of trainees left early, without achieving their qualifications. During 1999-2000, the proportion was 53 per cent. All of the current year's trainees are still in training. Records are kept of the reasons why trainees leave early. The evaluations, which trainees complete every eight weeks, and the questionnaires issued to early leavers, identify that some trainees would prefer more work-based training and less frequent attendance at the university.

Foundation for work

Grade 3

31. At the original inspection, the university provided three foundation for work training programmes. There were two learners on a Life Skills programme, 29 on a vocational access programme and one on an initial training and assessment programme. At reinspection, there were no learners on the preparatory training programme or the initial training and assessment training programme. Of the 11 learners working towards NVQs at level 1, three are in catering and eight are in distributive operations. Foundation for work learners also work towards Wordpower and Numberpower qualifications at entry level. At the original inspection, learners on the vocational access training programme also worked towards Wordpower and Numberpower at levels 1 and 2. Learners undertake work experience for four days each week and attend the university for training and assessment for one day each week. Learners can gain a qualification and carry out work experience. Jobsearch and personal development training is included in the off-the-job training at the university. Support workers provide pastoral support, visiting learners at their work placements at least once each month. Facilitators give on-the-job training in the workplace. Learners' progress is reviewed every 13 weeks. The number of learners referred to the foundation for work programmes has fallen significantly over the past four years. On the previous vocational access programme in 1997-98, 45 per cent of learners left early and without qualifications. In 1998-99, 43 per cent left training early. In 1999-2000, 55 per cent left training early. In 2000-01, 42 per cent of learners on foundation programmes left training early. On the initial training and assessment programme, in 1997-98, 15 per cent of leavers gained jobs and 33 per cent continued in training or education. In 1998-99, 37 per cent of leavers gained jobs and 27 per cent continued in training or education. In 1999-2000, 17 per cent of leavers gained jobs and 38 per cent continued in training or education. In 2000-01, 50 per cent of learners who started on a foundation for work training programme gained jobs, and 38 per cent continued in training or education. At the original inspection, inspectors agreed with one strength but none of the weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report. Other strengths were judged to be either no more than normal practice or more appropriate to other areas. Inspectors awarded a grade lower than that given in the self-assessment report.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ insufficient work-based assessment
- ◆ poor recording of basic skills assessment
- ◆ lack of flexibility in training
- ◆ insufficient initial assessment
- ◆ weak internal verification

32. At reinspection, inspectors acknowledged that three of the weaknesses had been rectified. Learners are all assessed in the workplace and examples from work are presented as evidence of basic skills achievement as well as NVQ competence. At the original inspection, most learners started their training at the beginning of the academic year, even when they had been referred for training much earlier. At reinspection, work-based learning staff are employed to work all year round and recruitment is throughout the year. All learners are now on work placements with employers for a minimum of four days each week. Although the results of initial assessment are not always clearly recorded on individual learning plans, there is now a comprehensive initial assessment process which is used to identify additional support needs. The results of basic skills assessments are now recorded. Learners, however, make slow progress towards basic skills qualifications.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ very supportive, well-selected work placements
- ◆ good, well-planned training

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ weak internal verification
- ◆ very slow progress made towards basic skills qualifications

33. Staff select work placements which meet learners' career aspirations and their specific learning requirements. Learners gain confidence in the workplace and some obtain jobs with their work-placement provider at the end of their training. Learners are able to effectively improve their work-related skills in preparation for employment. Employers take good account of learners' needs and abilities when planning their work schedules. Many learners are offered more than one work placement, until they find the most appropriate type of work for them.

34. Training is particularly good for foundation for work learners. Comprehensive planning and evaluation contribute to the good teaching. Individual training is provided by support staff who are present during all training sessions. Learners are encouraged to help each other. Achievements are well celebrated. There are good working relationships between staff and learners. Teaching takes learners' social needs and problems into account. It is also relaxed in style and includes an effective combination of humour and discipline. Trainers and support staff use plain language and give clear instructions to learners. Learners are accompanied by

support workers and field officers in their work placements, who support the development of learners' work-related skills

35. Some internal verification still involves only the examination of completed portfolios of evidence. Some learners do not obtain their qualification because internal verification identifies a problem with their work only after they have completed their training and left the course. At reinspection, internal verification is being improved. There is some effective internal verification of work in progress as well as reviewing of completed portfolios. Although observations of basic skills assessors are now being planned, only one has taken place. Internal verification of NVQs is insufficiently thorough in identifying assessment issues. For example, one learner had completed and been assessed for their NVQ, yet there was insufficient performance evidence to meet the evidence requirements of the qualification. Another learner believed they had completed their NVQ, but it had not been assessed.

36. Some learners have been on the training programme since 2000 and have yet to complete either Wordpower or Numberpower awards at entry level. There are often unnecessary long gaps between assessments. Assessors give a higher priority to NVQ assessment than basic skills achievement. Learners receive regular basic skills training but are not measured against entry-level standards until they are nearing completion of their time on the training programme. Where learners are assessed for their basic skills qualifications, they receive immediate feedback, but no effort is made to target achievement of basic skills awards or plan the next assessment date.

GENERIC AREAS

Equal opportunities

Grade 3

37. The university has an equal opportunities policy, which is reviewed annually. It applies to staff, learners, work-placement providers and employers. Detailed information is maintained on gender, ethnicity and disability in the local area. Equal opportunities is referred to in the students' handbook and in the university's charter, which is issued to all learners at induction. Employers and work-placement providers are issued with a handbook, which includes the equal opportunities statement and disciplinary and grievance procedures. An equal opportunities committee meets at least once each term. It works to the national guidelines for good practice in equal opportunities in higher education. Its remit includes equal opportunities monitoring, training and learning, admissions, guidance and the recruitment and development of staff. It is also responsible for the annual review of the equal opportunities policy, promoting disability awareness and co-ordinating the self-assessment of equal opportunities practice by each school. The university encourages the employment of people with disabilities and advertises its vacancies accordingly. At the original inspection, 59 per cent of learners were men and 41 per cent were women. Twenty-four per cent of learners

had a disability. At reinspection, 63 per cent of learners are men and 37 per cent are women. There are no work-based learners from minority ethnic groups and none with a disability. Eight per cent of learners have additional support needs. Inspectors at the original inspection agreed with one weaknesses and one strength identified in the self-assessment report. Other strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report were not significant or represented no more than normal practice. The grade awarded at the original inspection was lower than that given in the self-assessment report.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ poor promotion of equal opportunities to employers and trainees
- ◆ little promotion of training to under-represented groups

38. At the reinspection, although equal opportunities is now promoted to learners and employers, there is still insufficient monitoring of equal opportunities arrangements at employers' premises. At the time of the original inspection, learners had insufficient awareness of the equal opportunities policy. This has been rectified through increased training of both learners and staff. Although there has been promotional activity aimed at under-represented groups, this has been ineffective in attracting learners from these groups into work-based learning.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ comprehensive information on equal opportunities for learners
- ◆ particularly effective complaints procedure
- ◆ extensive equal opportunities training for staff

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor monitoring of employers' equal opportunities arrangements
- ◆ ineffective promotion of training to under-represented groups

39. The university has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy. It covers legal requirements and harassment and victimisation. It states the objectives of the policy and the action needed to achieve these objectives. There is also a detailed booklet covering the rights and responsibilities of students, which is updated each year. This booklet is issued to all learners and incorporates the students' charter, the equal opportunities statement and policy, and procedures for complaints and appeals. There is also a section on services for students with disabilities. A separate policy document outlines the procedures for the fair selection and recruitment of staff and an employees' handbook includes the university's equal opportunities statement.

40. The university's complaints procedures and staff effectively deal with discrimination and harassment. Learners are made aware of the complaints procedures at induction. They are confident that the university will effectively tackle any issues raised. Where problems have arisen, these have been dealt with

promptly and fairly, with the learner continuing with their training. The university has paperwork showing that complaints of bullying, racial discrimination and harassment have been investigated and that those raising the complaints have been satisfied with the outcomes. For example, complaints from learners, including sexual harassment and an accusation of theft, were dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. Staff remain impartial yet supportive when investigating complaints. Where appropriate, learners are additionally referred to the university's counselling service. The complaints and grievance procedure is monitored centrally.

41. There is extensive equal opportunities training for staff. During the past year, all staff have benefited from attending relevant courses, including workshops on equal opportunities, working with students with learning difficulties and disabilities, legislation, working with students with mental health issues and disability awareness. Staff have a good awareness of equal opportunities issues and share aspects of their knowledge with learners.

42. There is insufficient monitoring of equal opportunities arrangements at employer's premises. Although learners and employers are questioned about equal opportunities during the university's monitoring visits to the workplace, there is insufficient recording of this discussion. There is no evaluation of employers' own equal opportunities policies against the university's requirements.

43. Access to university premises varies. Some areas are inaccessible to wheelchair users. The premises, generally, are in need of improvement, although some adaptations have been made. The first-floor hairdressing and beauty salons are particularly inaccessible. There are plans for a possible relocation of the entire campus, which include plans for improved access and facilities for people with disabilities.

44. Data are collected on participation in training by gender, ethnicity and disability, which meet contractual requirements. There is, however, no effective use of this data or subsequent action-planning to tackle, for example, the lack of women on engineering training programmes. Promotional materials, such as the prospectus include positive images, which avoid gender stereotyping. It includes people of different ethnic origins and of varying physical abilities, in a range of occupations and learning environments. There is reference within the text to the university's disability statement and, in a section on learners' support, to the fact that an inclusive approach to learning is promoted. Promotional leaflets have been produced which encourage applications from under-represented groups, but this has yet to result in participation by learners from these groups. The university is identifying additional training access routes from within its current student population. This has yet to attract applicants from under-represented groups into work-based learning.

Trainee support

Grade 3

45. Potential learners are referred to the university by their employers, the careers service and schools. Learners who are not already employed are given help in finding either a work placement or employment by a work-placement officer. Learners are assessed in basic skills. Key skills assessments are carried out in some curriculum areas. Some learners also carry out an assessment to establish their prior learning. There are no occupational assessments. Learners are advised of the most appropriate training programme. Support is given in drawing up an individual learning plan. All staff are trained in interviewing and assessing learners and the university has carried out market research to ensure that reception staff and those dealing with enquires provide potential learners with accurate information about training programmes. Learners are given an induction into the university, which includes information on the qualifications, the NVQ appeals procedures and health and safety. Each learner is given a students' handbook, which contains details of the support and counselling services available within the university. Progress reviews are conducted in the workplace every three months. Specialist textbooks are available for learners to borrow. The careers service advises on work placements and jobs and there is a university counselling service, a nurse on the Buxton campus and a network of specialist support agencies which the university uses. At the original inspection, the self-assessment report identified some strengths with which inspectors agreed and two weaknesses, with which they did not agree. Inspectors awarded a lower grade than that given in the self-assessment report.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ poor progress review process in most areas
- ◆ ineffective use of individual training plans
- ◆ lack of recording of additional support
- ◆ inconsistent induction

46. The university has appointed assessors who visit learners in the workplace to carry out progress reviews. There has been some improvement in the review process and a new progress review form was introduced in September 2001 and reviewed in January 2002. Some learners are still not receiving an effective progress review. Individual learning plans have been improved and are now used to plan learners' progress through the training programme. There are some inconsistencies in updating individual learning plans. The university has implemented a standardised additional support recording system and has improved liaison with the additional support department. Additional support activities are now documented and recorded. This is no longer a weakness. The university has begun to share good practice in induction. There is not yet a standard induction pack for induction into the NVQ and key skills, and induction is still inconsistent.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good additional learning support
- ◆ wide range of pastoral and specialist support
- ◆ well-developed network of work placements

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ weak progress review process in some areas
- ◆ ineffective induction for some learners

47. The results of initial assessments of basic skills and key skills are used effectively by the university to identify learners' additional support needs. Lecturers, trainers and support officers help learners with reading, writing and spelling problems individually and in groups, and also in work placements. Staff are trained to give this support and can give appropriate help to learners with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. Within each occupational area, staff give help with portfolio-building and cross-referencing evidence. They use a good range of resources to help learners build their theoretical understanding, including reference materials, videos and computer-based learning packages. Learners are given useful feedback on their progress. Additional support for learners is well documented by support officers on weekly and four weekly training plans. The support sessions are evaluated and progress is recorded. The learning support centre also prepares a report for each learner on their identified support needs and how these will be tackled. Learners are motivated and encouraged by these reports.

48. The university gives effective pastoral support and encourages learners to use the wide range of specialist support services provided. Each learner is assigned a personal tutor and a workplace assessor who provide good pastoral, as well as learning support. Problems and emergencies are identified and dealt with very effectively. For example, one learner who was experiencing accommodation problems, was immediately provided with temporary safe lodgings on the university campus. Learners are able to stay overnight on the campus if this makes it easier for them to attend the university for their off-the-job training. Foundation for work learners are also assigned a support worker to accompany them to their workplaces. Learners appreciate the support they receive from the assessors and support officers in the workplace. The university provides a bus service, which is of great benefit for learners who have to travel long distances to their off-the-job training.

49. The university maintains a database of work placements in the local area. There are currently 430 companies, including national and international organisations, medium sized companies and small enterprises. They cover a range of vocational areas. There is effective monitoring of learner support provided by work placements. Information is collected by assessors during progress reviews and by personal tutors at the university. Any company, which does not meet this standard, for example poor health and safety, or insisting on unreasonable working hours, is not used again.

50. The progress review process is carried out by the assessor in the workplace every three months. Some progress reviews are ineffective. There is an inconsistent approach by assessors in how they complete a progress review and the relevant paperwork. Some motor vehicle and hairdressing learners have not been reviewed regularly. In business administration and catering, some progress reviews do not concentrate on the learner's progress sufficiently and there is insufficient action-planning. Employers are not always fully involved in the process. In foundation for work, progress reviews are good. The records of progress reviews do not always show whether learners are receiving additional support or if those learners receiving support are making better progress.

51. All learners receive a satisfactory induction into the university and the NVQ framework when they are enrolled on to the training programme. Induction into the NVQ programme and key skills takes place in the relevant schools. Learners receive an induction which varies in content and length depending on their occupational area. There is no standard induction pack or procedure for this induction. The induction pack used in hairdressing is good. There has been some sharing of good practice, but this has not yet resulted in a good induction for all learners. Learners on motor vehicle and business administration training programmes do not remember the details of their induction. Learners who join training programmes after the usual start times, have a shorter and less comprehensive induction.

Management of training

Grade 3

52. In August 1998, High Peak College merged with the University of Derby. The youth and adult training division is placed within the school of access and further education. The division is managed by a divisional head, with a work-placement support officer and two administrators. This team co-ordinates the work-based learning across the university. At the original inspection, the division also had a staff of three field officers. NVQ training is provided by the teaching staff in the relevant schools of the university. At the original inspection, the teaching staff assessed learners and a team of three field officers visited learners in the workplace. At reinspection, the field officers have been replaced with assessors, who also carry out assessment in the workplace. There has been a fall in the number of learners recruited over the past four years. The university achieved the Investors in People Standard in 1996, and was re-accredited in 1999. This is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people. All staff have job descriptions. The staff-appraisal system identifies individual training and development needs. There is a programme of team meetings which ensures that the team meets regularly. At the original inspection, the self-assessment report identified strengths and weaknesses which were no more than normal practice or were more appropriate to other sections of the report. Two additional strengths and three weaknesses were identified during the inspection. The grade awarded at the original inspection was lower than that given in the self-

assessment report.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ poor co-ordination of on- and-off-the-job training
- ◆ lack of clarity in management arrangements

53. Following the original inspection, there have been weekly meetings between assessors and the youth and adult training division team. There are clear roles and responsibilities for staff. The team of assessors meet with employers every four to six weeks and co-ordinate the on- and off-the-job training. Employers receive information about the off-the-job training programme. There are examples of where the university has held additional learning sessions to develop learner's personal and telephone skills at an employer's request. Inspectors found both of these weaknesses have been rectified, but identified an additional weakness at reinspection.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ comprehensive staff development and appraisal programme
- ◆ good staff involvement in strategic and management decision-making

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ inadequate use of data

54. There is good staff training and development. The university has a well-established annual staff appraisal system which is used as the basis for a staff development programme. Training and development needs are also identified through the observation of trainers. Training meets the needs of staff effectively as well as the strategic and operational aims of the organisation. There is a detailed staff development strategy. Staff have access to a wide range of courses through the university's staff development programme, which is updated annually. Training courses include those which keep staff up to date with new developments in their area of work, as well as courses to give staff additional skills which will benefit learners. The divisional head has held a programme of training courses to support the development of the assessor role.

55. There are clear links between the strategic objectives of the university and those of the youth and adult training division. All staff are well informed about developments and change within the university. The division has regular meetings, which are minuted and contain action points. A steering group has been established that enables the divisional head to have representation and decision making responsibilities at a management level. There is good involvement of the divisional head and assessors in management decision-making. The assistant dean supports decisions made by the team and ensures they are implemented at strategic level. Local labour market information is used to make decisions about new areas of learning to be developed and introduced for work-based learning.

56. The youth and adult training division has established effective communication links with many external organisations including a volunteers' bureau, a unit for young offenders, social services and staff from two careers services. The division encourages employers to visit the university's site and has held events to allow employers from all occupational areas to meet teaching and administrative staff.

57. Many aspects of the management of work-based learning in the university are satisfactory. There are good working relationships with employers. On- and off-the-job learning are well co-ordinated, but is not systematically recorded on individual learning plans. There is good communication with employers and internal communication is effective.

58. The divisional head collates and circulates data on retention and achievement rates to the relevant schools and managers of the university. Insufficient use is made of these data. No comparisons are made with data from previous years. Trends in achievement and retention rates are not routinely analysed. Individual schools collect and use their own data on work-based learners. The method used to calculate achievement rates is different in the schools from that used by the youth and adult training division. There are no targets for retention and achievement rates for the youth and adult training division. Only one assessor has targets for retention and achievement rates.

Quality assurance

Grade 4

59. At the original inspection, the university was developing new quality assurance systems. Its existing systems and procedures did not extend to work-based learning. At reinspection, the university has developed these systems for quality assurance to incorporate some work-based learning procedures. The systems are contained in a quality assurance manual, which is given to all staff. Each school within the university has a quality assurance manager, and carries out an annual evaluation of its courses. The dean of quality development has overall responsibility for quality assurance. Responsibility for implementing and evaluating the quality of the provision is delegated to the curriculum and quality subgroup. The school quality managers co-ordinate quality assurance within their own school and liaise with the subgroup. The head of the youth and adult training division is a member of working groups which discuss quality assurance issues. Formal feedback is collected from learners and employers. At the original inspection, the self-assessment failed to identify all of the weaknesses in this area, and some of the identified strengths represented no more than normal practice or were more appropriate to other areas of the report. At the original inspection, inspectors awarded a lower grade than that given in the self-assessment report.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ lack of an established system for quality assurance

- ◆ poor understanding among staff for arrangements for quality assurance
- ◆ insufficient action-planning
- ◆ inaccurate self-assessment

60. The university has rectified three of the weaknesses through developing and monitoring the post-inspection action plan. Staff have received training and development in self-assessment and action-planning. The self-assessment process is now thorough and is monitored by the university. Self-assessment is now effectively directed by the needs of the learner. Staff are fully involved in the self-assessment report and the action-planning process. Improvements have been made to the processes that relate to quality assurance. However, they are not fully established and the quality assurance system remains a weakness.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good use of learners' and employers' feedback
- ◆ effective sharing of good practice

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ lack of an established system for quality assurance
- ◆ insufficient monitoring of work-based training and assessment

61. Feedback is collected from learners and employers. Learners receive questionnaires three times each year. Over 300 questionnaires have been sent out and 100 per cent were returned. In addition, there have been good response rates for an exit and employer's questionnaire. The information from questionnaires is used during course reviews, course team meetings and divisional school meetings to evaluate the provision. Learners are asked to evaluate the university's facilities, the quality of training and the support they receive. The analysis of the data from questionnaires is circulated in bar chart form to the careers service, course team leaders, the assessor/trainer meetings and the curriculum and quality subgroup, and is used to improve the training programmes and support services. Examples of improvements include software updates, specialist books purchased and good information being given to learners about their training programme.

62. Meetings between internal verifiers and assessors are held every two weeks and minutes are recorded. These meetings are used to share good practice. In particular, recently appointed assessors have benefited from discussing good practice with more experienced assessors. Assessors share good practice with members of their own schools and course teams. Sharing of good practice on equal opportunities has resulted in the production of relevant leaflets and the purchase of equal opportunities videos. Good practice is also shared with other colleges and work-based learning providers.

63. The university has made some progress in implementing procedures but has been slow to establish a quality assurance system for work-based learning. There are insufficient procedures to assure the quality of work-based learning. Since the

merger of the college and university, a working party has developed new procedures and standards for quality assurance, which were issued in July 2000. The quality assurance framework for work-based learning is incomplete. Two key procedures for assuring the quality of training and assessment are not fully operational. The procedure for the observation and monitoring of support staff and facilitators is being piloted in three vocational areas and has not been evaluated. The procedure for the monitoring of the assessment and internal verification system has not been implemented. There is an inconsistent approach to the use of standard procedures across the schools. For example, there are inconsistencies in key aspects of the learner's programmes, including induction and progress reviews.

64. There is insufficient monitoring of work-based learning and assessment. The division conducts internal audits of paperwork completed during enrolment, induction, progress reviews and assessment. There has been some improvement in the feedback from the progress reviews. The internal audit process has insufficient impact on assuring the quality of the role of the assessor in the workplace. There is no clear strategy for internal verification of assessors in the workplace. One assessor has been observed nine times this year, but others have been observed only once. There is no systematic evaluation of training in the workplace. Key aspects provided by the employer, such as recruitment, induction, training and support, are insufficiently monitored by the university.