

G B Training (UK) Ltd

Independent learning provider

| Inspection dates | | 19 – 23 January 2015 |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| Overall effectiveness | This inspection: | Good-2 |
| | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory-3 |
| Outcomes for learners | | Good-2 |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | | Good-2 |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | | Good-2 |

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- senior leaders have been successful in ensuring that all staff share their high expectations for apprentices, and this is reflected in good outcomes
- the vast majority of learners benefit from good teaching, learning and assessment which enables them to make rapid progress and succeed in completing their apprenticeships
- apprentices develop valuable vocational skills and improve their confidence, communication, team-working and inter-personal skills
- the information, advice and guidance that learners receive from GB Training staff before starting their apprenticeship are excellent; these enable most learners to be certain they are choosing the right programme to prepare preparing them well for skilled employment
- the range of apprenticeships on offer closely reflects local skills shortages, especially in care, hospitality, catering and administration, and has been developed in close consultation with the local enterprise partnership and Birmingham City Council.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- too few employers have been found to meet the real-work requirements of the expanded information communications technology (ICT) apprenticeship programme
- efforts to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have not had sufficient impact across all subject areas
- too few apprentices are encouraged to take up the existing opportunities to study English and mathematics beyond the requirements of their apprenticeship.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve urgently the availability of work placements for current ICT apprentices. Leaders and manager should carry through to completion recent actions to improve employment experience for ICT apprentices, to ensure that the small number of apprentices involved can succeed on their programmes.
- Ensure the observation of teaching, learning and assessment process focuses more effectively on apprentices' learning during each activity, and that assessors receive more detailed feedback after each observation.
- Ensure that managers and assessors challenge apprentices to make the maximum possible progress in developing their English and mathematical skills. Apprentices should be encouraged and supported to achieve at higher levels, beyond the minimum level required for their qualification, so as to enhance their career prospects.
- Improve all assessors' functional skills qualifications to reduce their reliance on specialist English and mathematics tutors to support apprentices fully.
- Ensure assessors support apprentices to extend their learning beyond the requirements of the qualification by encouraging independent learning during off-the-job learning activities.
- Ensure that assessors' extensive and helpful oral feedback is always supported by detailed written feedback, so that apprentices can review the feedback and be reminded of what they need to do to improve.

Inspection judgements

| | |
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| Outcomes for learners | Good |
|------------------------------|------|

- GB Training provides apprenticeships mainly at intermediate and advanced levels, with a smaller range at higher level. Subjects inspected represent those with the greatest numbers of learners.
- A high proportion of apprentices complete their apprenticeships successfully and within planned timescales. Apprentices enjoy their learning and the vast majority make swift progress in improving the quality of their work and in developing good levels of vocational skills. For example, apprentices on the food and beverage programme develop excellent knife skills in food preparation.
- Apprentices rapidly develop positive attitudes to learning, including understanding the importance of improving their English and mathematical skills. A high proportion achieve the levels required to complete their apprenticeships successfully. All those apprentices who express an interest in studying these vital skills beyond the level required for the apprenticeship receive good support, but more need to be encouraged to do so.
- There are no significant achievement gaps and no discernible differences in rates of progress between identifiable groups of apprentices.
- In addition to strong vocational skills, most apprentices develop a good range of personal and social skills and become more effective in the workplace. Apprentices improve their confidence and gain much improved communication and team-working skills; this is seen in the way they interact in group sessions and in the working environment. Employers report that their apprentices rapidly gain confidence in working within teams and independently; as a result, they are happy to give them greater responsibility.
- As a result of good information, advice and guidance provided by their assessors throughout their programmes, apprentices are well aware of career and progression opportunities. A good

proportion make progress from intermediate to advanced apprenticeships with GB Training. Apprentices are successful in gaining promotion or more responsible positions where opportunities for progression are available; for example a health and social care apprentice progressed to an advanced apprenticeship and then secured a full-time, higher-level post at a local hospital.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Assessors provide highly effective personal support to apprentices, including those at risk of leaving their programme early. They provide very effective additional help to those who disclose a disability or learning difficulty. In many cases, assessors work unsociable hours to meet the needs of shift workers. As a result, a very large majority of learners make good progress and complete their programmes.
- Apprentices develop rapidly the skills they need in the workplace through well-planned and highly effective on-the-job training. For example, hospitality apprentices develop good customer service skills through their work in restaurants. Apprentices develop sufficient underpinning knowledge and understanding to meet the demands of their qualifications through off-the-job training. However, assessors do not support apprentices sufficiently to broaden their learning beyond the requirements of the qualification.
- Staff thoroughly assess apprentices' existing skills and knowledge and most assessors are skilled in using this information to construct high-quality individual learning plans for each apprentice. As a result, most apprentices make rapid progress.
- Assessors plan assessment activities well. During visits to apprentices, they set clear targets for them to achieve before the next visit. Assessors monitor achievement of these targets closely and as a result, apprentices quickly complete elements of their framework.
- Assessors provide their apprentices with high-quality oral feedback about assessed work that helps them understand what they have done well and the steps they must take to improve. In hospitality and business administration, assessors use voice recorders to capture this feedback so that learners are able to refer to it when completing further work. However, assessors seldom capture in writing the richness of this oral feedback. Assessors do not routinely identify and correct spelling, punctuation and grammar errors in apprentices' written work or provide guidance on how they can make improvements. This makes it more difficult for learners to recall and use assessors' guidance to improve their subsequent work.
- Vocational assessors provide good support to those apprentices who need to develop their English and mathematics skills to pass the functional skills elements of their framework. Specialist English and mathematics tutors provide enhanced support to those apprentices who need more help. As a result, the vast majority of apprentices gain appropriate functional skills qualifications early in their programme and can use these skills to support their vocational studies.
- Assessors do not provide apprentices with enough encouragement to develop their English and mathematics skills beyond the level required by their framework. A small number of apprentices choose to do so, but the proportion is too low. Apprentices do not have the opportunity to gain a GCSE in these subjects.
- Apprentices receive excellent information, advice and guidance at the beginning of their programmes. Short trial periods of work help apprentices decide if they are making an appropriate career choice. As a result, apprentices have appropriate expectations, are clear about the demands of their programme, and a very large majority complete their studies.
- Assessors provide high-quality advice and guidance throughout and at the end of apprentices' programmes. This helps learners make appropriate choices about future study and employment.

For example, an assessor gave clear information to an apprentice about the possible effects of becoming an agency worker in health and social care to help with possible career choices.

- Apprentices follow safe working practices well because assessors stress the importance of health and safety at the start of apprentices' programmes and during progress reviews. However, assessors do not focus sufficiently on e-safety; a small minority of learners do not fully appreciate the risks of posting personal information online.
- A small minority of progress reviews are insufficiently detailed. As a result, a small number of learners are unsure how well they are progressing or what they need to do to complete their framework. However, the vast majority of apprentices are doing well and making good progress.
- Staff and apprentices treat each other with respect, and assessors work hard to ensure that all apprentices have the opportunity to be successful, regardless of their backgrounds and starting points. However, not all assessors have the confidence to discuss in detail the attitudes and behaviours apprentices need to develop and thrive in a multi-cultural work environment.

Health and Social Care

Apprenticeships

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in health and social care are good because:

- a very high proportion of apprentices successfully complete their qualifications within planned time scales
- assessors rapidly develop excellent working relationships with apprentices and their employers; as a result apprentices receive excellent support and benefit from carefully integrated learning at work opportunities that enable them to make good progress
- apprentices develop their work-related knowledge, skills and understanding well and apply these in their everyday work to good effect; for example, during a learning session on safeguarding, apprentices learned and demonstrated the safe techniques for lifting and turning service users
- apprentices demonstrate much improved self-confidence and strong personal and social skills in their communication with service users, colleagues, line managers and assessors
- assessors clearly understand individual apprentices' learning needs and provide highly effective one-to-one support on a very frequent basis, helping all apprentices make good progress; for example, an assessor helped an apprentice use percentages and understand the importance of accurately measuring medicines
- enthusiastic, knowledgeable and skilled assessors engage learners very well in discussions when conducting assessments and learner reviews, helping them to make good progress
- apprentices develop a very good awareness of safeguarding and health and safety, benefitting from appropriate additional certification such as manual handling; they understand the importance in their work of their duty of care for service users and for themselves as employees
- apprentices enjoy their learning experience, develop their confidence and talk enthusiastically about how this benefits them and their work; they recognise and appreciate how their studies help them to enhance their performance at work and the beneficial impact this has on their career development
- pre-enrolment processes are well developed with all apprentices undertaking a trial period in the workplace to help them decide if this career pathway is suitable for them prior to enrolment and initial assessment; this contributes to ensuring that most learners stay on the programme

- progress reviews assist very effective individual advice and guidance that enable learners to make timely and informed career decisions; one learner was observed discussing a move to another employer and as a result had a clear career progression plan.

Health and social care are not yet outstanding because:

- the development and extension of learners' English and mathematics skills are not fully part of the learning processes; staff make limited use of initial and diagnostic assessment results which do not inform sufficiently individual learner action plans
- tutors do not routinely and systematically plan or reinforce the development of apprentices' awareness of equality and diversity; too often, discussion of these matters is superficial.

ICT for practitioners

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in ICT require improvement because:

- the majority of current apprentices do not have sufficient access to further work placements; this prevents them gaining mastery of skills in real-work situations and limits the opportunities available to assess their competence
- staff do not always assess apprentices' English and mathematics skills in detail at the start of their programme; this limits their ability to help apprentices make rapid progress in these subjects
- attendance is variable at off-the-job training sessions; as a result, a minority of apprentices make slow progress
- managers have not ensured that a vacant assessor post has been promptly filled; as a result, a small number of apprentices have been left without a vocationally qualified assessor, and this is slowing their progress
- although apprentices receive good information, advice and guidance at the start of their programmes they do not receive formally recorded advice and guidance at appropriate intervals throughout their apprenticeship.

In ICT the provider has the following strengths:

- a high proportion of apprentices successfully complete their framework; over the past 12 months, all advanced apprentices have been successful
- the integration of functional skills during ICT training activities is good and develops and consolidates apprentices' mathematical skills in particular
- skilled staff use engaging training activities which develop good mathematical skills; for example, in one lesson apprentices developed a sound understanding of 'mode' and 'mean' through increasingly difficult tasks
- assessors provide detailed and constructive feedback to learners on their work, and pay close attention to ICT content and the quality of written English skills; the standard of apprentices' work is good and clearly demonstrates workplace technical competence
- off-the-job training is well structured, ensuring that most apprentices develop skills in resolving problems in hardware and software installation; well-designed tasks enable apprentices to

develop good practical skills in the installation of hard drives, operating systems and games software

- those apprentices in work placements receive good support through frequent assessment and review visits; apprentices have good knowledge of the progress they are making.

Hospitality and Catering

Apprenticeships

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in hospitality and catering are good because:

- a high proportion of apprentices successfully complete their frameworks; they develop good work-related practical skills in using equipment correctly, working with customers and following legislative requirements
- assessors provide good support for apprentices in helping them to achieve their qualifications; they visit them frequently in the workplace and provide challenging assessment tasks linked to job roles to help them develop relevant skills
- apprentices show good levels of confidence and independence when creating dishes to be served to the public; in a very effective cookery skills session, learners demonstrated good knife skills and followed kitchen and food hygiene procedures in checking equipment and fridge temperatures confidently and independently
- assessors use information learning technologies well to enliven learning and motivate learners; they use video clips to consolidate apprentices' learning in health and safety and to broaden their understanding of equality of opportunity and diversity
- staff assess learners' work frequently and accurately and provide clear verbal feedback on how well they have done and what they need to improve; they observe apprentices performing practical tasks particularly thoroughly and provide excellent feedback
- assessors develop learners' English skills effectively and they relate tasks to learners' work roles, for example, in the development of menus and meeting legal requirements for food labelling; as a result, learners improve their vocabulary and writing skills
- staff provide good information, advice and guidance and inform apprentices about the course requirements and the options they have to progress to a higher level of study and enhance their career prospects; many apprentices progress to a higher level of study or gain more responsibility in their work roles
- the promotion of health, safety and safeguarding is good; learners demonstrate good skills in the kitchen and restaurant environment and feel safe and supported in the workplace
- apprentices are treated well in a culture of respect between them and their assessors; they understand how to treat others as individuals and how to challenge discrimination in the workplace.

Hospitality and catering are not yet outstanding because:

- assessors do not always plan or deliver activities to challenge more able learners; such learners do not always make the progress of which they are capable
- assessors do not plan to improve learners' mathematics skills sufficiently in sessions; learners are then unable to practise or develop mathematics skills sufficiently to improve them.

Administration**Apprenticeships**

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in administration are good because:

- apprentices produce work of a high standard and confidently apply newly acquired knowledge and technical skills to support their career progress in business administration, meeting the needs of local employers very well; the large majority of learners successfully complete their qualifications on time
- assessors are highly experienced in the business environment and they use their experience well to provide useful, practical tips that enable apprentices to work more efficiently and effectively; for example, apprentices use computer software and email management systems well to handle large volumes of information in their busy office environments
- assessors are highly motivated and sensitive to meeting individual apprentices' needs through the flexible delivery of sessions even when it involves working unsociable hours
- apprentices receive good oral feedback during visits, including digital audio recordings and emails between sessions, to support and encourage them to reflect on their performance in the workplace and improve the quality of the evidence they submit for their portfolios
- learners receive frequent visits from their assessors and this helps them to remain highly enthusiastic about completing their qualification; assessors conduct timely, detailed progress reviews, so that apprentices are aware of what they have completed successfully and what they still need to improve
- assessors enable all apprentices to develop their functional skills in mathematics and English by carefully embedding activities in the vocational course content; for learners who require additional support, specialist functional skills trainers use very interesting resources and memorable techniques to ensure that learners are able to understand and apply these concepts
- assessors are skilled in providing appropriate support for learners with, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia and tunnel vision; they adapt learning materials to suit needs and encourage apprentices to use a wide range of methods to submit their evidence
- in the majority of sessions, learners express a deep understanding of the implications of equality in the workplace, for example the importance of fair workloads and the challenges of working in global businesses with clients in countries where diversity, for example in lifestyle choices, is prohibited or limited
- all learners have a thorough understanding of safeguarding and they carefully implement health and safety procedures in their office environment, making sure that colleagues and customers remain safe from tripping hazards or breaches in internet security, for example.

Teaching, learning and assessment are not yet outstanding because:

- too many learners rely solely on their assessors for information and resources and they do not spend enough time developing study skills to support and enhance their independent learning
- not all intermediate-level apprentices with high prior attainment and experience have individual learning plans that motivate them to develop skills beyond the basic requirements of the course

- not all apprentices are taught to proof-read their written work to ensure the high level of accuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation required for career progression in business administration.

Business Management

Apprenticeships

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in business management are good because:

- a very high proportion of apprentices successfully complete their framework; they increase their confidence and develop excellent occupational skills such as decision-making and improved use of information technology
- staff support apprentices very well through coaching and mentoring sessions; support includes visits, specialist mentoring and additional help from functional skills specialists
- assessors use a wide variety of methods to gather evidence about apprentices' performance; they work flexibly to meet the requirements of apprentices who do shift work
- assessors are well qualified and use their extensive occupational experience well to provide good individual coaching and mentoring in the workplace
- apprentices receive positive and encouraging feedback in assessments including professional discussions, and on written work
- assessors have a good knowledge of both occupational and qualification opportunities and use this well to provide apprentices with good advice on how to progress within their workplaces at the start, during and at the end of their programmes
- apprentices, with encouragement and support from their assessors, carry out independent study and research; they use good bespoke workbooks that embed functional skills and carry out their own on-line research
- managers use a learner progress recording system well to identify apprentices who are at risk of not completing on time; the clear action plans they implement to support these apprentices ensure that few leave their programmes early
- staff assess apprentices' skills in mathematics and English and use the information this provides to plan learning sessions that address well apprentices' areas for development; learning materials, including workbooks, make appropriate connections between mathematics and English and vocational learning
- apprentices make good progress in developing their functional skills in English and mathematics; where learners have significant weaknesses in these subjects, assessors rapidly arrange specialist tutoring
- apprentices apply their good understanding of equality and diversity and safeguarding, which are well planned in learning sessions, to their everyday work; for example a taxi operator explained the additional needs of people with disabilities.

Teaching, learning and assessment in business management are not yet outstanding because:

- assessors do not monitor carefully enough the amount of time apprentices spend undertaking off-the-job training; a small number of learners do not complete activities quickly enough

- assessors use generic lesson plans and do not tailor these to the specific occupations of their apprentices; for a minority of learners, this makes it difficult for them to relate their learning to their own jobs and slows their progress.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders and managers have high expectations for apprentices and this is reflected throughout the organisation. As a result, assessors and support staff set high expectations of apprentices for progress and quality of work, and provide the support necessary for most to develop their skills swiftly and succeed.
- All staff have clear and challenging performance targets that are carefully monitored by their managers at monthly meetings; senior managers use a well-designed tracking and monitoring process to maintain a clear oversight of performance.
- Managers observe assessors across the full range of activities that support apprentices' learning; feedback from these observations identifies some, but not enough of the improvements assessors can make to enhance the learning achieved during each activity, as observers focus insufficiently on learning and progress. Results of these observations inform effective monthly performance monitoring meetings but do not contribute with sufficient clarity and detail to staff appraisal.
- Assessors have good vocational experience and appropriate assessor qualifications; they also hold, or are working towards, teaching qualifications. A minority are, however, still working towards level two functional skills qualifications and rely on support from well-qualified specialist functional skills tutors to help apprentices develop their English and mathematical skills. This approach is successful in ensuring programme requirements are met but requires improvement to support achievement at higher levels.
- Leaders use an inclusive process for evaluating the quality of the apprenticeship provision. Feedback from apprentices and their employers is a key element of the process and, as a result, leaders have a largely accurate picture of current performance and areas for improvement. An overall self-assessment report is supported by subject area plans and quality improvement plans that clearly allocate responsibilities and target dates for further improvement. Although they have identified most areas for improvement, managers had not pinpointed the weaknesses in the programme for the relatively very small number of ICT apprentices.
- Managers use data very effectively to monitor apprentices' performance using a tracking system which highlights learners who need to make more rapid progress. Managers have recognised the need to improve assessors' access to timely and accurate data, and work is underway to achieve this.
- Through representation on the local enterprise partnership board and close working relationships with the city council, other providers and employers, leaders have ensured the range of provision meets local needs, and contributes very well to meeting national needs. Local-priority subjects where leaders have agreed to expand provision include health and social care, transport and logistics and ICT. The expansion of ICT apprenticeships was not however, sufficiently well planned and immediate action is required to ensure the guided study hours and real-work requirements of the framework can be achieved for all current learners.
- Apprenticeship programmes closely meet the development needs of employees. Employers appreciate programmes tailored to meet their needs and delivered flexibly to reflect their employment patterns. For example, assessors planned and delivered visits during night shifts in a care home, and progress reviews for motor mechanic apprentices happened on Saturdays.
- Managers provide a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment for off-the-job training, and they carefully risk-assess the apprentices' employment environments. Apprentices learn

about expected behaviours during their induction and are aware of what to do if they experience any inappropriate behaviour in the training centres or in the working environment. Clear, well-known and effective anti-bullying, anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies are in place.

- GB Training staff reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of Birmingham and the broader West Midlands. Managers have been successful in increasing the diversity of apprentices to reflect the communities they serve, through very effective targeted recruiting activity by the sales and marketing team.
- The arrangements for safeguarding apprentices are good. Apprentices benefit from safe learning environments and know who to contact if they have any concerns or worries. Thorough health, safety, and organisational checks of employers, and their premises ensure that any risks to apprentices are assessed and minimised. Recruiting processes give an appropriately high priority to safeguarding and all GB Training staff who work routinely with young people are appropriately checked and trained in safeguarding.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

G B Training (UK) Ltd

| Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate | Overall | 14-16 part-time provision | 14-16 full-time provision | 16-19 study programmes | Traineeships | 19+ learning programmes | Apprenticeships | Employability | Community learning |
|---|---------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Overall effectiveness | 2 | | | | | | 2 | | |
| Outcomes for learners | 2 | | | | | | 2 | | |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment | 2 | | | | | | 2 | | |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management | 2 | | | | | | 2 | | |

| Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Grade |
|---|----------|
| Health and Social Care | 2 |
| ICT for practitioners | 3 |
| Hospitality and Catering | 2 |
| Administration | 2 |
| Business Management | 2 |

Provider details

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-----|----------|-----|---------|-----|-------------------|-----|--|
| Type of provider | Independent learning provider | | | | | | | | |
| Age range of learners | 16+ | | | | | | | | |
| Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year | 861 | | | | | | | | |
| Managing Director | Mr Lawrence Barton | | | | | | | | |
| Date of previous inspection | September 2006 | | | | | | | | |
| Website address | www.gbtraining.org.uk | | | | | | | | |
| Provider information at the time of the inspection | | | | | | | | | |
| Main course or learning programme level | Level 1 or below | | Level 2 | | Level 3 | | Level 4 and above | | |
| Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships) | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | |
| | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | |
| Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age | Intermediate | | Advanced | | Higher | | | | |
| | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | | 19+ | | |
| | 43 | 513 | 20 | 281 | 0 | | 35 | | |
| Number of traineeships | 16-19 | | 19+ | | Total | | | | |
| | N/A | | N/A | | N/A | | | | |
| Number of learners aged 14-16 | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Full-time | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Part-time | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Number of community learners | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Number of employability learners | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Funding received from | Skills Funding Agency (SFA) | | | | | | | | |
| At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors: | ■ N/A. | | | | | | | | |

Contextual information

GB Training (UK) Limited gained a Skills Funding Agency contract to deliver a range of apprenticeships in 2013. This followed a period during which the company worked as a subcontractor to various providers delivering a range of qualifications, including apprenticeships. Apprentices come from Birmingham and the broader West Midlands, including relatively affluent areas and deprived inner city areas.

Information about this inspection

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| Lead inspector | Mark Shackleton HMI |
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Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and seven additional inspectors, assisted by the Managing Director as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the past three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement |
|---------|----------------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012

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