

Training for Today

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Background information

Inspection judgements

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

Key for inspection grades

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

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

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

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

- Health, public services and care
- Hairdressing and beauty therapy
- Employability training
- Business, administration and law

Description of the provider

1. Training for Today (Tft) is a trading name for Michaeljohn Training Limited. The company was established in 1986 and operates two training centres located in Bolton and in Prestwich. The company has a contract with Greater Manchester LSC to provide apprenticeships, entry to employment (E2E) and training to gain (Train to Gain) level 2 and 3 programmes. Apprenticeship programmes and Train to Gain provision include health and social care, hairdressing, business administration, customer service, and management. In addition, Tft has a Train to Gain contract for waste management that it subcontracts to another provider. At the time of inspection, Tft has 298 learners of which 182 are apprentices and 56 are advanced apprentices. Currently 60 learners are completing E2E programmes and 64 are on Train to Gain programmes. Of the 298 learners, 21 are from minority ethnic groups and 64 are men. Some 52% of learners match the LSC's criteria as requiring additional learning support.
2. As part of the company's 14-16 strategy Tft provides young apprenticeship programmes for key stage four learners in health and social care, hairdressing and retail. As part of the Key Stage 4 Engagement programme branded in Greater Manchester as GM Power, Tft provides training in administration and hairdressing to national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 1 for key stage four learners at risk of leaving education and training.
3. Tft has recently worked as a subcontractor to Bury and Bolton Local Authorities offering pre-entry to employment programmes as part of the European Social Fund (ESF) funded programme for under 16 year olds. In partnership with Bury College and Alliance Learning Tft has provided management training as part of an ESF funded programme in health and social care.
4. Currently three directors, an operations manager, business development manager and quality manager are responsible for the four occupational teams, skills for life team and 17 support and administration staff. In total, 38 tutors teach and assess within the four occupational areas.
5. Bolton is one of the most deprived boroughs in England, ranking 50 out of 354 local authorities. According to the 2001 census, 87% of the population is British white with 13% from minority ethnic groups, the largest being Indian. In 2006, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C was 51%, against a national average of 59%. This shows a small increase from the 49% achieved in 2005. Early indications from Bolton Council are that there has been an increase in 2007 to 56%. The unemployment rate in Bolton is 5% and 4% in Bury compared with a national average of 5%. In June 2006, 12% of 16-18 year olds were classified as not in education, employment or training (NEET), the Greater Manchester figure was 10% and the England average 9%. Bolton has developed a borough wide NEET Reduction Strategy.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject area

Health, public services and care	Good: Grade 2
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Good: Grade 2
Employability training	Good: Grade 2
Business, administration and law	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

6. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. Achievement and standards are good, as is the quality of provision. Leadership and management and the capacity to improve are also good. The promotion of equal opportunity and social inclusion is satisfactory. Tft have successfully extended their provision to include good occupational training of 14-16 year old learners. They are also actively involved in partnership working to support young people at risk of leaving full-time education. Tft have implemented good strategies to improve the gender balance on the traditionally female dominated E2E programmes. Men now make up 76% of the learners. However, Tft takes insufficient action to promote training to under-represented minority ethnic groups. Tft have good strategies in raising learner's aspirations and widening their learners training opportunities. Learners receive high levels of individual support and guidance throughout their training. The provision in care, hairdressing and E2E programmes is good, as is business administration and customer care.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

7. The provider's capacity to improve is good. The organisation has grown considerably since the previous inspection and has maintained the quality of its provision. Overall apprenticeship success rates have increased considerably from 50% in 2004-05 to a good 67% in 2006-07. Since the previous inspection Tft have made many improvements to the provision. For example, the successful introduction of a comprehensive key stage four programme, partnership working has been strengthened and the senior management team has expanded. Tft has repositioned itself to take a more strategic role in local provision and networks. Tft have a newly recruited safety team and equality of opportunity team and improvements have further developed management information systems. Most weaknesses identified by the previous inspection have been satisfactorily resolved, however, some only partially. Grades awarded at this inspection were the same as at the previous inspection.
8. Tft's self-assessment process is good. This year staff, the subcontractor, employers, work-based assessors and learners were involved in meetings about self-assessment in all vocational areas. Programme area development plans are discussed at team and individual staff meetings. Inspectors were broadly confident in the accuracy of the self-assessment judgements, but identified further strengths and areas for improvement. Self-assessment awarded three higher grades than those of inspectors.

Key strengths

- Good development of personal and occupational skills
- Good and improving overall success rates
- Some well planned learning

- Good progression routes to match learner needs and career development
- Highly effective support to meet individual needs
- Very good partnership working
- Particularly good internal and external communication
- Good actions to improve the quality of provision

Key areas for improvement

- Slow progress of learners
- Some ineffective good teaching
- Insufficiently detailed progress and development targets
- Slow actions to improve timely success rates

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade: 2

9. Achievement and standards are good. Learners' develop good personal and occupational skills. They gain confidence and establish good professional attitudes to employment and training. Very quickly, learners are able to contribute to and take responsibility for key aspects of their job roles. Many progress into further training and gain promotion.
10. Overall success rates are good and improving. Apprentices overall success rates have improved in excess of twenty percentage points over the last two years in two occupational areas and are consistently above the national average. Advanced apprentices have improved by 17% across all programmes and by 27% in care programmes. Progression rates for E2E programmes are improving and now satisfactory. Overall success rates on Train to Gain programmes are good at 69% during 2005-06 and 88% during 2006-07.
11. Learners make slow progress during their award. Apprenticeship and Train to Gain timely success rates are improving but remain consistently below national averages. Apprenticeship learners repeatedly miss target completion dates.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade: 2

12. The quality of provision is good with good planning of some learning. In hairdressing and care, many learners achieve key skills awards at a higher level than the framework requirement. Tutors integrate key skills into the occupational context making them interesting and meaningful. Many varied activities, visits, sporting activities and guest speakers extend E2E learners' experience and raise their aspirations. On all programmes, individual coaching and small group support is good. Tutors carefully plan learning to match the needs and work roles of learners.
13. Tft has good progression routes to match learner needs and career development. Progression advice and guidance take good account of learners existing skills, experience and career goals. Learners are able to complete additional awards and extend their choice of optional units. Many learners take non-occupational specific qualifications that enhance their effectiveness in the work place.
14. Tft provides highly effective support to meet the needs of learners. Tutors increase their frequent visits to the workplace if learners require additional support, training or assessment. Sometimes this includes weekends and evenings. Literacy and numeracy support is available in the workplace with additional support available in the centres three days each week. Good use is made of external agencies to pursue personal issues such as finance, housing, health and well-being. Useful contact numbers are available around the centre and on the desktop of personal computers.
15. All apprentice and E2E learners complete initial literacy and numeracy assessments, with diagnostic assessments completed for learners with low GCSE results. Train to Gain learners on subcontracted provision do not yet receive initial assessments but Tft are in the early stages of deciding how to extend assessment and support to Train to Gain learners.

16. Tft has some ineffective good teaching. Of the 11 training sessions observed, three were good, seven were satisfactory and one was inadequate. Better sessions include good interesting activities that are well paced and challenging. Poorer sessions are unstructured and do not motivate and engage learners.
17. Progress and development targets are insufficiently detailed. Targets in individual learning plans and those set during learner reviews are insufficiently detailed, not always time bound and too frequently record targets as whole units.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

18. Leadership and management are good. Partnership working is very good, as recognised through self-assessment. Tft is committed to, and has invested considerable resource in partnership working. Tft generously shares its good practice, documentation and procedures with partners and its subcontractor. Tft selects the partnerships it is involved in carefully. Learners benefit from the greater range of provision and progression routes offered through collaboration. Tft has introduced a good range of 14-16 provision since the previous inspection. Management of the subcontractor is good and supportive. Tft use the same quality assurance and monitoring processes with the subcontractor as it uses internally.
19. Internal and external communication is particularly good, as recognised through self-assessment. A very good meeting structure ensures all staff are well informed of strategic and operational matters. All meetings have standard agendas to maintain focus and ensure necessary information is discussed and shared. Minutes are detailed and clearly show action required, responsibility for action, and ongoing issues. Progress against relevant targets is discussed and shared at all meetings.
20. Tft shares information on its performance with partners. Communications with schools and 14-16 partners are good. A 14-19 co-ordinator has been employed and liaises closely with schools and parents. Good incentives schemes link learner activity and progress to school activities. Employer engagement is good and employers are kept up-to-date with learners' progress. However, E2E placement providers are not effectively involved in learners' programmes.
21. Action taken to improve the quality of the provision is good. Tft is particularly self-critical and acts upon feedback from learners, partners and employers. Good observation and audit systems are in place to quality assure all key procedures and stages of the learning cycle. Observations of teaching, assessment or individual tutorials occur three times each year. Inadequate grades are re-observed in 12 weeks. Audit has identified some variability in the quality of target-setting, but Tft has not adequately resolved the issue. Internal verification is well planned and well structured. However, it has failed to identify some poor assessment practice. When inspectors identified issues, staff took immediate action to resolve them.

22. Strategic, operational and programme management are good. Staff development is good and is linked to appraisals. Support for new staff is good. Flexible working patterns enable staff to visit learners at weekends and in the evenings.
23. Overall arrangements for health and safety monitoring are satisfactory. Facilities and resources are satisfactory. Facilities at the Bolton centre have been upgraded and are well resourced.
24. Action to improve timely success rates is slow. Although overall apprenticeship success rates are now good, timely success rates are still low. The October 2007 self-assessment is the first to refer to timely success rates. A newly introduced colour coded system identifies learners not meeting their targets as they near the end of their programme. However, reports showing how much of their qualifications learners have achieved are not used sufficiently throughout the programme.
25. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Some learners have a particularly good understanding of equality and diversity issues. Learners receive an informative booklet about equality and diversity, but some of the information and language used is too complex.
26. Issues identified at the previous inspection have been satisfactorily resolved. For example, all staff have had equality and diversity training and marketing material has been changed. An equality and diversity officer keeps all staff up to date with changes in the legislation, news and monitoring of learners. An equality and diversity committee meets once a quarter and is made up of representatives from each vocational area. The gender balance on traditionally female dominated E2E programmes has improved. However, insufficient action is taken to promote training to under-represented minority ethnic groups.

What learners like:

- 'The ability to get extra help at the centre whenever you like'
- The friendly and supportive staff and other learners
- The experience and expertise of the staff
- The good information about the NVQ at the beginning of the programme
- 'The helpful advice when I had a personal problem'
- 'It's helped me a lot with my job and handling people'
- 'How you can get lots of qualifications and they are free!'
- 'The amount of enjoyable activities to help us learn'
- 'The way the programme has improved my mathematics'
- The help in getting a job

What learners think could improve:

- To have less theory sessions
- Reduce the time hairdressers are working on head-blocks
- To have more facilities in the canteen at Prestwich
- 'The Bolton kitchen needs finishing quickly'
- More outside activities

Sector subject areas

Health and social care

Good: Grade 2

Context

27. Tft has eight advanced apprentices, 32 health and social care apprentices, and 28 learners on Train to Gain care level 2 programmes. Of the current learners, four are men. Tutors at the Bolton centre provide training and assessment for key skills and the technical certificate. Learners who have difficulty attending receive on-the-job training in their place of work. Most learners are employed in Bolton and the surrounding areas. A small number of learners are in placements.

Strengths

- Good overall success rates
- Good development of work skills
- Good learner progression
- Particularly effective support for learners
- Well-managed programmes

Areas for improvement

- Insufficiently detailed target-setting
- Insufficiently integrated apprenticeship programmes

Achievement and standards

28. Overall success rates are good. They have improved over the last three years and are consistently above national rates. In 2006-07, 61% of apprentices and 67% of advanced apprentices achieved their framework. Train to Gain success rates for the same year were 74%. Tft has successfully implemented measures to improve the timely success rates on apprenticeship programmes. However, Train to Gain timely rates are low.

29. Learners develop a good range of new skills, knowledge and confidence. New learners quickly develop a good understanding of the core values that underpin health and social care. More experienced learners develop knowledge and understanding which enhances their practice in the workplace. Development of supervisory and team working skills has enabled some learners to gain promotion.

30. Learner progression onto further qualifications and career advancement is good. Thorough and highly relevant information, advice and guidance provide learners with a good understanding of progression routes. Over the past two years, 22% of learners have progressed to further training. Many aspire to progress to nurse training or senior positions in social care. On completion of the advanced apprenticeship programme, one learner applied for and was successful in gaining a management position. Two other learners train and assess in the workplace. Able learners are actively encouraged to achieve additional key skills qualifications or ones at a higher level than the framework requirement. A Train to Gain learner has completed an information technology key skills qualification and is using this new skill to carry out research towards the care NVQ Level 3.

Quality of provision

31. Tft provides particularly effective support for learners. Assessor visits are flexible with evening and early morning visits arranged to meet learner needs and their work patterns. Learners have good access to assessors' through frequent fortnightly visits and mobile telephone contact. Tutors visit learners who are falling behind target more frequently. The internal verifier carries out 12 weekly reviews of progress, with tutors completing six weekly visits for learners with additional learning or support needs. Internal verifiers act as an impartial critical friend, capturing learner opinions and any issues of concern. Staff have a good understanding of individual learners' needs. They support and closely monitor those with personal issues or additional learning needs. Assessors provide good coaching in portfolio-building and very effectively support learners in fully understanding the national occupational standards. Where learners have difficulty attending the centre, assessors provide training in the workplace. Employers feel very well supported. They work in partnership with assessors helping learner progress and improve performance in the workplace.
32. Teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. Staff are occupationally competent and appropriately qualified. Training rooms are spacious with learners' work displayed on walls. A wide range of training materials supports teaching and learning. Good use is made of an interactive whiteboard quiz to check knowledge and understanding. However, some electronic presentations have too much information on each slide and are difficult to read.
33. Overall, assessment practice is satisfactory. Assessors visit learners frequently every two weeks and agree an assessment plan. Assessment plans include realistic short-term targets agreed between the assessor and learner. Most plans are detailed and inform learners of what they need to complete. Learners receive good and immediate verbal feedback for observed practice and written work but only receive recorded feedback for written work when the whole unit is completed. The range of evidence in learner files is appropriate and good. Learner progress reviews are satisfactory overall.
34. Target-setting is insufficiently detailed. Individual learning plan targets are set according to the learner's end of training date. Targeting for individual unit completion is insufficient with most units having the same target date for achievement. Tft's internal quality audit has identified this and recent records show an improvement. Some progress review records are insufficiently detailed. Where learners have not met targets, records to demonstrate the reasons that have attributed to the missed target date are insufficient. Some review records lack detail with comments such as 'good progress' and 'on target for completion'.
35. The components of the apprenticeship framework are insufficiently integrated. Learner's complete key skills awards as discrete qualifications at the start of their programme. Most learners complete their key skills portfolios before starting the technical certificate, with the NVQ following on as the technical certificate is completed. Some learners are on programme for almost 12 months before observations towards their care NVQ are completed. Assessors do not effectively use assessment opportunities across the three qualifications. Programme managers have identified this issue and are currently examining more efficient assessment practices.

Leadership and management

36. Care programmes are well-managed. Well-recorded weekly staff meetings provide staff with company and training updates and time to focus on issues that affect learners. Staff value the particularly supportive individual meetings with their manager in helping them develop strategies to support learners falling behind target. A quarterly company meeting effectively updates staff on Tft's achievements against its targets and business plan and provides time to share any good practice. Assessors are fully involved in the self-assessment process and take full ownership of the development plan for their area. Employers receive useful newsletters and information on new programmes and any funding available. Continual improvement has a clear focus and internal quality audits have accurately highlighted areas for improvement. Internal verification is well planned and timely. Assessors receive clear feedback on how to improve assessment practices. However, internal verification has not been effective in identifying some issues identified during inspection.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Good: Grade 2

Context

37. Tft offers hairdressing training to 41 advanced apprentices and 89 apprentices, of whom two are following barbering courses. Learners join the programme through referral from Connexions, employers or direct applications to Tft. Apprentices attend the centre for off-the-job training and assessment once every two weeks. Advanced apprentice training and assessment is entirely salon based, but they attend the centre for additional support. Currently 81 employer salons, 12 hairdressing staff and two internal verifiers support the learners while on programme.

Strengths

- Good skill development
- Good overall success rates
- Good learner progression
- Good key skill practices
- Very responsive and supportive employers
- Good and flexible learner support

Areas for improvement

- Slow progress of some learners
- Insufficient embedding of health and safety practices early in the programme
- Insufficiently detailed target-setting

Achievement and standards

38. Learners' skill development is good. This is demonstrated in the salons and in the competition work organised by Tft. Learners develop good occupational skills and customer care. They are able to work with confidence selecting products and services. Learners exhibit a high degree of professionalism showing good commitment to clients and their learning.

39. Overall success rates for all programmes are good, and are consistently higher than national averages. Overall success rates have increased year on year since 2004-05 and are now good at 70% for advanced apprentices and 71% for apprentices. Tft identified this strength in their self-assessment.

40. Learner progression is good. Over the last two years 33% of learners progressed from the apprenticeship into other learning. Many learners progress directly onto advanced hairdressing apprenticeships and others complete customer service units while they develop appropriate clientele ready for level 3 hairdressing.

41. Some learner progress towards their awards is slow. Timely success rates are consistently below national averages and current rates are lower than those of the previous year. Some assessment is slow and learners frequently miss their deadlines for completion of units. Tft

has recently introduced a reward system for learners based on the early completion of key skills and units of the NVQ.

Quality of provision

42. Arrangements for promoting good key skills practices are integral to the programme. Tft is reluctant to apply key skill concessions. Apprentices with GCSE Grades A*-C are entered for key skills higher than the framework requirement. Key skills teaching and assignments are in context or a subject that interests the learners. Wherever possible the assessment of key skills is through naturally occurring evidence. Learners and employers recognise the benefits and transferability of key skills.
43. Tft works with very responsive and supportive employers. The organisation actively seeks employers who support its values. Around 36% of employers are ex-learners, which promotes mutual loyalty and learners benefit from their employers' knowledge of Tft and the programme. Employers are particularly effective in supporting advanced apprentice learners whose development is almost entirely dependant on employers with additional support provided by Tft staff. Many employers are actively involved in good and extensive discussions on their learner's progress during review.
44. Individual support for learners is particularly good. All learners have assessors' mobile telephone numbers. Tutors take good account of learners needs when visiting salons for assessment, review, vocational training and literacy and numeracy support. As a minimum, tutors visit every four weeks, sometimes at weekends or in the evenings. Learners can arrange to attend the centre at any time for additional support. Tft carefully matches apprentices to the characteristics of salons before they are placed. Some 70% of learners remain with the same employer during their apprentice and advance apprentice programmes. Tutors mediate with employers on learners' behalf and referrals to external advisory bodies are well considered and meaningful. All optional units are available as part of the framework. Tft staff give good advice and guidance on the appropriateness of units in meeting the needs and interest of learners and employers.
45. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Lesson plans are satisfactory, with good ones identifying learners with support requirements. Learners' understanding is checked throughout lessons and at the beginning of the next session. A good ratio of staff to learners in practical sessions allows learners access to individual attention. However, there are too few clients for learners and practise work on mannequin blocks is unstructured. Enrichment activities include visits to an external hair competition and visiting speakers. Resources are satisfactory. Salons at both the centres are newly refurbished with up to date equipment and professional products. However, the Bolton centre does not have a payment facility or display area for retail products.
46. Assessment is satisfactory and meets the requirements for the awarding body. The internal verification plan identifies the learners, assessors and salons eligible for verification. However, the sampling of observed activities has an uneven bias to the paper based and non chemical treatments and services.
47. The embedding of health and safety practices early in the programme is insufficiently rigorous. Examples of good health and safety practices are evident. Combs and other equipment are routinely sterilised and learners clean the salon during practical sessions and at the end of each day. However, there is inconsistency in the use of personal

protective equipment for chemical work, some learners open hairgrips with their teeth and learners do not routinely protect clients from hot electrical equipment.

48. Target-setting at review is insufficiently detailed. Although short, medium and long-term targets are set during reviews, records do not identify clear deadlines for completion of work. Learners are often unsure when work has to be completed.

Leadership and management

49. The management of the programme is good. Meetings are frequent and focus well on learner issues with recorded actions to support learners and improve achievement. The team places much emphasis on continual improvement spending time evaluating current practice, developing new approaches and learning materials. Some of the experienced and well-qualified tutors still work in commercial salons. Staff development is good with a range of activities forming the staffs' continual professional development. Tft has good strategies to increase the number of work-based assessors through its frequent tutor visits. Staff, learners and a local employer were actively involved in the self-assessment process.

Employability training

Good: Grade 2

Context

50. Currently 60 E2E learners attend either the Bolton or Prestwich centre for a minimum of 16 hours per week in either the afternoon or morning. Training increases to 30 hours per week when the learners are on placement. Learners can start the programme at any time through the year. The programme includes the three core areas of skills for life, vocational development and personal and social skills development. Learners have a range of barriers to employment. The Connexions service refers most learners but some self-refer or are recruited directly by Tft. Some learners progress onto the programme from the pre E2E programme, 'Step-Up' for 14-16 year olds.

Strengths

- Good development of personal and social skills
- Good range of activities to complement learning
- Good range of initial assessment to inform planning of learning
- Good support and guidance for learners

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient involvement of placement providers in learners development
- Some ineffective recording of progression and development targets

Achievement and standards

51. Learners develop a good range of personal and social skills, including the ability to identify their personal strengths and areas for improvement. They show development of thinking skills, an awareness of how their opinions and judgements are formed and respect for others. Team working skills are strongly developed and established in activities. Learners report a significant increase in their confidence and motivation. Their communication skills, confidence in using the telephone, giving presentations and taking part in role-play improve. A list of personal and social skills is kept in all files and this is kept up to date with regard to their progress.

52. Learners develop a satisfactory level of vocational skills. This includes jobsearch skills and an awareness of job opportunities and skills and qualifications needed for different jobs. For those on work placement, employment skills are developed in a supportive environment. Approximately 50% of learners are on placement or have a part-time job. Some learners, particularly at Prestwich are frustrated by not yet having a work placement.

53. Progression rates are satisfactory, increasing from 53% in 2005-06 to 56% in 2006-07. Approximately 16% of leavers progressed to apprenticeships last year. Learner achievement of key objectives has also increased, partly due to tutors agreeing aims that are more realistic with learners. However, literacy and numeracy qualification outcomes are low.

Quality of provision

54. A good range of activities reinforces learning including visits to venues with job and training opportunities, leisure pursuits and outside activities. External organisations contribute to the programme including agencies that help with drug and alcohol misuse. A presentation by an agency supporting asylum seekers makes a profound impact on learners' understanding of the plight of asylum seekers and also helps learners to understand how their voice can be heard. Learners benefit from advice on budgeting and cooking healthily on a budget. Good use is made of drama and role-play activities.
55. Good and extensive initial assessments inform individual learning plans and support learner development. Learners complete a full range of particularly effective exercises, observations, self-evaluation, group and computer-based exercises and tests during the initial stage of the programme. Learners produce and give a power point presentation of their preferred and researched career choice. Initial assessment effectively informs the planning of learning so that targets are individual and realistic.
56. Learners receive good support and guidance and find staff extremely helpful. Tft use a good range of specialist referral agencies to support learners. There is a good ratio of staff to learners with plenty of opportunity for individual support. Additional specialist staff join group sessions to support learners with additional needs. Planned placements take full account of learner's individual skills and social needs. Learner's personal advisers effectively review and identify any ongoing support required by learners. Information and guidance is good. Learners have access to relevant pamphlets and contact numbers and computer screens have direct links to websites which are useful to learners for jobsearch and support.
57. Support for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. More learners are now completing literacy and numeracy qualifications. Literacy and numeracy sessions planned to match learners needs effectively improve learners ICT, creative and team working skills. Learners report good progress in their numeracy and literacy skills. However, entry level qualifications have yet to be developed at Prestwich.
58. Resources are appropriate to enable a good variety of teaching and learning activities. There is an interactive whiteboard and learners regularly use the sufficient number of networked computers. However, the Bolton centre has problems with computer connections, which are unreliable. Rooms are spacious and well maintained. Learners' work is displayed attractively and learners have sufficient social space.
59. Placement providers are not sufficiently involved with learners' development. They do not receive information about learner's current literacy and numeracy skills or their aims and targets. Placement providers feedback on learner progress is not routinely collected and any paper records are brief. Information provided to placement providers is incomplete. Many are unable to help learners in career or training choices. Tft have plans to recruit additional staff to specialise in supporting placement providers.
60. Target-setting is not always specific, measurable or time bound. In some instances targets are repeated several times with no progress. Learners may meet targets but there is little indication of how well they have performed. Weekly activity sheets completed by learners and commented on by trainers do give some of this information.

Leadership and management

61. Management is satisfactory. Communication is effective between sites. Promotion of equality and diversity to learners is good. Inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated. Although reviews, initial interviews and induction are quality assured, observations of teaching and learning are not yet part of the quality cycle. Tft evaluate learner satisfaction levels but questionnaires do not have the level of detail required to make specific improvements. Quality processes do not include detail of how work placements should be effectively monitored and evaluated. Self-assessment includes input from staff and learners.

Business, administration and law

Good: Grade 2

Context

62. There are 61 apprentices and seven advanced apprentices in customer service and business administration. Of these, 80% are women, with 8.5% from minority ethnic backgrounds. All learners are employed in a wide range of small, medium and large enterprises, amongst which are hairdressing salons, retail outlets, the Primary Care Trust, accountants and banks. Most assessment and learning is in the workplace. Tft also provide training in business management, Train to Gain and programme led learners. However, these learners are not part of the inspection judgements because of low numbers. All staff have appropriate industry background, experience and qualifications

Strengths

- Good overall success rates for apprentices
- Highly effective support to meet learners' individual needs
- Well managed programme

Areas for improvement

- No areas for improvement identified

Achievement and standards

63. Overall success rates for apprentices are good, with an upward trend on both apprentice and advanced apprentice programmes. Apprentice overall success rates have increased over the past three years from 58% to 85%. Advanced apprentices overall success rates have increased from 50% in 2005-06 to 57% in 2006-07. Timely success rates for apprentices are much improved but are still lower than the national average. Some learners make slow progress with targets for completion routinely extended.

64. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory, with some very good work in portfolios. Employers report on the good contributions made by their learners to work activities. This extends to activities within the centre. Learners benefit from this breadth of learning from increased confidence and enhanced job skills, particularly in communication, organisation and people handling. A level 3 learner designed the safety notices displayed in all rooms at the provider's premises.

Quality of provision

65. Highly effective support meets the individual needs of learners. Assessor visits to learners in the workplace are frequent, weekly if needed. Tutors tailor the visits to the requirements of the learner. Learners and assessors have a good rapport. Learners requiring additional learning or social support receive a sympathetic approach. Tutors are patient, motivating and provide an emphatic attitude to learners. Effectively planned help from specialist literacy and numeracy colleagues provide extra coaching towards key skills end tests. Learners' optional units are well considered and negotiated to match learners work roles and responsibilities. Learners value the guidance and support they receive from staff. Many believe their progress and achievements are a direct result of the frequent contact

and perseverance of Tft staff. Dedicated staff support learners' personal welfare. External help is available from a list of agencies but learners have rarely requested external advice and guidance.

66. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. A range of informative learning resources are used effectively to engage and motivate learners. Learners are receptive to suggestions on how to improve their work practices and skills. They demonstrate good attainment, responding well to activities and tasks. However, aims and objectives are not clearly defined. The very good resources are not always effectively used and some wording in presentations is too complex for learners who lack confidence. Whenever possible training provided in the workplace is carefully planned to reflect the work practices of learners.
67. Assessment is satisfactory with observation a preferred method. Frequent assessor visits provide good and extensive opportunities for assessment. Assessment has been too assessor-led, but recent changes encourage learners to take more of a lead in writing their own action plans under the assessor's supervision and identifying the criteria being met. Assessment is methodical and organised but at times too dependant on repetitious written questions. Action plans are detailed, but are routinely carried forward and targets extended with insufficient detail on the reasons for extending the targets.
68. The initial assessment process is good. All learners complete initial literacy and numeracy assessments. Arrangements for diagnostic tests and additional support for learners with literacy and numeracy needs is good. Learners receive good key skills support as part of the individual coaching from their tutors within the workplace. Additional support is available through agreement with their tutor for on-the-job specialist help or access to additional support sessions available three days each week at the centre.
69. Twelve-weekly learner progress reviews and the resulting training and assessment targets are satisfactory. Reviews give learners the opportunity to assess their own progress and comment on personal issues. Training and assessment targets take good account of learners work roles. Although there are some repetitious targets, most are realistic and achievable. Support to address any breach of equality of opportunity is readily available as is the promotion of health and safety during the review. Employers are invited to participate in their learners' review. Although some employer involvement is limited, all employers complete written comments on the review.

Leadership and management

70. This is a well managed programme, with very good communication between all the staff. Individual staff meetings are frequent and minuted. The quality manager regularly audits and grades the meeting, visits and reviews, with areas for improvement noted. However, audit documents contain standard phrases and lose impact. Observation of teaching and learning is well-planned, with action-planning and additional monitoring where necessary. Peer observations also regularly occur with written feedback given. Staff speak highly of the benefits from this exchange of practice. Management information is effective in monitoring learners' progress. Tft is very effective in promoting and managing the opportunities for learners to progress onto customer service and administration NVQs from the hairdressing, health and care programmes. Learners benefit from this breadth of learning through increased confidence and enhanced job skills, particularly in communication, organisation and people handling.

71. The internal verification strategy shows frequent and systematic observation of assessment audit of product. The internal verifier does not interview learners at the time of assessment. While thorough, internal verification did not pick up some over-assessment and was slow to address the assessor-led practice. Paperwork used for internal verification is standard and approved and is generally effective, although two checklists are not fit for purpose.
72. Annual and ongoing staff development is clearly logged, showing a good range of in-house and external training.
73. Staff were involved in the self-assessment process with an employer and learner taking part in the discussions. Inspectors broadly agreed with self-assessment judgements.

Learners' achievements

Health, public services and care

Success rates on **work-based learning apprenticeship programmes** managed by the provider **2004 to 2007**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners	Provider NVQ rate	National NVQ rate	Provider framework rate	National framework rate
Advanced Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		timely	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	05-06	overall	5	40%	49%	40%	29%
		timely	9	11%	33%	11%	18%
	06-07	overall	9	67%	N/A	67%	N/A
		timely	6	50%	N/A	50%	N/A
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	12	58%	38%	42%	19%
		timely	15	13%	18%	0%	9%
	05-06	overall	30	47%	48%	47%	38%
		timely	35	9%	24%	9%	18%
	06-07	overall	23	65%	N/A	61%	N/A
		timely	19	36%	N/A	32%	N/A

Note 'At the time of the inspection - LSC data for 2006-07 had yet to be fully validated'

- * Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned.
- ** Provider and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'.

Success rates on **work-based learning Train to Gain programmes** managed by the provider to **2006 to 2007**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**
Train to Gain ***	2006-07	overall	31	74%
		timely	51	19%
	2007-08 (2 months)	overall	2	100%
		timely	17	12%

Note: 2007-08 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the first 3 months or greater of the LSC contract year

- * Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned.
- ** Provider qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'.
- *** Includes 'Train to Gain' long course NVQ provision, but not 'skills for life'.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Success rates on **work-based learning apprenticeship programmes** managed by the provider **2004 to 2007**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate **	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	5	80%	41%	60%	29%
		timely	4	75%	28%	50%	20%
	05-06	overall	11	73%	45%	64%	36%
		timely	12	33%	26%	33%	19%
	06-07	overall	27	70%	N/A	70%	N/A
		timely	27	19%	N/A	19%	N/A
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	45	62%	50%	62%	42%
		timely	49	16%	33%	16%	28%
	05-06	overall	104	53%	55%	53%	52%
		timely	108	31%	38%	31%	36%
	06-07	overall	72	71%	N/A	71%	N/A
		timely	66	26%	N/A	26%	N/A

Note 'At the time of the inspection - LSC data for 2006-07 had yet to be fully validated'

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned.

** Provider and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'.

Employability Training

Outcomes on **Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes** managed by the provider **2005 to 2008**.

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate*	Progression rate**
2005-06	143	0%	53%
2006-07	129	35%	50%
2007-08 (3 months)	40	68%	80%

Note: 2007-08 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the three months or greater of the LSC contract year

* These are key objectives identified for each learner following an E2E programme

** Progression is measured in terms learners' movement to further education, education and employment, during or at the end of their training period

Business, administration and law

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners	Provider NVQ rate	National NVQ rate	Provider framework rate	National framework rate
Advanced	04-05	overall	1	0%	47%	0%	32%

Apprenticeships		timely	1	0%	34%	0%	23%
	05-06	overall	2	50%	59%	50%	50%
		timely	4	0%	44%	0%	37%
	06-07	overall	7	71%	N/A	57%	N/A
timely		6	33%	N/A	33%	N/A	
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	24	58%	56%	58%	46%
		timely	29	38%	35%	38%	29%
	05-06	overall	38	63%	62%	63%	57%
		timely	39	23%	44%	23%	41%
	06-07	overall	53	85%	N/A	85%	N/A
		timely	47	53%	N/A	53%	N/A

Note 'At the time of the inspection - LSC data for 2006-07 had yet to be fully validated'

- * Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned.
- ** Provider and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'.