



TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL

INSPECTION REPORT OCTOBER 1999

Kendal College

SUMMARY

Kendal College provides satisfactory training in hair and beauty. The practical training is given in a modern well-equipped salon. Trainees receive satisfactory support from college staff and use the wide-range of college services. All trainees are tested for their basic skills ability. The college has recently completed a comprehensive audit of equal opportunities but the trainees' induction to equal opportunities is inadequate. The retention and achievement rates of trainees have improved but are still poor for the industry. The performance of modern apprentices is particularly poor. Trainees are not set demanding enough targets and monitoring is inadequate. Opportunities to assess in the workplace are missed. There are not enough work-based assessors. The college has well-established management and quality assurance systems but fails to integrate the on- and off-the-job training. Work-based training is evaluated using the extensive college systems but not enough emphasis is placed on the feedback from employers or the quality of training in the workplace.

GRADES

| OCCUPATIONAL AREAS | GRADE |
|--------------------|-------|
| Hair & beauty | 3 |

| GENERIC AREAS | GRADE |
|------------------------|-------|
| Equal opportunities | 3 |
| Trainee support | 3 |
| Management of training | 3 |
| Quality assurance | 3 |

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ good practical training in hairdressing
- ◆ good occupational resources
- ◆ all trainees tested for basic skills
- ◆ comprehensive college support services
- ◆ college-wide audit of equal opportunities
- ◆ clear strategic planning process
- ◆ well-established quality assurance systems
- ◆ good variety of feedback methods

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor retention and achievement of modern apprentices
- ◆ missed opportunities for assessment
- ◆ no initial assessment of key skills
- ◆ ineffective deployment of assessors
- ◆ inadequate induction to equal opportunities
- ◆ inadequate monitoring of achievement of targets
- ◆ poor integration of on- and off-the-job training
- ◆ no formal feedback sought from employers

INTRODUCTION

1. Kendal College is a general further education college in Kendal in Cumbria. It operates from four sites in the town. The main building on the south side of the town provides accommodation for most of the teaching. The college serves a rural area with students attending from within a radius of 25 miles. The college's catchment area has a population of 100,000. There are 30,000 people living in the town of Kendal. Kendal has 10 local secondary schools, including two grammar schools whose pupils regularly achieve good examination results. The next nearest further education colleges are at Lancaster and Morecombe, 30 miles from Kendal. The college has 138 permanent staff, 770 full-time students and 8,132 part-time students. Most students in the college are over the age of 21 years. Kendal College has held a contract with the local training and enterprise council (TEC), Enterprise Cumbria Limited, since 1990. The contract makes up less than two per cent of the total college income. There are currently 38 trainees working towards NVQs at levels 1 to 3. There are 26 trainees in hair and beauty, two in business administration, three in catering, three in work preparation, three in health and social care and one in information technology. Nine are modern apprentices, 21 are national trainees and eight trainees are on other work-based training programmes for young people. The college has a contract with a national training provider for the full-time education and training option in a New Deal programme and currently has 13 clients in nine occupational areas. The only trainees to be covered by this inspection are the 26 taking hair and beauty, as the numbers in the other occupational areas are too small to inspect.

2. Cumbria's major industries are farming and tourism. Agricultural businesses accounted for nearly 30 per cent of VAT registered companies in 1994, compared with 10.6 per cent nationally. However, the labour requirements of modern farming are relatively low compared to some other industries. Tourism has created many new jobs in hotels and catering, and this sector, along with retailing, health and social work, distribution and education, accounts for over half of Cumbria's total employment. Recent areas of decline in employment have been construction, manufacturing, transport and communications. The unemployment rate is 5 per cent, which roughly equates to the national average of 5.2 per cent. The unemployment rate for Kendal is 2 per cent.

3. In 1998, the percentage of pupils leaving school and achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 43.9 per cent, compared with the national average of 46.3 per cent. Seventy-two per cent of year-11 pupils from the Kendal area remain in full-time education. This figure is 10 per cent higher than other areas of Cumbria and 12 per cent higher than the national average. In 1998, only 2.4 per cent of year-11 pupils went into work-based training and 11.3 per cent went into employment.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

4. Kendal College produced its self-assessment report along with one for the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). Inspections by the FEFC and the Training Standards Council (TSC) took place during the same week. Self-assessment is an annual process in the college and is linked to the quality management and business planning cycle. The report was prepared by the vice-principal for standards who consulted with the training staff, with advice and guidance from the TEC. The report was descriptive rather than evaluative in its statements. Inspectors agreed with most of the grades given in the report for the generic aspects, but awarded a lower grade for hair and beauty.

5. Three inspectors spent a total of 10 days at the college. Where appropriate, FEFC and TSC inspectors conducted joint interviews and shared evidence and interview records. The TSC inspectors interviewed 17 trainees, which represents 65 per cent of trainees, 21 staff, 8 employers and one member of staff from the TEC. They reviewed trainees' files, policies and procedures, trainees' records, employers' files, marketing materials, quality assurance reports and evaluation data. Inspectors observed three training sessions and awarded two a grade 2 and one a grade 3.

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Hair & beauty

Grade 3

6. Kendal College has 24 trainees in hairdressing, and two in beauty therapy. Five trainees are modern apprentices and 21 are national trainees working towards hair and beauty NVQs at levels 2 and 3. All except one are employed. All trainees attend off-the-job training at the college one day each week, which includes practical, theoretical and key skills training. Beauty trainees attend some generic classes with hairdressing trainees, then break into subject groups for occupational sessions. On-the-job training takes place in local salons, where the trainees are supervised and practise their new skills on clients. A 'vocational field assessor monitor', or roving assessor, from the college is responsible for assessing the trainees in the workplace, conducting reviews, developing training plans and providing pastoral support to the trainees. The self-assessment report identified many strengths and few weaknesses. Inspectors regarded many of the strengths as no more than standard practice. Inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses and awarded a grade lower than that given by the college.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ high standard of practical training
- ◆ trainers systematically updated on hairdressing techniques
- ◆ modern, well-resourced facilities at college and workplace
- ◆ good promotion of professional standards

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ slow progress of trainees
- ◆ missed opportunities for assessment
- ◆ poor retention and achievement of modern apprentices
- ◆ undemanding targets set for trainees

7. Practical training is informative, well planned and effective, with good attention to detail. Inspectors observed an off-the-job training session for first-year trainees on consultation. This included a demonstration in which all trainees worked as a cohesive group to identify and expand upon the main points of a good consultation, after which they practised consultation on each other. There were nine trainees to one tutor, so trainees could have individual attention if necessary. Trainees demonstrated a very clear understanding of the process, and they were eager to try their newly learned skills on their own models at the next session. In another off-the-job training session, which covered blow-drying, the tutor took great care to explain the effect of different types of brushes on different hair types and lengths. The standard of off-the-job training is high. Trainees produced good work following this training. The standard of training in the employers' salons is also good and the training is planned effectively. Trainees can bring models in at anytime during the week to practise their skills. Trainees show a good level of practical ability, with many trainees able to blow-dry the hair of paying customers in the salons after only two to three months on the programme.

8. The college tutors and salon trainers constantly update their knowledge of hairdressing techniques and skills. The college has good links with the product manufacturers and is kept informed of the latest developments in both products and equipment. Training is also provided by the manufacturers on such topics as new types of perm and perm curlers. Long hair and cutting workshops are also arranged, with the teaching being led by a well-known local hairdresser. Each year, college tutors participate in both advanced colouring and perming courses provided by a major product manufacture. Salon trainers also join in the manufacturers' technical sessions and specialist skills events. Some also attend the 'updating skills' sessions put on by the college staff.

9. All salons are modern and well equipped with a good range of tools and resources. Most salons are situated in the centre of the main towns in the lake district. Their decor and presentation is good and reflects their high profile in this

sector locally. The college salon has a strong professional image and has recently been recognised as a centre of excellence by a major manufacturer. The manufacturer will use the college salon as a base to provide training for their customers in the surrounding area.

GOOD PRACTICE

This is a good example of adhering to the health and safety requirements in a salon. A trainee was applying a 'quasi colour' to a customer's hair and showed good attention to protecting the customer and herself, including carefully and safely disposing of the gloves.

10. Professional standards are promoted through a range of activities. All trainees have to conform to a formal dress code and abide by clearly promoted salon rules. Health and safety is rigorously implemented. For example, when trainees arrive for their practical training, all of their equipment is sterilised before work commences. There is an average of one 'barberside jar' for each two styling units, which reinforces the standard of cleanliness required in the salon. The college encourages students to adopt a professional approach to clients, which is a requirement of the industry. For example, trainees recommend specific types of hair 'aftercare' to their clients using the range of professional retail products which the college stocks.

11. A large number of trainees who have been on the programme for over a year have still to complete a full unit of the NVQ. This is partly due to the sequence of off-the-job training promoted in the hair and beauty department. Until January 1999, all theory training was given during the first year, with no practical training until the second year when most of the practical assessment was completed. Using feedback from employers and trainees and analysis of the NVQ achievement figures, the college recognised that this was not the best method of training and altered it to provide a mix of theory and practice from the beginning of the programmes. The full range of assessment methods are used: trainees are observed, are questioned about their work and have to complete written assignments.

12. The college has tried to increase the amount of assessment in the workplace by developing the role of the roving assessors to carry out assessment in the salon as part of their duties. However, this is limited by the fact that such assessors are only employed for 30 weeks of the year. Last year, the staff's priority was to ensure that second year NVQ level 2 students had all of their assessment completed. This resulted in first year trainees having an average of only two assessment sessions in the workplace. These sessions were put to good use, but naturally occurring assessment opportunities were missed. The roving assessors visited in the evening or on Saturdays, and often three or four NVQ units were assessed. The college identified that two assessment sessions in the workplace combined with a shortened training and assessment time in the college severely effected first year students' results. Five of the twenty-two salons used have qualified assessors, but they do not assess trainees systematically and, as they are supervisors, have their own clients to attend to as well as observing the trainees. College staff have identified problems in ensuring that work-based assessors maintain the awarding body standards. Evidence did not satisfy performance criteria or range statements in a few cases. Only one workplace assessor is fulfilling the role effectively.

13. Retention and achievement rates for trainees are below the national average, but have shown steady improvement over the last three years. In 1996, 75 per cent of trainees left early without completing their training and 25 per cent achieved their

qualifications. In 1998, 57 per cent left early and 43 per cent gained their qualifications. Trainees and employers have welcomed the restructured training programme. The roving assessors are now even more closely involved with trainees as they are course tutors for off-the-job training. Retention and achievement rates for modern apprentices are poor. Although rates have increased slightly over the past three years, the performance is below the average for the industry. Of the trainees who started in 1996, 80 per cent left early and 20 per cent achieved their qualifications; in 1998 70 per cent left early and 30 per cent achieved. The college recruits most of its applicants directly from salons. During the past two years, most employers have opted for the modern apprenticeship scheme for their trainees owing partly to a financial incentive from the TEC. However, some salons were not able to provide the appropriate level and variety of work required for trainees to complete this programme, and the programme was not suited to the ability of all trainees. Many employers withdrew from the scheme. For example in 1997, 44 per cent of trainees achieved NVQ level 2, but half of these withdrew before attempting level 3. The college has now radically changed its whole approach to modern apprenticeships with agreement from the TEC. National traineeships have become the main route into training, with careful selection of applicants wanting to attempt the level 3 stage.

14. The college identified that trainees are making slow progress and that there are problems with retention and achievement. It also identified that completion dates are set which are not sufficiently demanding for trainees. For NVQ level 2 trainees, individual training plans give three to three and a half years for completion, and there are no interim dates for the achievement of NVQ units. Reviews are unspecific, encompassing welfare issues, rather than focusing on the trainee's occupational or NVQ progress. Monitoring of assessment has been weak. In some cases, where the required number of observations have taken place, assessment planning has not been wholly effective. Some range statement requirements have been covered excessively, while others have been omitted. This has resulted in trainees needing further assessments to fulfil all of the requirements in the NVQ. Copies of review documents are not given to either the trainee or the salon trainer, leaving them unable to monitor progress towards completion dates themselves. Action-planning for trainees and a new progress monitoring system have been introduced in September 1999, but it is too soon to comment on the effectiveness of these measures.

Equal opportunities

Grade 3

15. Kendal College has an equal opportunities policy covering current legislation and contractual requirements. Policy statements are included in the documents given to trainees, but the policy does not discuss work-based training separately. Employers who do not have their own stated policy are given a copy of the college's policy. The college has a grievance procedure for staff and trainees. The local area has a very small minority ethnic population. The self-assessment report identified strengths and few weaknesses. Inspectors regarded many of the

strengths as no more than normal practice. Additional strengths and weaknesses were identified and the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report was awarded.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ annually reviewed policy
- ◆ comprehensive college audit of equal opportunities
- ◆ open-access recruitment policy

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ failure of induction to adequately promote equal opportunities
- ◆ little awareness of equal opportunities among trainees and employers
- ◆ no monitoring of equality of opportunity operated by employers

16. The college has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy, reviewed and updated annually, which refers to the latest legislation in the *Disability Discrimination Act*. A policy statement on equality of opportunity is included in Kendal College's charter, which is given to all students and trainees. The college also has policies and procedures for responding to bullying and harassment. The unit manager for social care and management is responsible for managing equal opportunities in the college and has recently carried out a comprehensive audit of equal opportunities. This has identified many areas for development, including the need to ensure that equality of opportunity is demonstrated in all staff development activities, that equal opportunity issues and targets are included in the college's strategic plan and that these are reviewed regularly by the college management team.

17. The college has a strong commitment to evaluate its progress in establishing equality of opportunity and to raise the awareness of staff, trainees and employers. There has been some internal staff development in equal opportunities. The college has an open-access policy to recruit all students and trainees wanting training, whatever their abilities and backgrounds. The college's selection policy is free from any discrimination. There is a comprehensive complaints procedure, and there are no recorded complaints about inequality of opportunity. The college has a management information system which is used to compile statistics on students by ethnicity, gender and disability. The data are used to detect any trends in recruitment or to indicate low numbers of students from specific groups, but it is not used to monitor trainees' achievements or to record when they leave the programme. The TEC sets contractual targets for recruiting trainees with disabilities, which the college has met. The college promotes its open access policy through careers events and its annual open day.

18. Induction for trainees briefly refers to the equal opportunities policy. It does not promote discussion on the topic or give examples of unfair treatment that the

trainees may meet. Trainees and employers have little understanding of equal opportunities. Equality of opportunity is not promoted to employers. Recently, employers without their own policy for equal opportunities have been given a copy of the college's policy. There is no attempt to monitor the employers' implementation of their equal opportunity policy.

Trainee support

Grade 3

19. Kendal College makes a commitment to ensuring high standards of service and support to students and trainees. Most trainees apply to the college having already secured a work placement or employment and, in some cases, having been working part time for a year or more. All applicants are invited to the college for guidance and counselling, and those without work placements receive help to secure one. All trainees receive individual interviews. The college also recruits through visits to local schools and careers events. Trainees receive an induction which covers trainees' rights and responsibilities and an introduction to the NVQ process. Inspectors considered that many of the strengths identified in the self-assessment report were no more than normal practice. Inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses and awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ wide variety of college support offered to trainees
- ◆ comprehensive induction
- ◆ all trainees tested for basic skills ability

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no accreditation of trainees' prior experience
- ◆ no additional learning support for modern apprentices
- ◆ no initial assessment of key skills

20. The college has a good college services unit which provides comprehensive support to students and trainees in a wide variety of areas. These include advice and guidance, careers and personal counselling, financial support and access to the students union. There is also a wide range of college-based support for students with disabilities, learning difficulties and mobility problems. All areas of college support systems are available to, and used by, trainees. There is support available to trainees from a roving assessor for a few hours during college holidays. Additional support is also available through the college's advice centre.

21. All trainees have a comprehensive induction prior to training, which takes six days over a two-week period. There are 29 different topics covered, including

health and safety, training plans, legislation, record keeping, financial matters, qualifications and the monitoring of progress. Equality of opportunity is not covered as a separate item during the induction. Trainees are asked for feedback on the induction. The pack given to trainees at the induction contains information about the college, its policies, statutory requirements, and the qualification the trainee is following. After induction, trainees' progress is formally reviewed every 12 weeks by the roving assessor, although there are frequent opportunities for them to discuss their progress informally with college tutors.

22. All trainees are tested for their basic skills ability and the results are used to identify which trainees require additional support. Most trainees take up the offer of the additional support, which is usually on an individual basis, and at a time to fit in with the trainees' college timetable. Trainees are encouraged to seek additional support when they believe they need it through the 'drop-in' centre, which is open all day.

23. Trainees are not assessed or accredited for any previous learning or experience when they begin their programmes. Many of the hairdressing trainees have gained considerable skills from working part-time on Saturdays and during school holidays, yet this experience is not taken into account or used to influence their training and assessment plans. Although basic skills tests are carried out on all trainees, there are no funds available or mechanisms in place to provide additional learning support for modern apprentices. The college has identified this and has plans to incorporate TEC-funded trainees within the college support system. There are some examples of trainees whose support needs have been identified but who have not received support for considerable periods of time, even after repeated reviews have highlighted this omission. There is no formal initial assessment of key skills, although key skills training is taking place. Some trainees who were recruited outside of the main recruitment period have not received a formal induction.

Management of training

Grade 3

24. The work-based training programme is managed by the external liaison officer, who reports to the college's vice-principal on resources through the college services manager. Kendal College was awarded the Investor in People award in 1997. The 38 trainees are mostly in the hair and beauty unit with 12 in five other curriculum areas. All 26 hair and beauty trainees except one were employed before joining the work-based training programme. Trainees receive most of their training in the workplace and attend college classes for one day a week. Responsibility for off-the-job training rests with the curriculum units. Assessment takes place in the workplace using college assessors and a small number of employers' staff who are trained as assessors. The external liaison officer makes the first visit to the employer to clarify training needs and to check the employer's understanding and commitment to the programme. This is followed by a visit from a roving assessor to undertake the health and safety appraisal, enrol the trainee and explain the training process. The external liaison officer works with these assessors to monitor the

trainees' progress. The self-assessment report identified a large number of strengths and few weaknesses. Inspectors regarded many of the strengths as no more than standard practice. Inspectors agreed with some of the statements and awarded a grade equal to that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ well-established strategic planning
- ◆ good variety of communication methods
- ◆ staff development linked to business objectives

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor monitoring of training targets
- ◆ no integration of on- and off-the-job training
- ◆ poor monitoring of employers' training

25. The college has an established business planning cycle. Planning is led by the senior management team and then clearly delegated to the department and curriculum area staff. The college has a timetable and a format for discussing and agreeing targets and implementing plans. Plans include developing programmes for both FEFC students and TEC trainees. The objectives in the 1999 strategic plan include meeting TEC contract targets and having a successful TSC inspection. Plans take account of feedback from regular course reviews and systematic observation of teaching by tutors employed by the college and those employed by an agency. The employment liaison officer produces a separate development plan for the TEC contracts which links to the TEC contract cycle. The contract is monitored through quarterly meetings between the external liaison officer and the TEC contract manager.

26. There are a variety of communication methods in the college which include college management team meetings, unit meetings, team meetings, bulletins placed on the college's intranet, e-mail, the principal's briefings to staff, and academic board and subcommittee meetings. Minutes of meetings are widely disseminated. Staff involved in work-based training meet regularly to discuss issues and trainees' progress. They also have a system of feeding back on visits to employers using coloured forms, which denote different priorities. These are sent or given to the administrator who identifies issues with the external liaison officer, with whom she has daily contact. The administrator was previously a modern apprentice; she is also a roving assessor for two trainees working towards administration qualifications, and regularly contributes to induction for trainees. The external liaison officer was previously a TEC employee, and has helped to improve communication between the college's training unit and the TEC. There is a hairdressing advisory board run by the college which includes employers. This meets three times a year. The meeting is an opportunity for college staff and employers to discuss work-

based training issues and to remind employers of their responsibilities for training and assessing the trainees. A number of employers attend regularly and also attend the workplace assessor meetings.

27. There is an annual staff appraisal system in which individual objectives are linked to curriculum and college objectives. Training needs are identified from the appraisal and from feedback via the teaching observation system. There is a human resource manager who monitors the training budget and liaises with line managers on the requests for funding training. College staff receive a lot of training. For example, the hairdressing co-ordinator has attended numerous hair and beauty courses relating to the NVQ and has received management training to help fulfil her responsibilities to her staff, which includes supervising the roving assessor. The external liaison officer has also received training from the TEC on aspects of government-funded programmes. There is regular training for assessors and internal verifiers, which is also offered to employers.

28. The administrator currently maintains a paper-based system for monitoring the progress of trainees from the start of their training to the end, noting their achievements. These milestones in training are cross-referenced to trainees' gender, ethnicity, and disability if applicable. There is a computerised monitoring system to provide information to check progress against the TEC contract, but the administrator has not been fully trained in its operation. Financial claims to the TEC for meeting contractual targets are prepared monthly, but do not link into the college-based tracking system. The college has plans to address this. The data maintained on students through the college system do include data on trainees, but do not produce details on the quality of work-based training.

29. Targets for NVQs are not set and monitored in sufficient detail. Contract targets for the year are agreed with the TEC and with the curriculum staff, but dates are not set for each trainee indicating when they should complete the whole, or part of, the qualification. The college does not offer unit accreditation. Targets are not agreed in detail with the employer. On a few occasions, employers have not given trainees time to attend the college but have expected them to use their day off work for this purpose. Trainees' progress depends on their attendance at the taught course sessions and the opportunity for assessment in the workplace. There is no formal system which allows trainees to progress swiftly, achieve early, and move to the next level of training.

30. Employers do not follow a structured programme of training which integrates with the college's programme. There is no clear plan to combine practice, theory, key skills and workplace activity with regular assessment dates. Employers are aware of the general content of the training provided at the college, but do not plan their trainees' activities around the schedule of college sessions, or cross-reference their own training to the requirements of the NVQ. There is a training agreement between the college and the employer, but it is not used to monitor the employer's contribution to training. There is little formal contact between tutors and trainees during the college holidays, although trainees can telephone the college advice and information centre. Roving assessors have a critical role in supporting trainees in

the workplace, but are unprepared for carrying out reviews and monitoring trainees' progress.

Quality assurance

Grade 3

31. Kendal College has an annual cycle for reviewing the quality of training which relates to the strategic planning process. A quality assurance manager leads the college unit responsible for quality assurance and student records. The manager reports to the vice-principal for resources. The unit was established in January 1999 with the aim of improving the reliability of information about students, and this includes gathering information about trainees. The college liaises with two awarding bodies for its work-based training. The TEC's audits over the past two years have shown an improvement to a more than acceptable standard. The self-assessment report for the TSC's inspection was produced to coincide with the annual self-assessment report for the FEFC. It was produced by the vice-principal for standards using the results of questionnaires to trainees and employers, teaching observations and feedback from staff involved in work-based training. The vice-principal and the external liaison officer attended training sessions provided by the TEC. The hairdressing staff were consulted about the report, and their comments were used to make amendments. The report was more descriptive than evaluative and explained the training process. It contained many strengths and few weaknesses. Many of the strengths were regarded by inspectors as no more than standard practice. Some of the strengths and weaknesses were not correctly placed under the aspects of provision as laid out in the *Raising the Standard* framework. The college initially gave satisfactory grades for all aspects, but at the start of the inspection proposed that hairdressing should be graded as good. Inspectors judged all areas to be satisfactory, and concluded that there had been many improvements in work-based training during the last year.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ established quality assurance policies and procedures
- ◆ systematic reviews of the quality of teaching
- ◆ good variety of feedback methods

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ failure to seek feedback from employers
- ◆ recent contract achievement targets not met
- ◆ insufficient observations of workplace assessors

32. The college has well-established quality assurance policies and procedures which include all aspects of curriculum, teaching, qualifications and assessment, administration, finance, management control and governance. These procedures have an effect on the trainees through their tuition, additional learning support and

the assessment and verification processes. Staff involved directly in supporting trainees have additional written procedures to follow specifically concerning work-based training. These procedures have been developed over the last two years and were recently updated to ensure compliance with the TEC contract. The quality of teaching and learning is reviewed annually through observation. The comments and scores are collated by the quality assurance manager and disseminated to department staff for action planning. Where teaching is identified as less than satisfactory, staff are supported to improve their performance. The college acknowledged that it does not observe training in the workplace.

33. The college assures the quality of the service it provides through reviewing attendance registers, unit development plans, course files, programme reviews and complaints. The academic board reviews retention and achievement data. There is a quality assurance forum, which monitors improvements. The college produces an annual self-assessment report and last year produced a self-assessment of work-based training. The quality assurance manager leads an annual internal audit using the FEFC's quality assurance framework. Students and trainees are formally asked for feedback through a questionnaire sent out three times a year. The questionnaires are analysed by curriculum areas and departments, but the responses from work-based trainees are not identified and considered separately for trends because of the small sample size. The results are displayed as graphs and bar charts in the main corridor of the college.

34. There has been continuous improvement in work-based training. Examples include the restructuring of the hairdressing programme to provide a balance of theoretical and practical training, combining the role of the hairdressing roving assessor with that of a part-time lecturing post to provide classroom tuition as well as workplace support. This has improved the monitoring of visits to trainees by highlighting priority issues sooner, as trainees are in contact with this assessor/lecturer in every off-the-job training session.

35. Employers are not formally asked for feedback on the quality of training. The hairdressing department has an end of year review to which employers are invited, but few attend. Those that do are the same ones who support all events and also act as workplace assessors. The college has failed to meet the contract targets for the last year primarily because of the restructuring in training. The college was aiming for seven national trainees and four modern apprentices to complete their programmes in the year, but none achieved this.

36. The college introduced a new system of internal verification in January with new procedures and lines of accountability. The system has been implemented, but not yet reviewed. There are insufficient observations of workplace assessors by the internal verifier and the verification sampling plan does not cover the full range of assessors and trainees. This was highlighted in a recent external verifier's report. Many employers are not fully aware of the requirements of work-based training. The college does not formally monitor the destinations of trainees. Data are collected when trainees leave the programme but not after that time. In hairdressing, many trainees stay with the same salon and become supervisors, so



college staff see them when they visit new trainees. Self-assessment has provided the first opportunity to formally evaluate work-based training. Previously, the college has relied on the review mechanisms for students being applied to trainees, and not considered work-based training separately.