



TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL

INSPECTION REPORT

MARCH 1999

Moulton College

SUMMARY

Moulton College provides good off-the-job training opportunities in agriculture and construction. There is poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training, however, and there is insufficient work-based assessment. In both the programmes, trainees' key and occupational skills are not systematically assessed at the start of training. As a result, training plans are not individualised. Trainees' progress is not well recorded. The college has a genuine commitment to equal opportunities. There is good access for those with mobility problems. A counsellor and nurse are available part time to support trainees. The college works effectively with a range of external agencies. It has been proactive in addressing serious shortcomings in the management of its training programmes. The college sets realistic targets and monitors and evaluates the views of trainees and employers.

GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Agriculture	3
Construction	3

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

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ key skills effectively integrated into the GNVQ programme
- ◆ above-average achievement rates in construction
- ◆ particularly well-organised and -supervised off-the-job training in horticulture
- ◆ opportunities for trainees to pursue additional qualifications
- ◆ good access for those with disabilities
- ◆ effective action taken to address shortcomings in the management of training
- ◆ comprehensive action plan to address weaknesses

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ insufficient work-based assessment
- ◆ key skills not integrated into NVQ programmes
- ◆ poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- ◆ training plans not individualised
- ◆ ineffective internal verification procedures in agriculture and horticulture
- ◆ promotional materials contain stereotypical images
- ◆ occupational and key skills not systematically assessed at start of training

INTRODUCTION

1. Moulton College, based in the village of Moulton, Northamptonshire, was established in 1921 to provide training and education for the agricultural community of Northamptonshire. During subsequent years, it developed into the county agricultural college. More recently, the college has extended the range of programmes and qualifications it offers, and has opened a second training centre in the grounds of Peterborough Cathedral. Moulton College is set in 1,150 acres of agricultural land. There are 238 staff, six of whom are responsible for government-funded programmes. The range of programmes offered by the college includes national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in agriculture, construction, engineering, horticulture, security and loss prevention, and waste management, and an advanced general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) in construction and the built environment. The college also offers a variety of 'taster' and short courses including computing and information technology, sales, health and safety, management and interpersonal, outdoor team-building, and assessor and verifier awards. Moulton College subcontracts with two colleges of further education to provide plastering and dog grooming qualifications.

2. The college has contracted with Northamptonshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise (CCTE) and with Greater Peterborough CCTE since 1983 and 1998 respectively to offer NVQs in agriculture, horticulture and construction-related occupations and the advanced GNVQ in construction and the built environment. For the purposes of inspection the lead CCTE is Northamptonshire. The college is an accredited assessment centre with three awarding bodies for these qualifications. To avoid direct competition and to provide progression routes for individuals, the college has liaised with local further and higher education institutions. Moulton College has 3,864 students, of whom 290 are on youth training programmes. This includes 65 modern apprentices, 98 national trainees and 127 on other government-funded programmes. These programmes are managed and co-ordinated by the training office of Moulton College.

3. The proportion of those from minority ethnic groups is 3.5 per cent in the Northamptonshire area and 4.2 per cent in Peterborough. In 1998, the percentage of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 42 per cent, compared with the national average of 46.3 per cent. The main areas of employment in Northamptonshire are in manufacturing, distribution, public administration, education and health, banking, finance and insurance. In Peterborough, the main areas of employment are management and senior professional, administration, clerical and secretarial, plant operatives, drivers, assemblers and sales.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

4. Moulton College produced its first self-assessment report in November 1998. The training manager produced the report in collaboration with the deputy principal, with input from subject managers and placement officers. Generally, inspectors agreed with the main findings of the report. Some of the strengths identified in the report represented no more than normal practice. All of the grades awarded by inspectors were lower than those presented in the self-assessment report.

5. A team of six inspectors spent a total of 24 days at the college during March 1999. Inspectors examined college, TEC and awarding body documents. Inspectors interviewed representatives of the college's senior management team, training and placement staff, trainees and employers. They examined trainees' records and portfolios of work and observed four training sessions, three reviews and two assessments.

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Agriculture

Grade 3

6. Moulton College has 80 young people in training. Of these, 12 are modern apprentices, 23 are national trainees and 45 are on other youth training programmes. Moulton College offers NVQ levels 2 and 3 in agriculture and horticulture. There are 26 trainees in agriculture, four in gamekeeping, five in animal care, eight in veterinary nursing, 32 in horticulture and one in floristry. There are 15 female trainees. Because of the low numbers of trainees in animal care, veterinary nursing and floristry, these programmes were not inspected. The agriculture and horticulture programmes are offered mainly on a day-release basis, although evening sessions are available. Trainees attend the college for their off-the-job training. Trainees spend four days with employers, and one day at off-the-job training. Practical training takes place on the college farm estate, which operates as a commercial organisation, in a horticulture nursery and a horticulture centre located in the grounds of Peterborough Cathedral. The college has, and continues to develop, a series of show gardens and horticulture features. All but 16 of the trainees are employed. These 16 trainees are on work placements.

7. Trainees in horticulture are employed by a variety of horticultural, landscape and specialist companies. Trainees in agriculture are employed on a variety of farms, including dairy and pig farms and mixed farms, and one trainee is employed on a large estate. Trainees work alongside skilled staff and are involved in real work situations, which include building pheasant pens in gamekeeping, and disbudding calves in agriculture. In horticulture, the work involves the design, creation and maintenance of gardens and horticultural features. There are good working relationships between these employers and the college. Many of the strengths identified in the college's self-assessment report represented no more than normal

practice. Inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses. The grade awarded by inspectors was lower than that given in the report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ particularly well-organised and -supervised off-the-job training.
- ◆ opportunities for trainees to pursue additional qualifications
- ◆ good-quality off-the-job training facilities and resources

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ insufficient on-the-job assessment
- ◆ low achievement rates in livestock production
- ◆ workplace supervisors not aware of NVQ requirements
- ◆ ineffective internal verification procedures

8. Off-the-job training sessions are particularly well organised. Trainees are supervised by well-qualified and experienced trainers. The training is stimulating and interesting and, in horticulture, is of a particularly high standard. The training provides trainees with valuable learning experiences and introduces them to a wide range of skills. The training at the main college sites has good-quality facilities. The classroom facilities at the Peterborough site are adequate, although they are not fully accessible for trainees with mobility difficulties. There is an adequate supply of modern tools and equipment. Health and safety are given a high priority by all trainers. The range of facilities in horticulture provides trainees with the opportunity to develop their knowledge of plant names, become familiar with plant groupings and to learn the principles of good landscaping. These features add to the attractiveness of the college grounds. Some of the landscaping training is limited due to the land that is currently available. Despite this, trainees are able to learn a range of skills for use in the industry. Similarly, in agriculture, trainees undertake and learn new skills on the college farm. The 'real work' tasks they are required to undertake replicate those they would be expected to undertake at their place of work. The quality of off-the-job training is highly regarded by employers who appreciate the experience, knowledge and skills gained by trainees.

9. Trainees receive good on-the-job training, which includes the instruction and guidance given by their employers and workplace supervisors. Often, this is on a one-to-one basis, as the employers are small. However, there is no direct communication between off-the-job trainers and employers. The training given by employers is not linked to the off-the-job training. Many employers and workplace supervisors are unaware of the requirements of the NVQs and the progress of their trainees. Employers are therefore unable to make sure that they give trainees the necessary support. Employers are not involved in trainees' reviews, where they take place in the college. The college has identified this and new review documents have been introduced, along with a pilot project which involves placement officers liaising with trainers prior to reviews being undertaken. Employers are involved in these

reviews for the purposes of the pilot.

10. Trainees who wish or are required to undertake a more varied range of tasks in the workplace, such as the use of pesticides, driving fork-trucks and rough terrain vehicles and using chainsaws, are required to achieve statutory industry-recognised qualifications. These qualifications are offered to them at no extra cost.

11. There is insufficient on-the-job assessment. Most assessment takes place at off-the-job training sessions. This invariably results in trainees having to repeat work unnecessarily. Trainees are not encouraged to identify on-the-job opportunities for assessment. There is no use of witness testimony. Trainees develop good portfolios of evidence. Much of this work shows a high degree of personal effort and a greater understanding of the technical aspects than would normally be expected. The college has an internal verification system but it is not effectively operated. It is not systematic, effectively planned or sufficiently rigorous. Achievement rates, particularly in agriculture, are poor. A number of staff changes have occurred at the college during 1997 and 1998. Only 40 per cent of trainees achieved an NVQ in livestock production during this time. The college has recognised this problem and has recruited new staff.

Construction

Grade 3

12. Moulton College has 210 trainees pursuing qualifications in construction-related occupations. Of these, 53 are modern apprentices, 75 are national trainees and 82 are on other youth training programmes. Three trainees are women. Moulton College offers NVQs at levels 1, 2 and 3 in wood occupations, trowel trades, plastering, and plumbing, and an advanced GNVQ in construction and the built environment. There are 85 trainees in carpentry and joinery, 46 in brickwork, 46 in plumbing, 23 in advanced construction and the built environment and 10 in construction. All but 10 of the trainees are employed by a range of employers in the Northamptonshire area. The remaining 10 trainees are on work placements. Off-the-job training takes place at the college workshops and is delivered by the college's teaching staff. All trainees attend off-the-job training. This training is offered on a day, block or evening basis. A number of the strengths identified in the college's self-assessment report represented no more than normal practice. Inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses. The grade awarded by inspectors was lower than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ effective support for trainees from employers
- ◆ very good understanding by trainees of the assessment process
- ◆ key skills effectively integrated into the GNVQ programme
- ◆ trainees encouraged to work without supervision where appropriate
- ◆ above-average achievement rates

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no work-based assessment
- ◆ key skills not integrated into NVQ programmes
- ◆ employers unaware of the content of off-the-job training programmes
- ◆ weak recording of trainees' progress
- ◆ poor communication between trainers and workplace supervisors

13. All training is delivered by well-qualified staff who have appropriate industry experience. The college workshops are well equipped, if a little cramped. To address this, the college built an additional plumbing workshop. Trainees are able to experience a range of learning opportunities. Practical training is good. Trainees have access to a wide range of learning materials. All employers are enthusiastic and are very supportive of their trainees. The range of work placements and employment opportunities available to trainees on work-based training programmes is good. There are well-established links between the college's placement officers, who conduct regular reviews, and employers. However, there is little direct communication between the college's trainers and employers. This, and the fact that employers do not receive copies of the off-the-job training programmes, leaves employers unaware of trainees' progress and the content of the off-the-job training sessions. The college has made plans to address this and improvements are being made.

14. Trainees are well motivated and are clearly able to make the links between the work they undertake in the workplace and the information and training they receive at off-the-job training sessions. Where appropriate, trainees are encouraged to work without direct supervision, both in the workplace and at off-the-job training. All trainees have a good understanding of the assessment process and what is required of them.

15. The GNVQ programme is particularly well planned and key skills are effectively integrated. However, key skills are not integrated into the NVQ programmes. Trainees pursuing these awards are unclear about key skills and their requirements. The college is aware of these problems and is addressing them. Trainees' achievement rates are good. In 1998-99, 61 per cent of trainees achieved an NVQ. This is above the national average of 51 per cent.

16. There is no workplace assessment. All assessment takes place at off-the-job training sessions. In an attempt to meet these assessment requirements, trainees are required to repeat work unnecessarily. These simulated activities do not accurately represent the variety of challenges faced by trainees during the course of their working day. There is no use of witness testimony. Trainees' individual training plans are not always updated as they progress through the programme.

17. The advanced GNVQ programme in construction and the built environment, which is normally delivered in colleges of further education as a full-time programme, is offered to trainees on a part-time basis. This assists trainees in

making the links between the theoretical component of the course and their daily work. They are all employed and able to gain real work experience and gather evidence.

GENERIC AREAS

Equal opportunities

Grade 3

18. Moulton College has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy which is reviewed by an equal opportunities monitoring group. The policy meets the requirements of both Northamptonshire and Peterborough CCTEs and is included in staff and trainees' handbooks. The proportion of the population of Northamptonshire who come from minority ethnic groups is 3.5 per cent. In 1997, 9 per cent of the trainees who enrolled on government-funded training courses at the college were from minority ethnic groups. In 1998, 5 per cent were from minority ethnic groups. The NVQ programmes are generally male dominated. In the current year, 8 per cent of trainees are women. There are 15 women in agriculture and one in construction. The college monitors trainees in terms of age, ethnicity, gender and disability. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed. There is access for those with disabilities and there are adapted lavatory facilities at almost all of the college sites. A strong commitment to equal opportunities is demonstrated at all levels of the organisation. Many of the strengths identified in the self-assessment report represented no more than normal practice. Inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses. The grade awarded by inspectors was lower than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good transport arrangements for trainees in remote rural areas
- ◆ range of initiatives undertaken to widen participation by under-represented groups
- ◆ active equal opportunities monitoring group
- ◆ good access for those with disabilities

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ lack of equal opportunities awareness among trainees
- ◆ promotional materials contain stereotypical images
- ◆ promotional materials fail to reflect adequately the college's commitment to equal opportunities
- ◆ lack of awareness by employers of college's equal opportunities policy

19. Moulton College operates an open recruitment policy. All potential trainees are interviewed. Many of the trainees live in remote rural areas. So that these trainees are not disadvantaged, Moulton College subsidises transport services including minibuses and taxis. Although these facilities are not available to trainees attending the Peterborough centre, public transport arrangements to this venue are good. Moulton College has good working relationships with local schools and is a member of the Northamptonshire Curriculum and Industry project which is funded by the local education authority. This offers low achievers the opportunity to pursue non-accredited programmes of study. Additionally, in an attempt to widen participation, the college employs a schools liaison officer. Schools financially support pupils in their attendance at 'taster' sessions at the college every Wednesday. Some of these pupils work towards units of, or even full, NVQ level 1 qualifications. Through its effective partnerships with the borough council, Northamptonshire CCTE, and the careers and youth services, the college has arranged training for the severely disaffected young people of the area.

20. The equal opportunities monitoring group is made up of Moulton College tutorial staff who are from various backgrounds and occupational sectors. This group usually meets annually to update and revise policies and procedures. The college has invested considerably in adapting accommodation for those with disabilities. Improvements include numerous ramps, a stair lift and adapted lavatories. The Peterborough centre is a large listed building. Alterations to this building have not been possible, therefore access for those with mobility difficulties is problematic. The college's disability statement does not include current legislation.

21. All trainees receive a copy of the trainees' handbook which contains the college's equal opportunities policy. This policy is explained to trainees as part of their induction. Despite this, trainees have little awareness of equal opportunities issues. The college has a range of promotional materials. These contain stereotypical images and do not always carry an equal opportunities statement. The college is aware of these deficiencies and is working to amend them. Employers are not always made aware of the college's equal opportunities policy.

Trainee support

Grade 3

22. Potential trainees are referred to Moulton College by employers and the local careers service. Staff from Moulton College attend numerous careers conventions to inform prospective trainees of the variety of courses on offer. All prospective trainees are interviewed by placement officers, and offered impartial advice and guidance. The initial information booklet given to trainees and employers by the college is not totally accurate about how programmes are delivered. Interviews are conducted using a standard checklist to evaluate individual aptitude and potential. All trainees undertake an initial basic skills assessment which is used to identify additional learning needs. Trainees receive a thorough induction and have regular reviews. Many of the strengths identified in the self-assessment report represented no more than normal practice. Inspectors identified additional strengths and

GOOD PRACTICE

Moulton College is involved in a training project for severely disaffected young people. This project was officially opened by the minister for life-long learning and was very well publicised locally. It is based in a severely deprived area with high rates of crime and drug abuse, and offers training to 10 disaffected young people. The training takes place in a refurbished, disused maintenance depot. Dedicated and appropriately qualified staff recruited for the project allow the young people to sample brickwork, basic carpentry and joinery hand skills and computing, while also completing wordpower and numberpower qualifications. The experience of learning in this safe environment develops trainees' confidence and self-esteem. After only four weeks, one of the trainees had progressed onto an NVQ level 1 in carpentry and joinery.

weaknesses. The grade awarded by inspectors was lower than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good support for trainees with additional learning needs
- ◆ counsellor and nurse available on part-time basis
- ◆ good advice and guidance on progression and job-search skills
- ◆ collaborative projects with external agencies

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ occupational skills not systematically assessed on entry
- ◆ key skills not systematically assessed on entry
- ◆ individual training plans not personalised
- ◆ employers not issued with a copy of trainees' training plans

23. All trainees receive a comprehensive induction. Trainees are issued with an induction form to be completed in the workplace. The first part of the college induction is organised by the placement officers, who introduce trainees to the requirements of the training agreement and familiarise them with the support services available and to health and safety requirements. All trainees receive a copy of the training agreement, and are issued with safety footwear where appropriate. The second part of the induction introduces trainees to the qualification they will be pursuing and to the college's policies and procedures. Throughout their training, trainees are well supported by their placement officers, trainers and employers. However, employers do not receive a copy of their trainees' training plan as outlined in college marketing materials. Pastoral support is provided by the placement officers during reviews. Trainees are also encouraged to contact the training office between reviews should the need arise.

24. A counsellor and nurse are available on a part-time basis. Approximately 16 per cent of the trainees seen by the college nurse are from work-based programmes. A careers adviser who attends the college for 15 hours each week is available to provide trainees with advice and guidance on opportunities for progression, job-search skills, writing a curriculum vitae, job applications and interview techniques. Trainees also have the opportunity to attend a higher education fair which provides them with information that allows them to make decisions regarding their future studies. Many trainees in agriculture and horticulture pursue additional qualifications in addition to their NVQ. Due to the range and flexibility of the courses offered by the college, trainees are able to transfer to other programmes as their needs, or the needs of their employers, change.

25. The results of trainees' initial basic skills assessment are used to identify additional learning needs. Appropriate learning support is provided by the college's learning support team. The additional learning support given to trainees is not recorded on individual action plans, although details may be recorded on review

documents. All trainees have access to the well-stocked college library and the college's learning centre. However, many trainees do not take advantage of these facilities. The initial assessment trainees undertake does not systematically assess their occupational or key skills. Consequently, individual training plans do not reflect individual needs in these areas or reflect trainees' prior knowledge or experience. A key skills initial assessment is being introduced, and key skills logbooks are now being issued to all new trainees. These trainees are aware of the requirements of key skills.

26. The college has traditionally worked with a variety of external agencies to support disaffected and disadvantaged young people. Moulton College is actively involved in a project to support severely disaffected young people.

Management of training

Grade 3

27. The college's training programmes are managed by the training office under the leadership of a training manager. There are six members of staff: a full-time training manager on a six-month temporary contract, three full-time placement officers, one part-time training officer, and an administrative assistant. The training office is responsible for all administration relating to the training programmes, the recruitment of trainees to programmes, placement and trainee reviews, and arranging attendance at off-the-job training. In early 1998, senior managers identified that problems existed in the management of the work-based training programmes. These included the administration of the scheme, failure to address issues identified by CCTE audits, and failure to inform senior managers and staff of issues, developments and changes. As a result, the college had been identified as 'high risk' following CCTE audits. In attempting to address these problems, senior managers have become more involved in the day-to-day management of the training office. Following staff changes, a new manager has been employed. A full and comprehensive review of the work of the office has been undertaken. A range of new policies and procedures has been produced, and a management information system designed. Detailed action plans have been developed, staff roles and responsibilities redefined, and workloads examined. The college is now assessed as 'medium risk' by Northamptonshire CCTE for both finance and quality assurance, and as 'high risk' for finance and 'medium risk' for quality assurance by Greater Peterborough CCTE. The college achieved the Investors in People standard in 1995 and was successfully re-assessed for this award in July 1998. Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths identified in the self-assessment report, although some represented no more than normal practice. The self-assessment report identified only one weakness. Inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses. The grade awarded by inspectors was lower than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ effective action taken to address shortcomings in the management of training
- ◆ well-managed staff development activities

- ◆ effective design and use of management-information systems

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ staff responsible for training do not have access to all relevant documents
- ◆ poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training and assessment
- ◆ little awareness by employers of the college's policies and procedures

28. Management and staffing structures are clear. Internal lines of communication are good, both within the training office and the college. Staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff receive a comprehensive induction and are supported by a range of staff development activities. All staff training is regularly reviewed and evaluated. Working relationships between staff are good, although staff at the training office do not feel that their efforts are always recognised or valued across the college.

29. The action plans developed by the college are realistic. The training staff are actively involved in making the specified changes and are well supported by the training manager. There is effective ongoing training to update their knowledge and awareness of issues relating to work-based training and NVQs. An audit of trainees' files has been effective and has resulted in files being more comprehensive. New policies and procedures specific to the work of the training office are being introduced which complement the college's extensive range of policies and procedures. The effectiveness of new working practices is monitored at weekly meetings between the training office and senior management. Action points are addressed by staff and open debate is encouraged. The appointment of an additional placement officer has effectively reduced the workload of the placement officers. The range of recent changes has resulted in a more cohesive team approach to work. The introduction of a meeting between placement officers and trainers prior to reviews has improved the support trainees receive. The training manager's attendance at college course team reviews has significantly increased the profile of the training office and the work that they undertake. Many of the changes are now fully established as part of the day-to-day management of the training programmes.

30. All new staff attend a one-day induction which introduces them to the college's policies and procedures. All staff receive a folder which contains the college charter and all of the college's policies and procedures, but not those of the training office. There is an annual appraisal system for all staff. Staff development opportunities are particularly well planned and managed by a staff development committee which meets monthly. An audit of staff's skills has been used to clearly identify areas for staff development across the college. Measurable targets are set for all staff. Moulton College places great emphasis on the training and development of its staff.

31. A comprehensive and user-friendly database has been designed. Data are collected, collated, analysed and used as a basis for management decisions. Necessary changes to management practices have been made. Monitoring of trainees' attendance is good. The results of a recently introduced employer and

trainee questionnaire have been analysed and used as the basis of an action plan for future improvements in training. The employer and college newsletters are well designed and informative.

32. The staff at the training office who are responsible for the management of work-based training do not hold copies of contract, audit or external and internal verifiers' documents. They are not always made aware of the feedback from these agencies at the time of the visits. They do not monitor the quality of internal verification or assessment practices within the departments that their trainees attend. They are therefore unable to manage or quickly address issues as they arise. The poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training and assessment results in assumptions being made about what trainees have learnt and what they are expected to be able to do in the workplace. Employers and placement officers are not always aware of the content of the off-the-job training programme. Employers' awareness of the college's policies and procedures is poor. Employers are not fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. This, in several instances, has left employers frustrated. The information booklet given to trainees to inform them of work-based training opportunities is incorrect in its description of the programme for national traineeships.

Quality assurance

Grade 3

33. The college has a range of policies, procedures and charters and copies of these are distributed to all staff. The college sets targets and evaluates the views of trainees and employers. An action plan to address the weaknesses of the training programmes was devised in September 1998. The college is familiar with the process of self-assessment, having previously been inspected on several occasions by the Further Education Funding Council. However, this was the first self-assessment undertaken for work-based training programmes. The section on quality assurance contained many strengths. Many of these relate to the main work of the college, with which the training office is not actively involved. The report lacks rigour and is incomplete. Only one weakness was identified. Inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses. The grade awarded by inspectors was lower than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ well-informed open discussion leads to improvements
- ◆ comprehensive action plan to address weaknesses
- ◆ well-documented policies and procedures

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ college's quality assurance framework does not fully embrace the work of the training office
- ◆ self-assessment process not rigorous

34. The training office staff meet regularly with the vice principal. Action plans are agreed and acted upon by individual staff members. Progress is reviewed at subsequent meetings. Issues, where necessary, are referred to subject leaders or taken up at college course team review meetings. There is a comprehensive and realistic action plan which has clearly defined objectives. The plan is reviewed regularly. Target dates are met. This systematic approach has led to improvements in the quality of work-based training. The policies and procedures designed specifically for these programmes work well. Any action points from CCTE audits are now acted upon. The college meets the quality requirements of the CCTEs. All staff training is regularly reviewed and evaluated. The college monitors trainees' achievements and destinations. The recently introduced 'leavers' questionnaire, and employer and trainee survey results have been analysed and action has been taken to address some of the issues raised.

35. The training office, as an integral part of the college, has not evaluated the effectiveness of its new policies and procedures. The training office is not yet fully integrated into the overall college quality assurance framework, and is not involved in monitoring assessors, internal verifiers or trainers. There are no service-level agreements with the various departments with which the office works. All arrangements are agreed verbally. The college is committed to continuous improvement and is aware of the benefits of bringing its quality assurance processes together and instigating a self-assessment process as part of its quality assurance cycle.