



TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL

INSPECTION REPORT MAY 1999

Mackworth College

SUMMARY

Mackworth College in Derby offers good training in business administration and hair and beauty. In business administration trainees are placed in good work placements and are visited regularly to be assessed for their NVQ. In hair and beauty, trainees have access to a work-based assessor in all hairdressing salons. The training offered in engineering is less than satisfactory. While the off-the-job resources in engineering are excellent, trainees' progress is not sufficiently reviewed or recorded. The college approach to equal opportunities and its quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. Trainees are very well supported and are well integrated into the wider college support arrangements. Training is generally well managed. Managers are supported by a wide range of current and historical achievement and retention data and effective internal communications.

GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Engineering	4
Business administration	2
Hair & beauty	2

GENERIC AREAS	GRADE
Equal opportunities	3
Trainee support	2
Management of training	2
Quality assurance	3

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ excellent off-the-job resources for computer manufacturing
- ◆ good work placements
- ◆ high standard of off-the-job training
- ◆ college is sensitive to cultural and religious beliefs of the wider community
- ◆ excellent programme management and review arrangements
- ◆ effective internal communications

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ lack of awareness by some trainees of all programme requirements
- ◆ inconsistent internal verification procedures
- ◆ insufficient detail in equal opportunities policy
- ◆ poor recall of induction by trainees
- ◆ no systematic sharing of good practice across or within occupational areas
- ◆ insufficient internal auditing of trainee-related documents

INTRODUCTION

1. Mackworth College was created as a result of tertiary reorganisation in the City of Derby in 1989. Initially named Derby Tertiary College, Mackworth College, along with all other further education colleges in England and Wales, became incorporated in April 1993 in response to the *Further and Higher Education Act* of the same year. The college employs 332 staff. Thirty-four of the staff are directly engaged in the provision of government-funded, work-based training. There are currently 79 people in training who are funded through contracts with the Southern Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise (CCTE). Trainees are working towards national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in engineering, business administration and hairdressing.

2. With a population of 550,000, Derby enjoys a diverse economy which has followed a national pattern of change from a largely manufacturing base to office and technology-based activity. This change has resulted in over 60 per cent of local employment now being within the service sector. Traditionally, employment was centred around the railway and aerospace industries, which jointly employed some 25,000 people in 1985. Owing to contracting markets and the introduction of modern manufacturing methods, by 1995, this figure had fallen to nearly 13,000. In June 1996, Derby's unemployment figure was 9.7 per cent. This figure was 2.4 per cent higher than the national average at that time, but considerably less than the figures for the adjoining cities of Nottingham and Leicester. By June 1997, the figure had fallen to 7.4 per cent, only 1.7 per cent above the national average. The most recent unemployment figure for May 1999, for the area covered by Southern Derbyshire CCTE, is 4.3 per cent. This figure rises to 5.6 per cent for the City of Derby. The national figure is 5.2 per cent. The percentage of people from minority ethnic groups account for 4.8 per cent of the population in the area covered by the CCTE. In 1998, the proportion of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 38.2 per cent compared with the national average of 46.3 per cent.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

3. Mackworth College is subject to the Further Education Funding Council's (FEFC) self-assessment and four-yearly inspection process and is familiar with the concept of self-assessment. It produced its first self-assessment report for the Training Standards Council five months before inspection. The self-assessment report was written by the manager and staff from within the training and recruitment services unit of the college, with support and consultation from colleagues within the wider college. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment grades in the occupational areas of business administration and hairdressing, and in the generic areas of trainee support and management of training. Inspectors awarded lower grades in the occupational area of engineering and in the generic areas of equal opportunities and quality assurance.

4. A team of five inspectors spent a total of 20 days at Mackworth College in May 1999. Inspectors examined college and awarding body documents. They interviewed 22 college staff, 37 trainees and 21 employer representatives. They examined assessment records, trainees' work and the portfolios being compiled for NVQs. Inspectors observed seven training sessions, the details of which are tabled below:

Grades awarded to instruction sessions

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Engineering		1				1
Business administration		2	1	1		4
Hair & beauty		2				2
Total	0	5	1	1	0	7

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Engineering

Grade 4

5. Mackworth College provides training in fabrication and welding and mechanical engineering. Trainees are referred to the college from the careers service, employers or apply directly. At present, there are 17 trainees of whom 16 are modern apprentices and one is following a national traineeship programme. Modern apprentices are working towards an NVQ level 3 and national trainees towards an NVQ level 2. Trainees work towards key skills at the appropriate level for their programme of training. Nine modern apprentices attend college on a day-release basis for off-the-job training. The remaining trainees have successfully achieved their required theoretical knowledge qualification. All are employed within small- to medium-sized employers. The college is currently in a transitional period, whereby practical off-the-job training, trainees' progress reviews and assessment and verification are soon to be transferred to a local private training company. In the

future, Mackworth College will provide only the off-the-job training sessions. Existing trainees will, however, continue to remain the responsibility of the college until they have achieved their NVQ level 2, at which stage the separate training provider will monitor their progress. During the past three years, four trainees have left training, all of whom achieved an NVQ. The college's self-assessment report failed to recognise several key weaknesses. Inspectors awarded a grade lower than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ excellent off-the-job resources for computer-integrated manufacturing
- ◆ well-structured and -taught theory sessions
- ◆ additional training available from some employers

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ trainees unaware of NVQ framework
- ◆ poor understanding of key skills by trainees and employers
- ◆ slow progress towards completion of NVQ qualification
- ◆ ineffective review process
- ◆ missed opportunities for work-based assessment
- ◆ no ongoing assessment
- ◆ lack of rigour in internal verification

6. Facilities available for the provision of computer-integrated manufacturing are of an exceptional standard. Recent investment has provided modern high-tech equipment for trainees to develop their skills in robotic operations. This has assisted in creating an environment that is conducive to learning. Tutors make use of outline session plans and schemes of work to aid the teaching of theory sessions. These sessions are professionally provided by well-qualified staff. Trainees are encouraged to participate during sessions through ongoing questioning by the tutor. Trainees also adopt a hands-on approach during practical demonstrations. Some employers offer their trainees further training in addition to that detailed in their training plan. For example, welding inspection certification, fork-truck and 'abrasive wheels' courses. This further enhances trainees' skills and flexibility in the workplace.

7. Trainees are unclear about the programme of training they are following. While they are able to identify the NVQ they are undertaking, they are unaware of the overall requirements of their particular modern apprenticeship framework. Many trainees and employers have little or no understanding of key skills or how they are to be achieved. Generally, trainees are making slow progress towards completion of their NVQ. Two trainees, who had their target completion dates extended, have not subsequently achieved by the revised date. As a result, their training plans are no longer valid. Reviews of trainees' progress are conducted infrequently. Those who have been in training for two or three years have written evidence available to

support only two or three reviews during this period. Those reviews which have been carried out lack specific target-setting to guide the trainee towards completion of the NVQ. During reviews conducted in the workplace, the assessor does not use this time as an opportunity to conduct an assessment. The trainee is not given the opportunity to progress at their own pace.

8. The assessment process is not ongoing. Instead assessment is carried out once the trainee has completed the portfolio. Shortfalls within the portfolio are, therefore, not identified immediately and trainees have become disillusioned at having to revisit work already completed. The internal verification arrangements include a sampling plan which details the range of units selected from the NVQ appropriate to each assessor. Feedback following internal verification is given to assessors. Internal verification is, however, only carried out at the end of the training programme when the trainees' portfolio is complete.

Business administration

Grade 2

9. Mackworth College offers NVQs at levels 2, 3 and 4 in accounting, levels 2, 3 and 4 in administration, and levels 1, 2 and 3 in information technology. There are currently 41 modern apprentices, four national trainees and one trainee following other work-based training for young people programmes. Of the modern apprentices, 17 are registered for qualifications in accounting, 23 in business administration and one in information technology. The four national trainees and one other trainee working towards NVQs in business administration at levels 2 and 3. College staff provide all of the training and assessment in this occupational area. The staff who provide the off-the-job training are based within the appropriate curriculum directorate of the college. Assessors are, in the main, based in the training and recruitment unit of the college. All staff have good vocational and training experience. Four members of staff are qualified as internal verifiers and two others are working towards the internal verification qualification. All trainees are employed in one of 31 local businesses in the manufacturing and service sectors. Some employers have as many as four trainees. Trainees are recruited by Mackworth College. In many cases, the college also arranges employment. During the academic year, most trainees attend weekly off-the-job training sessions, either on a day-release or evening class basis, while others are trained entirely in the workplace. This training takes place in the business studies teaching rooms and in the college's information technology suites. Of the 72 trainees who have started since 1995-96, 19 have achieved the full modern apprenticeship framework, 46 are current trainees and seven have left. Of those, four achieved NVQs but not the full framework. Inspectors agreed with the major strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report and awarded the same grade as that given in the report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ staff quick to respond to individual needs of trainees
- ◆ thorough understanding by trainees of training and assessment arrangements

- ◆ challenging targets set and agreed by trainees and trainers
- ◆ excellent on-the-job training opportunities
- ◆ extremely supportive employers

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ low awareness by employers of trainees' programmes
- ◆ low awareness by trainees of modern apprenticeship frameworks
- ◆ inconsistent internal verification procedures

10. A recently created team of work-based assessors has quickly established good working relationships with trainees and the curriculum staff. Trainees feel supported by the work-based assessors and curriculum staff. They have ample opportunity for consultation with both. When trainees need help between planned visits, they are able to contact staff who respond quickly. Trainees have a clear understanding of what evidence is required to complete their programme. They are active in evidence collection, record-keeping and are proud of their portfolio work. There are clear recording and monitoring systems within portfolios. Trainees set themselves regular challenging short-term targets with the help of the work-based assessors. Trainees progress in line with target completion dates. Employers give trainees ample opportunity to collect naturally occurring evidence of their competence in the workplace and to undertake additional responsibilities in order to generate evidence. The work-based assessors' commitment, and frequency of visits, to trainees has considerably enhanced the reputation of the college with employers.

11. A small percentage of trainees' training and assessment is entirely off-the-job. This is well planned and the theoretical knowledge is well taught. Most trainees attend college for off-the-job training. Most training sessions are effective, however, a proportion are not provided to the same high standard. In these sessions, trainees are not as well motivated. The college has made substantial progress in removing the inflexibility of the traditional academic year, but further progress has still to be made. The small number of complaints made by employers, which mainly relate to the timing of off-the-job training sessions, are dealt with in a professional manner. Trainees and employers are not sufficiently aware of their rights and responsibilities within the modern apprentice framework. There are many examples of good internal verification procedures and practices, but a few examples of poor practice also exist in this area. Meetings between work-based assessors and curriculum staff are unplanned and are not being minuted. Opportunities for action-planning are missed.

Hair & beauty (hairdressing)

Grade 2

12. Mackworth College has 10 young people, all modern apprentices, working towards hairdressing NVQs at levels 2 and 3. Trainees spend four days each week in a commercial hairdressing salon and one day each week at the training salon in the college. Assessment takes place in the commercial salons, it is carried out by

assessors in the workplace and supported by college assessors. There are also opportunities for trainees to be assessed in the college. The college training schedule is timetabled over 42 weeks each year. This includes eight weeks of summer school. In 1998-99, there were eight trainees who left the training programme. Of those leavers, six achieved the full hairdressing modern apprenticeship qualification, one achieved an NVQ level 3 hairdressing qualification and the other achieved an NVQ level 2 hairdressing qualification. Inspectors agreed with the grade given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ qualified assessors in all salons
- ◆ high standard of off-the-job training
- ◆ robust internal verification system
- ◆ well-qualified and -experienced staff

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ late introduction of key skills
- ◆ college training salon needs updating

13. All the salons employing modern apprentices have qualified assessors in the workplace. This gives the trainee the opportunity to be assessed within the workplace and the potential to progress more quickly through their NVQ units. Theory and practical sessions are effectively taught and relate well to each other. Sessions are well planned in advance with a comprehensive scheme of work and lesson plan. Teaching is lively and relevant and good use is made of question and answer techniques to share information and check trainees' understanding. Trainees are thoroughly involved in their work. Consideration is given to individuals' learning ability. The more able trainees are given the opportunity to attend additional classes which enables them to progress more quickly through their programme, while the less able are given additional one-to-one support. There is a robust internal verification system, all internal verification is well planned and documented. Internal verifiers meet on a regular basis to discuss and plan forthcoming verification. Trainees are made aware that they can request assessment and verification when they feel they have achieved competence. An employer-liaison officer visits the trainees every eight weeks in the workplace. The reviews are a three-way process, with employers actively involved and encouraged to give their views on how the trainee is progressing. The college tutors are all well qualified and very experienced in the occupational area of hairdressing. Three members of the hairdressing curriculum area have previously been part of the British hairdressing team.

14. Key skills are not fully integrated at the beginning of the modern apprenticeship programme. They are only introduced once an apprentice has embarked on their NVQ level 3. Trainees are concerned that they are being given an additional workload at this stage in the programme, when there have been opportunities within their NVQ level 2 programme to demonstrate competence. Trainees do not fully

understand the key skills component of the modern apprenticeship framework. The training salon within the college needs to be modernised. Specialist equipment needs replacing and the salons have not had any significant refurbishment since 1992.

GENERIC AREAS

Equal opportunities

Grade 3

15. Mackworth College operates an open door recruitment policy and does not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour. Recruitment of trainees is monitored by gender, ethnicity and disability. The organisation has an equal opportunities policy which meets TEC and awarding body requirements. The policy is not annually updated and is not the responsibility of one named individual. There is no systematic evaluation of employers' performance in guaranteeing equal opportunities. The college failed to recognise several of the weaknesses identified by inspectors within its self-assessment report. The grade awarded by the inspection team was lower than that given in the report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ college sensitive to cultural and religious beliefs of the wider community
- ◆ wide range of statistics collected and analysed to inform future action
- ◆ wide range of equal opportunity-related training available to staff

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ lack of sufficient detail in equal opportunities policy
- ◆ poor understanding of equal opportunity issues by trainees and employers
- ◆ poor awareness of NVQ appeals procedure by trainees

16. The college gives consideration to the diverse cultural and religious groups who attend the various courses. Facilities are made available for those who wish to worship. Staff are made aware of the requirements of religious festivals, such as Ramadan, and are sensitive to such issues. A wide range of statistical data is collected in relation to equal opportunities, particularly regarding the gender, ethnicity, disability and age of both staff and trainees. This information is used to influence recruitment and marketing activity. Performance indicators set by the Southern Derbyshire CCTE, for the recruitment of people with disabilities and minority ethnic groups are, in the main, achieved and, in some cases, exceeded. There is a wide range of equal opportunity-related training courses made available to college staff, although these have not been taken up by the assessors directly engaged in the provision of government-funded training. There is good access to the college for those with mobility difficulties.

17. The college's equal opportunities policy does not explicitly state the areas of

discrimination and harassment to which trainees may be subject; for example, gender, race, religion, age or sexual orientation. Employers and trainees have little understanding of the college's equal opportunities policy and are not offered the opportunity to discuss, evaluate, review or influence the policy. Equal opportunities issues are not sufficiently covered at induction or reinforced at any other time during the training programme. There is no effective method for monitoring that employers implement equal opportunities for trainees or for supporting them in setting out a policy. The college does not help them with action-planning or monitoring equal opportunities legislation within the workplace. Although the college has an open-door policy to recruitment, marketing and publicity material fails to fully promote the college's firm commitment to equal opportunities. Literature made available to trainees and employers, such as the student charter and handbook, makes little reference to equal opportunities. However, there is a clear complaints procedure detailed in the handbook which trainees are aware of. These tend to focus more towards issues relating to disability. While a comprehensive procedure exists in relation to appeals against NVQ assessment decisions, trainees have no knowledge or understanding of what to do in such an event.

Trainee support

Grade 2

18. Potential trainees are referred from the careers service, employers or apply directly to the college. All trainees are required to undertake an initial assessment. Trainees are then interviewed by an occupational specialist, who determines the appropriate programme and identifies whether the trainee requires any additional support. The trainee is then referred to the relevant curriculum sector where they are enrolled and a course induction takes place. Trainees are issued with an induction pack containing information of course content, health and safety and a student handbook, which covers general college information. All trainees are employed status. Inspectors did not agree with all of the strengths claimed in the self-assessment report. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given in the report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ wide range of support facilities and resources
- ◆ regular contact between trainees and assessors
- ◆ active involvement of trainees in development of college's support arrangements
- ◆ communicators for the hearing impaired

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ induction not memorable
- ◆ lack of involvement by employers in reviews

19. The results of initial assessment are used to inform trainees' individual training

plans which are updated regularly updated. Trainees' prior achievements and learning are accredited. Trainees at the college benefit from the high level of pastoral support available. Trainees with additional support needs receive structured support linked to their vocational area. This support is provided in a sensitive way by the college's support team. All staff who provide this level of support are very well qualified and experienced. Work-based assessors give a high priority to supporting trainees. Visits to trainees in the workplace are carried out at eight-weekly intervals but additional visits are arranged if trainees have specific problems or issues to discuss. As an example, assessors have recently been advising some trainees on how to negotiate pay increases. In providing this help, the assessors have ensured that trainees are fully informed about the minimum wage and how it affects their training allowance or salary. The college operates a number of curriculum focus groups which are organised by the quality assurance manager. The groups are, in the main, attended by trainees and students. The groups offer students the opportunity to discuss any problems and concerns regarding domestic issues, support arrangements, curriculum content and personal experiences of the college as a whole. The findings of the groups are collated and discussed as a regular agenda item at the programme review group meetings, which is responsible for agreeing on actions. All minutes and agreed actions are forwarded to the curriculum development group which is primarily responsible for change.

20. Induction is not provided in a memorable fashion. Trainees have little recall of it. They are aware that many forms were completed and signed, but many are unsure of what they have signed or its significance. Employers are not sufficiently involved in the review process. Reviews are recorded and are used to agree on action plans to ensure trainees are progressing. However, many of the employers express concern regarding their lack of involvement and the fact that they are not being kept informed of their trainees' progress. The college has trained communicators for the hearing impaired. This enables deaf people to take an active part in training sessions. The communicators, in partnership with a local school for deaf people, have established social and learning development groups for the deaf students and trainees of Mackworth College. Tutor group sessions are held regularly to support deaf students and trainees with theoretical work, and a number of social events are organised throughout the year. Both are well attended.

Management of training

Grade 2

21. Government-funded training is managed from a separate unit within the enterprise and business centre of Mackworth College. The centre has developed its own business plan, but also contributes to the overall college business and strategic planning process. Work-based training is represented at all levels of strategic and operational management of the college. Many policies and procedures are generic to the college and extend to all staff, students and trainees. Where this is not appropriate, policies and procedures specifically relating to government-funded work-based training, have been written and are fully established. Mackworth college provides regular off-the-job training by integrating trainees into mainstream programmes. All trainees are enrolled onto the college register and are able to access

a wide range of support services. Inspectors agreed with the grade given by the college.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ college values and policies are understood and supported by staff
- ◆ effective staff development arrangements
- ◆ accurate and current data are used to inform management decisions
- ◆ effective internal communications
- ◆ managers encourage open debate with staff and trainees

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ good practice not systematically shared across or within occupational areas

22. There is an effective staff-development process, which is informed by an annual personal appraisal and a programme of classroom observations. Each member of staff has an annual appraisal which is completed and agreed on by immediate line managers. Staff have the opportunity to review their own performance and suggest how they would like to be developed in the following 12 months. Line managers are then able to consider requests in line with the colleges' overall business plan and prioritise development activities. At least once each year, all teaching staff are observed by a trained observer and their performance is judged against standard criteria. Feedback is given to the member of staff following the observation and a report is written to inform the staff development process and the annual review of programmes. The colleges' values and policies are contained in a handbook which is issued to all staff. Many policies are displayed in all rooms throughout the college, including health and safety and the college's quality assurance policy. The posters display not only the policies, but also an interpretation of the role that each member of staff has to play in the effective operation of the relevant policy. The college communicates well with all of its employees. Each month the college produces an information bulletin containing notices and minutes from all of its activities. The bulletin is attached to monthly payslips to ensure that all staff receive a copy. When staff are on maternity leave, annual or sick leave, a copy of the bulletin, and any interim special bulletins, are posted to home addresses to ensure all staff are informed.

23. The college holds a range of management and general review meetings, some of which include trainees and students, and all of which are comprehensively minuted and supported by detailed action points. The colleges' senior management team holds weekly management meetings to discuss issues such as personnel, finance and performance against a range of internal targets and indicators. The management-information systems generate a range of accurate data, which are used to inform future action or to make recommendations to the meetings of the colleges' governing body. The college has established a number of task groups, which are all represented by trainees or students. These include health and safety, publicity and information-

technology task groups. The college encourages open debate with its staff and, wherever appropriate, with its trainees and students. The college regularly reviews its performance within occupational areas, but it does not have a systematic approach to sharing good practice across or within occupational areas. One example of this is the college's approach to assessment and internal verification. In some areas, internal verification practices are excellent in others, they are less than satisfactory.

Quality assurance

Grade 3

24. Mackworth College has well documented quality assurance arrangements. There are comprehensive quality assurance procedures manuals and systems for reviewing and evaluating all aspects of training programmes. The college employs a quality assurance manager who co-ordinates much of the work in this area. The college works to the quality standards of the CCTE and regularly conducts self-assessment against the quality frameworks of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) and, more recently, the Training Standards Council (TSC). Inspectors awarded a lower grade for this area than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ comprehensive quality assurance arrangements
- ◆ quality assurance is well communicated and understood by all staff
- ◆ good programme review arrangements
- ◆ standards and targets are set and regularly reviewed

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ non-compliance with TEC contract in engineering
- ◆ insufficient checking and internal auditing of trainee-related documents
- ◆ some self-assessment judgements not supported by clear evidence

25. Mackworth College has failed to comply with its contract with Southern Derbyshire CCTE for engineering training. Two trainees are currently on the programme without a valid individual training plan and none of the trainees have been reviewed to the frequency stipulated within the CCTE contract. There is insufficient internal auditing of trainee-related documents, some of which are either not rigorously completed, or completed to different standards depending upon individual staff members or occupational areas. In many areas, but particularly in engineering, the judgements made in the self-assessment report are not supported by clear evidence. Several strengths are no more than normal practice or were found to

be weaknesses.

26. In 1996, the college adopted the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) business excellence model as its framework for the development of quality assurance up to the year 2000. The quality assurance arrangements of the college are well documented and effectively communicated to all staff, employers and trainees. The quality assurance manager, in consultation with senior managers, sets targets and standards for quality which are circulated to all trainees and employers. These targets are regularly reviewed and the results are published around the college campus. An example of this is the curriculum charter which is displayed in every classroom in the college. This charter explains to students and trainees the importance of handing in homework within the correct timescale set by the lecturer. It also explains the importance of having it marked thoroughly and promptly and handed back with a full explanation of the marks and areas where improvements could be made. The timescales for the prompt return of homework by the lecturing staff are displayed in the charter and monitored at the programme review meeting, which is held each term. The colleges' commitment to quality assurance is displayed in the form of a detailed 'quality policy' in all of the college buildings. It informs staff of the colleges' arrangements and of the valuable role that they all have to play in the continuous improvement of its services.

27. The quality assurance review arrangements are comprehensive and, at many levels, actively involve students and trainees. Each occupational area holds a programme review each term at which students and trainees are represented. There is a standard agenda which includes the results from the lesson observations, students and trainees' achievements and retention rates and the monitoring of quality assurance targets. The programme review is minuted and informs the six-monthly curriculum development group. One of the tasks of the development groups is to prepare and review an annual report which is presented to the academic board. In addition to these structured review meetings, the quality assurance manager regularly holds focus groups. These groups are made up of students, trainees and lecturing staff. Their purpose is to gain feedback on a range of specific issues with a view to improving standards.