



TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL

INSPECTION REPORT JULY 1999

# Cathedral Centre

## SUMMARY

Cathedral Centre offers good training in information technology, art and design and foundation for work. Teaching takes place in stimulating environments and trainees are strongly supported by well-qualified and experienced teachers and volunteers. Effective development of individual learning plans supports trainees' progress and helps them to acquire knowledge and skills. Trainees' achievement of qualifications is good. Opportunities for work experience, however, are insufficient to meet demand. Equal opportunities are strongly promoted and recruitment of people from traditionally under-represented groups is good. Many trainees have additional learning needs. Management of training is strong, although information systems are not fully developed. Self-assessment is an integral part of quality assurance.

### GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Business administration	2
Media & design	2
Foundation for work	2

GENERIC AREAS	GRADE
Equal opportunities	1
Trainee support	1
Management of training	2
Quality assurance	2

### KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ good-quality teaching to meet individual trainees' needs
- ◆ well-qualified and experienced teachers and volunteers
- ◆ good achievement rates
- ◆ stimulating learning environments
- ◆ strong promotion of equal opportunities
- ◆ effective initial advice and guidance given to trainees
- ◆ effective pastoral support
- ◆ thorough induction for trainees
- ◆ company's values and aims fully supported by staff
- ◆ rigorous staff review linked to effective professional development
- ◆ self-assessment an integral part of quality assurance

### KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ insufficient opportunity for work experience
- ◆ underdeveloped management-information systems
- ◆ quality assurance does not ensure consistent practice across all training programmes

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Cathedral Centre Company Limited is a large voluntary sector education and training organisation sited in the centre of Bradford. Registered as a charity and a company limited by guarantee, The Cathedral Centre occupies premises owned by the Diocese of Bradford and leased for a peppercorn rent. The company has no religious affiliation. The main building, originally built in the 1840s was formerly used as a school. Two adjoining buildings have been acquired through a National Lottery grant and funding through trusts, and are owned by the company. The Cathedral Centre was founded in 1981 in response to the needs of local unemployed young people. In 1985, the emphasis on training shifted from youth towards adult training funded largely through the European Social Fund (ESF). The Centre has developed its role as a provider of education and training for disadvantaged people, including those with learning difficulties and those who are long-term unemployed. The Centre aims to support people in the development of greater self-confidence, to acquire employability skills and to progress towards employment and independence. The training centre is visited daily by around 300 trainees, of whom over a quarter are from minority ethnic groups. The Cathedral Centre has expanded steadily over the years and now employs over 40 people to manage and deliver its training programmes. At the time of inspection, 229 trainees were following government-funded programmes.

2. The Cathedral Centre delivers a wide range of training programmes and community projects through different funding sources. In 1998-99, work-based training for adults and youth training programmes directly funded by Bradford & District Training & Enterprise Council (TEC), together with the New Deal full-time education and training (FTET) 18-24 programmes contracted through the Employment Service and managed by the TEC, accounted for 37 per cent of the Centre's income. Twenty per cent of the Centre's annual income derives from the ESF, 18 per cent from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC), 14 per cent from a Bradford Council Community grant, and other funding sources account for 11 per cent. The Centre is the largest provider in Bradford of prevocational learning programmes for long-term unemployed adults. Youth training programmes form a small part of its provision and focus on giving intensive help to youngsters with additional learning needs, especially in basic skills and key skills training. ESF programmes are designed around 'pathways', aiming to take people out of unemployment, and train them with an emphasis on guidance and support. Pathways enable trainees to develop social and communication skills and acquire occupational-specific skills and understanding. FEFC-funded programmes enable over 300 trainees annually to gain nationally recognised qualifications in a wide range of educational and vocational areas. Bradford Council Community grants fund an environmental conservation training scheme, 'Calico', for people with learning difficulties and disabilities and non-vocational courses as part of a 'life-long learning' project. Other funding is derived through a range of sources and includes Bradford Community Health Trust, Social Services, The National Lottery Charity Board and the local Placing Assessing & Counselling Team

(PACT). Monies from these sources fund people with support needs on the Calico scheme and rehabilitation training for people with disabilities.

3. The City of Bradford lies within the county of West Yorkshire and, with a population of 483,000, is the fourth largest metropolitan district in the country. Bradford is at the centre of a growing economic region in which 7.5 million people live within a 30-mile radius of the city. Unlike many other metropolitan districts where population growth is static, Bradford's population shows steady growth, due largely to increase in numbers within minority ethnic groups. Estimates for population change for 1996-2011 suggest large increases in Asian communities compared to a decline in white communities. Figures for 1996 indicate that 81 per cent of the Bradford district population are white, with 16 per cent comprising people from Asian origins. Black communities account for 3 per cent of the population. Bradford is readily accessible from the major north-south and east-west motorways with direct links to the M1 and M62. Rail links to all parts of Britain are good. The service sector accounts for the majority of the workforce and businesses, while traditional industries such as textiles and heavy engineering remain an important, but declining, element of the local economy. Recent years have seen steady growth in the electronics industry, financial and business services, retailing, hotel and catering and telephone-based services, coupled with an overall decrease of unemployment levels. The overall unemployment rate for Bradford however, at 6.2 per cent, is higher than the national average of 5.2 per cent. Unemployment is greater among men, of whom 8.9 per cent are out of work compared to 2.9 per cent among their female counterparts. Pockets of high social deprivation exist within the inner-city areas where local levels of unemployment are estimated to be over 20 per cent. People with disabilities make up 13 per cent of the working population in Bradford, with the unemployment rate among this group 2.5 times higher than that for non-disabled workers. Achievement levels by year-11 school-leavers have been consistently lower in Bradford than those reflected nationally. In 1998, the percentage of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 29.6 per cent, compared with the national average of 46.3 per cent.

## INSPECTION FINDINGS

4. Cathedral Centre completed its second self-assessment report for work-based training in May 1999. The first self-assessment report, completed in December 1998 and written to comply with TEC requirements, was revised to include New Deal training. The company had completed earlier self-assessment reports in respect of its training funded through the FEFC. Two members of staff attended training sessions conducted by the Training Standards Council in preparation for self-assessment. The report was developed over several months and was led by the assistant director. All staff were involved in the self-assessment process and contributed to the report. The first draft of the report was presented at staff meetings for comment and amendment. Section heads were instrumental in the collection of evidence and the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses. Judgements in the report were openly debated and reflect a consensus of opinion of staff. The final draft of the report was endorsed by all staff and the management committee.

5. A team of five inspectors spent a total of 25 days at Cathedral Centre in July 1999. Inspection covered adult and youth training programmes funded through Bradford & District TEC, and full-time New Deal 18-24 FTET programmes subcontracted from the Employment Service via Bradford TEC. Training schemes and projects funded through other grants and trusts were also inspected. The foundation for work training inspected included prevocational work-based learning, FTET and basic employability programmes. Computing and information technology was inspected as part of business administration. FTET was inspected within media & design programmes. Inspectors observed a total of 27 instruction sessions and made eight visits to trainees in work placements and off-site project work. Eighty-seven trainees were interviewed, meetings were held with directors, managers, teachers, placement officers and volunteer staff and work-placement providers. A range of documents were inspected, including business plans, policies and quality assurance files, external audit and inspection reports, minutes of meetings and staff and trainees' guidance packs. Inspectors examined trainees' files and work portfolios, and data relating to trainees' achievement and progression and equal opportunities. They inspected resources and accommodation, including the library, café and nursery.

### Grades awarded to instruction sessions

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Business administration		7	2			9
Media & design	2	6				8
Foundation for work	1	9				10
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>27</b>

## OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

### Business administration

### Grade 2

6. Cathedral Centre has 86 people following government-funded business administration programmes leading to qualifications in information technology. Forty-one trainees are funded through the New Deal option and 45 through work-based learning for adults basic employability schemes. Training leads to a range of qualifications including CLAIT, (computer literacy and information technology), integrated business technology (IBT), including text processing and word processing stages 1 to 3, and desktop publishing. Use of key skills training is integrated into teaching programmes and trainees work on the information technology unit for key skills and on completion receive an internal certificate. All trainees are given initial information technology assessments, and their prior learning and experience is taken into account in the development of individual learning plans. Each trainee works to an individual programme and timetable. Their attendance is routinely monitored. Trainees use open-learning information packs to enable them to progress at their own pace. Group learning sessions are integrated into open-learning programmes. A minimum of six tutors with additional teaching support provided by volunteer trainers are available to give trainees support and advice during sessions. Inspectors agreed with the findings in the self-assessment report and awarded the same grade as that given by the company.

#### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ well-structured training
- ◆ focus on trainees' individual needs
- ◆ good progression through range of qualifications
- ◆ effective use of internally developed learning materials
- ◆ good human and physical resources
- ◆ good retention and achievement rates

#### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ insufficient opportunity for work experience
- ◆ low rate of progression into employment

7. Training is sharply focused on the needs of individual trainees. Teaching allows trainees to progress at a pace and level suited to their abilities and experience. Training is structured and well planned and delivered within a supportive environment. Teachers are well qualified and use their experience effectively to enable trainees to gain understanding and practical skills. The high levels of individual support and understanding given to trainees enable many of them with

no prior knowledge and experience of computing to gain confidence and succeed. Training makes effective use of one-to-one tutor support, supplemented by good-quality self-study materials developed in-house and customised to trainees' requirements. The Centre subscribes to several computing magazines which supplement trainees' knowledge and understanding of the commercial market in information technology. Trainees have access to the Internet, but this facility is not fully developed and a planned 'webwise' multimedia course has yet to be implemented. Trainees are well supported and are highly motivated to achieve. Staff quickly establish good rapport with trainees and encourage them to progress and achieve qualifications. Staff systematically evaluate the initial assessment process to identify trainees' learning needs and this is used effectively to develop individual learning plans at the start of training. Trainees are fully involved in developing their learning plans which are then used to guide the training process. The open-plan workshop area forms a stimulating working and learning environment. Generally, the training workshops are well equipped, with a range of computer equipment and up-to-date software, and sufficient work stations to enable all trainees to work individually. Computers and software are upgraded as part of a management strategy.

8. Trainees have a good understanding of the content and structure of their training programmes. Induction is good and is used to effectively disseminate information about the Centre's facilities and support services and training-specific issues. Trainees value the induction process as a means of raising their confidence and motivating them to progress and achieve. Reviews are generally undertaken monthly, but can be done more frequently if necessary. Reviews provide support and guidance and focus on maintaining trainees' progress. Trainees give regular feedback to staff on their progress in review sessions and in an informal manner. Trainees' comments on the quality of teaching and resources are recorded and used to effect improvements in the programme. Trainees identify areas in which they would like more training, for example in use of the internet and electronic mailing. Trainees' progress and achievement are good. During 1998-99, 85 per cent of trainees gained qualifications, many achieving multiple qualifications. Retention rates are high, at over 90 per cent. Work-experience opportunities with outside employers, however, are limited. The Centre is addressing this by appointing placement officers, but at present only a minority of trainees on vocational programmes gain work experience within outside commercial settings. Real work opportunities are provided in the workshop for trainees to gain, for example, work experience in office skills, reception work, filing, photocopying, faxing and switchboard operation. Trainees' progression from training into employment is low. Over the last year, less than 20 per cent of leavers moved into full-time employment.

### **Media & design**

### **Grade 2**

9. Training options in media & design programmes cover the areas of painting and drawing, pottery, silk-screen printing and photography. Fifty-six people are on these programmes as part of TEC-funded basic foundation for work programmes for adults or 18-24 year olds on the New Deal FTET option. Ten trainees are from

prevocational training schemes and follow the art course for a period of 20 weeks. The remaining forty-six New Deal FTET clients spend from 20 to 52 weeks in training. Trainees have the opportunity to access more than one option and many develop individual learning plans which include all the options. Accredited courses offer trainees the opportunity to achieve nationally recognised qualifications at levels 1 and 2. Trainees are taught in mixed groups and are composed of people funded through different organisations, such as the FEFC and the ESF. A manager oversees the department, co-ordinating the work of three specialist trainers. These are supported by volunteers and support workers, who assist trainees in each of the skills areas. Inspectors agreed with the judgements made in the self-assessment report and awarded the same grade as that given by the company.

### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ clearly structured progression routes
- ◆ high level of practical skills displayed by trainees
- ◆ good planning and enthusiastic delivery of training
- ◆ creative input to teaching by industry-experienced volunteers
- ◆ effective use of good-quality internally developed learning materials
- ◆ flexible, well-planned timetables
- ◆ good awareness by trainees of health and safety issues
- ◆ good achievement rates

### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ some limited resources and lack of workshop space
- ◆ restricted progression for some trainees
- ◆ insufficient work-placement opportunities

10. Training programmes are well structured and teaching is planned. There are detailed schemes of work which are used to guide teaching. Comprehensive work schemes follow set criteria for the awarding body, and in photography, pottery and silk-screen printing, trainees are well informed of the schedule and subject matter for lessons. Training staff have good occupational expertise, are well qualified and perform their teaching duties to high standards. Teaching is delivered at a pace and level to suit the needs of individual trainees and takes full account of the wide differences in trainees' abilities, experiences and practical competencies. Trainers are well supported by volunteers who share their industrial experience and expertise with trainees. Trainees may join the teaching groups at any stage. Trainees' individual learning schemes are successfully integrated into group sessions. Trainers impart the information and demonstrate practical skills with enthusiasm. Their enjoyment of teaching is conveyed to trainees and serves to stimulate their interest and motivate them to achieve. Trainers effectively use a variety of teaching styles and methods while concentrating on the specialist



subject. Timetables for individual trainees are carefully planned to enable each trainee to attend teaching sessions in all art and design options and thereby acquire a broad range of practical skills. Open workshop sessions are very well organised with staff working enthusiastically to foster strong working relationships at all times.

11. Effective use is made of project work to enable trainees to develop a full range of practical skills. Trainees complete practical assignments from the original design phase to a good-quality finished product. Completion of trainees' records of achievement for awarding body assessment requirements is well planned, and adequate time, based on each trainee's ability, is allowed for them to gather and record essential evidence. Excellent learning materials, including background knowledge sheets, have been developed by trainers to assist them in this. Achievement rates are good. During 1997-98 and 1998-99, 85 per cent of trainees following media and design courses as part of prevocational programmes achieved qualifications. Achievement rates for New Deal clients are also good; records to date indicate that over 80 per cent of FTET trainees have gained primary target qualifications. Those trainees still on the programme are making good progress towards successful completion. Achievement rates within media and design as a whole have risen from below 80 per cent to nearly 97 per cent. Retention rates within media and design are over 82 per cent. Trainees receive good support and advice on achievement strategies as part of their progress reviews with trainers.

12. The numbers of trainees opting to take media and design programmes has increased significantly over the last year. Workshop space is now barely adequate to cope with the larger groups, although strategic business plans include provision for new workshops. Trainees in painting and drawing, for example, have limited space, which inhibits work on medium- or large-size works and the workshop area available to pottery trainees is restricted. Availability of resources and materials is generally adequate, but in some cases the quality of equipment is inadequate. Constant use of specialist equipment has resulted in wear and tear. For instance, photographic enlargers are showing signs of age and need constant maintenance, and the photographic studio backdrop facilities display wear over several years' use. Trainees have a good understanding of health and safety measures, which they adhere to in the workshops.

13. A wide range of qualifications is available and trainees are able to develop a broad range of traditional art skills at foundation level. However, progression routes are limited and do not extend beyond level 2 and trainees are unable to work at higher levels and learn more advanced techniques. Trainers in photography and silk-screen printing provide excellent technical skills development, and trainees achieve standards above those required for certification. Although links with other training providers enable trainees to progress to more advanced training programmes, some trainees would prefer to remain at the Cathedral Centre to benefit from the highly supportive learning environment. Insufficient work placements are available to enable all trainees to partake of on-the-job training.

## Foundation for work

## Grade 2

14. There are 89 government-funded trainees in this occupational area. All trainees are on a prevocational training programme. Eighteen are following a work-based learning for adults programme and 48 are on basic employability programmes. Twenty-three trainees are on a New Deal programme following the FTET option. Training programmes provide training all year round so that trainees can join a course at any time. The Cathedral Centre offers training to unemployed people, including those with a variety of learning difficulties and disabilities. Many trainees are long-term unemployed. Most trainees have poor literacy and numeracy skills. All trainees, irrespective of the programme they are on, work on basic skills, key skills and vocational skills. Trainees are able to access training in all vocational areas offered through flexible training and attendance patterns. Trainees have access to a wide range of competence- and examination-based qualifications. They negotiate and agree their individual learning plans and timetables during the initial induction. Prevocational and basic employability trainees attend the centre for 21 hours each week for a period of 20 weeks. New Deal (FTET) trainees attend for 30 hours each week for between 20 and 52 weeks. The development of key skills is encouraged through the use of the national record of achievement. This is introduced to trainees at induction. Trainees work with the tutor and their peers to assess their own key skills. They draw up suitable action plans to address weak areas. Key skills development incorporates job-search and work-placement activity. Insufficient work-experience placements are available for trainees. Formal job-search sessions are provided and these include input from the local careers service. Inspectors agreed with the strengths identified in the self-assessment report, and identified additional weaknesses. The grade awarded was the same as that given by the organisation in the report.

### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ good development of trainees' basic skills
- ◆ effective integration of key skills into learning programmes
- ◆ effective involvement by trainees in course development
- ◆ wide range of accreditation to reflect individual ability
- ◆ varied and interesting training sessions
- ◆ visually stimulating learning environments
- ◆ highly experienced and well-qualified staff

### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ insufficient external work-placement opportunities
- ◆ unplanned and unstructured work experience
- ◆ underdeveloped ESOL training

15. A variety of formal teaching and workshop sessions is available for trainees to develop their basic skills, including workshops for literacy and numeracy. Improvements in trainees' literacy and numeracy skills are evident in their work. The Centre helps to develop trainees' reading skills through communication-skills workshops. Trained volunteers are used effectively to help trainees to learn through one-to-one sessions. Staff effectively help trainees to develop their learning plans. Initial assessment is comprehensive, and any identified support needs are met. Training sessions are varied and interesting. Afternoon sessions for literacy and numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) are formal teaching sessions. Morning workshop sessions are less formal and focus on addressing a variety of subject areas to supplement learning. Teaching and project work are based on themes chosen by the trainees. Assessment is well planned and schedules for assessment are negotiated with trainees. Trainees have good access to tutorial support and are able to book one-to-one tutorial support sessions.

16. Trainees are involved in developing their courses. Teaching staff consult with trainees on a regular basis during their reviews. Staff take account of trainees' preferences for subject areas for use in developing their basic skills. Trainees' evaluation is integral to their training. A wide range of basic skills qualifications are available to trainees. Many trainees enter training with few or no formal qualifications. Almost all trainees (99 per cent) gain a qualification and many achieve several. Trainees make good progress along clearly identified routes leading to set targets for achievement. Accreditation is offered at different levels, which enables trainees to achieve and progress at intervals, by working at their own pace.

17. Teaching staff are experienced and well qualified and hold appropriate teaching and assessment qualifications. Teachers use their experience effectively to enable trainees to learn and acquire skills. Training sessions are well planned and structured. There are schemes of work and lesson plans and clear aims, objectives and outcomes are recorded for each teaching session. A wide range of learning materials, including computer multimedia, is available and used effectively. Many materials have been produced in-house to meet particular needs of trainees. Teaching staff employ a wide range of teaching techniques. Volunteers support teaching staff and contribute fully to teaching process and they have a hands-on approach. Sessions include formal input from staff, combined with the opportunity for trainees to practice their skills. Trainees find the sessions interesting. They are encouraged to work alone, in pairs and in groups. Trainees take responsibility for their own work and, where appropriate, their portfolios of evidence. The Centre provides a welcoming and stimulating environment for trainees. Each teaching room provides visual displays of learning materials on the walls.

18. Opportunities for trainees to secure work placements are limited and only eight trainees are placed with employers. Work experience for trainees is offered within the Centre's library, administration department, café, graphics department, nursery and reception area. This provides a valuable sheltered work-experience opportunity for the more vulnerable trainees and those lacking in confidence. Two

work-placement officers are making efforts to increase the availability of work placements, and working relationships between the centre staff and work placement staff are co-operative and mutually supportive. Trainees in work placements are well supported and are reviewed at work every four weeks. Reviews are comprehensive and employers are fully involved. Generally, however, on-the-job experience is unplanned and unstructured. Trainees' involvement in work activities are largely in response to employers' needs, rather than those of the trainee. Targets are not routinely identified or set for trainees at work. Recently developed placement training plans have yet to be implemented. ESOL training is not fully developed and a programme is currently being piloted and evaluated for effectiveness. Trainees are able to work towards elementary ESOL qualifications, which allows them to demonstrate their oral and written skills. However, training is insufficient to meet the demand of trainees from minority ethnic groups. The present narrow range of ESOL qualifications does not fully address the varied levels of ability that trainees have.

## GENERIC AREAS

### Equal opportunities

### Grade 1

19. The Centre has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy which meets the requirements of legislation and those of Bradford & District TEC. Responsibility for equal opportunities lies with the assistant director who chairs the equal opportunities sub-committee. The sub-committee reports directly to the senior management team and routinely implements and monitors policies and procedures. Monthly data is collected systematically and the Centre has a schedule of internal audits of activities in areas such as marketing, recruitment and selection. Recruitment of people from minority ethnic groups has increased in recent years. In 1998-99 trainees from minority ethnic groups accounted for 27 per cent of all those on programmes, compared with around 19 per cent of the local population. The Centre liaises closely with many voluntary and established community groups and support agencies to recruit its trainees. Over two-thirds of trainees on government-funded programmes are men. Inspectors agreed with the judgements made in the self-assessment report, but felt that the company had under-valued its provision for equal opportunities. Inspectors awarded a higher grade than that given by the company.

### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ strong promotion of equal opportunities
- ◆ total intolerance of discrimination
- ◆ in-depth analysis of equal opportunities data
- ◆ staff sensitive to the needs of trainees from diverse cultural backgrounds
- ◆ nursery provision available for trainees with small children

- ◆ open access to training for all
- ◆ action taken to address the issue of under-represented groups
- ◆ trainees able to begin training at any time throughout the year

#### WEAKNESSES

- ◆ analysed data not fully integrated into strategic planning
- ◆ written workplace agreements do not include reference to equal opportunities

#### GOOD PRACTICE

*The Centre maintains good links with its sister company Bradford Talking Magazines, which operates from well-equipped audio studios within the Centre. The company publishes a monthly audio cassette, which is a talking magazine for people with visual impairments. The Bradford Cassette is distributed to over 400 adults throughout Britain. In 1994, the talking magazine "Bhol Chal" was launched. This cassette is one of the few talking magazines in Britain, to be published in Urdu. Recently, Bradford Talking Magazines has started publishing an edition in Punjabi.*

20. The Centre is known within the Bradford community for its promotion of equal opportunities and its support of trainees from a wide range of backgrounds, including those who may have been previously excluded from other organisations. The Centre operates an open-access policy, whereby no potential trainee is excluded. Trainees are able to start training at any point in the year and programmes are delivered flexibly to meet individual needs and make training accessible to all. The equal opportunities policy is well documented and has been developed in consultation with staff, outside support agencies and community groups to ensure that it is comprehensive. Equal opportunities are effectively promoted within the Centre, by example and through induction programmes. Staff and trainees are fully aware of, and support, equality of opportunity. Posters promoting equal opportunities and copies of the Centre's mission statement and grievance procedures are displayed prominently around the training centre. Equal opportunities information is given to all prospective staff and trainees. The Centre routinely vets the equal opportunities arrangements of the employers it uses for work placements. Placement officers reinforce employers' awareness of equal opportunities issues during visits and emphasise the expectation that employers will adhere to the Centre's policies. However, formal written agreements with employers do not include a clause requiring employers to implement equal opportunities procedures approved by the Centre.

21. Staff display and promote an intolerance of all forms of discrimination. Measures to eradicate discrimination within the centre are effective. Clear guidelines on identification of harassment and discrimination are given to staff and trainees. Trainees are encouraged to report instances breaching equality of opportunity. Examples of incidents relating to discrimination are rare, and where issues have arisen, action by staff to resolve matters has been prompt and effective. The grievance and complaints policies are effective and are adequately adapted to meet the needs of the multi-racial and diverse community. Complaints from trainees are routinely recorded and their gender, ethnicity and disability are analysed to gain better understanding of potential areas for improvement. Equal opportunities data are collected routinely and the information is systematically and thoroughly analysed. Additionally, annual surveys are conducted and these provide equal opportunities data which are included in sub-committee reports. The results of any analysis are used to inform managers and to guide the management and delivery of training. For example, surveys have highlighted gender imbalances in such training programmes as electronics and photography. As a result, the Centre has changed the emphasis of its marketing material, in order to encourage a gender

balance. However, use of analysed data within strategic planning is not fully developed and long-term planning for equal opportunities is not yet a part of the Centre's planning.

22. Staff demonstrate sensitivity and understanding of the varying needs of trainees from diverse social, educational and cultural backgrounds. They are aware of trainees' wishes to celebrate cultural festivals and holy days. Such festivities are recognised at the training centre and the awareness of them is encouraged and supported. Formal training of staff is well established and focuses on raising awareness of equal opportunities issues and on improving practices. In-house training sessions provide good support for staff and, where appropriate, make effective use of the knowledge and expertise of the Centre's staff and outside consultants. Members of staff working for outside support agencies share information and good practice relating to equal opportunities with colleagues. Access to the Centre for people with mobility impairments is good. Improvements have been to buildings, facilities and equipment to enable users of wheelchairs to access the main teaching and services areas of the centre. Lavatories are also accessible to those in wheelchairs. Parents of small children are able to access training, because they can make use of the Centre's nursery. Childcare is provided free of charge for all trainees.

### **Trainee support**

### **Grade 1**

23. Cathedral Centre provides good support for unemployed and disadvantaged people and those from groups traditionally under-represented in adult education and training. Its mission statement focuses on the personal development of individuals in a welcoming environment, where people take an interest in each other. Senior staff conduct weekly introductory tours of the centre, to give general advice and information about training and centre activities to prospective trainees. All applicants are interviewed and new trainees are given a series of assessments in basic skills, literacy and numeracy to determine levels of support required. Trainees are given full information on training available, including key skills training, and guidance in making choices. All trainees receive an induction programme, during which their key skills are assessed, and opportunities for taster sessions in information technology and media and design are given. Trainees are visited in work placements by the Centre's staff to review their progress and action plan at least every four weeks, and more often if required. Employers are involved in the review process. The self-assessment report was accurate in its findings. Additional strengths were identified by inspectors who awarded a higher grade than that given by the Centre.

#### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ effective use of initial advice and guidance to develop individual learning plans
- ◆ thorough induction programme
- ◆ effective support for trainees with additional learning needs and those with disabilities

- ◆ extensive counselling services available
- ◆ good use of external support agencies and organisations
- ◆ wide range of social and community activities
- ◆ effective and responsive pastoral support
- ◆ positive use of volunteers to help with training
- ◆ celebration of trainees' achievements

#### WEAKNESSES

- ◆ staff guidance policy not fully comprehensive
- ◆ some infrequent and inadequately recorded reviews of trainees

#### GOOD PRACTICE

Fortnightly surgeries are held at the Centre by a local solicitor, the Citizens Advice Bureau, the Educational Advice Service for Adults and Bradford Careers Services. The network extends to local units dealing with alcohol and drug abuse and to agencies such as those training people with physical disabilities, mental health resource centres and a local school for pupils with visual impairment.

24. Working relationships between staff and trainees are good and based on mutual respect. Staff willingly provide support services beyond their contractual responsibilities. Pastoral support is good, and includes crisis intervention, long-term counselling and support to help trainees deal with serious personal and domestic issues. Support workers and volunteers are used effectively to provide additional one-to-one help for trainees with literacy and numeracy problems and support for those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Volunteer staff also provide support for trainees in the classroom. Appropriate levels of support enable all trainees, regardless of ability, to progress. Personal counselling services are available. Weekly counselling sessions are provided by qualified centre staff and spontaneously, if necessary, in response to trainees' needs. Links with external support agencies offering advice, support and counselling are extensive.

#### GOOD PRACTICE

Good examples exist showing how teachers have adapted accommodation and learning materials to meet the needs of trainees with learning difficulties and disabilities. In photography, the dark room for has been adapted specifically for wheelchair users. Learning materials in media and design have been rewritten for trainees with low levels of literacy and numeracy to support them with their training.

25. The initial advice and guidance given to trainees is good. Training programmes are negotiated with trainees and a wide range of course options enables programmes to be tailored to individual needs, abilities and occupational interests. Staff are approachable and trainees feel able to seek guidance and advice at any time. Feedback questionnaires indicate a high level of satisfaction by trainees with the levels of support provided. Effective use is made of initial assessments to evaluate the additional support and key skills requirements of each trainee. Initial assessment is thorough and covers assessment of their basic and key skills in the units of communication, application and information technology, where appropriate. Results of assessment are recorded and discussed in-depth with each trainee before agreeing any additional support needs to go in individual training plans. Induction of trainees is comprehensive; it takes place over three and a half days and includes visits to workshops and meetings with teachers. Clear information is given on the nature and content of programmes and trainees receive informed and impartial advice. Individual appointments with teachers enables trainees to fully discuss their programme choices, learning plans and timetables. Trainees are given comprehensive information packs containing details on rights and responsibilities, health and safety, complaints and grievance procedures, equal opportunities and trainee-support services. General induction is followed by a programme-specific induction once learning plans have been established.

26. A wide range of communal and social activities is available to trainees at the Centre. The café services are excellent and provide good-quality food at low prices. Trainees have access to social areas where they can relax and meet with fellow trainees. Trainees are involved in organising a calendar of social events and activities. Where events are linked to training, trainees' participation is subsidised so that no one is excluded on financial grounds. Staff arrange and participate in residential courses for trainees. Initially aimed at trainees with severe learning difficulties, all residentials are now inclusive. One annual residential week is organised specifically for single parents and their children. Financing such events relies heavily on funding from external charities and fund-raising events organised by trainees and staff. The Centre has a library containing a good range of books and learning materials. Trainees' successes are promoted and publicly celebrated. Presentation ceremonies are held twice yearly, and local dignitaries present certificates of achievement to trainees. The presentation is followed by a social event attended by trainees and their families. Notice of trainees' achievements is given in the Centre's quarterly newsletter and on notice boards.

27. The Centre has clear procedures for recruitment of trainees, guidance and support, but these do not contain detailed information or guidelines for conducting initial assessments and reviews. There are inconsistencies in the reviewing and recording of trainees' progress and achievements. Good practice in New Deal trainees' reviews is not reflected in other work-based learning programmes. New Deal reviews are conducted frequently and results are routinely recorded in detail. In other areas, however, reviews are infrequent and records of trainees' achievements, progress and action-planning are inadequate.

## Management of training

## Grade 2

28. The Centre was accredited with the Investors in People Standard in May 1998. It has undergone considerable expansion during the last 12 months, during which the number of trainees attending the centre daily has increased from around 200 to nearly 300. Staff numbers have increased accordingly from 35 to 44, most of whom are full time, covering management and delivery of programmes, administration and support services. Some internal restructuring of the management framework has taken place and resulted in the creation of a single teaching division and a core services and finance division. The core services department maintains social amenities and catering services, nursery facilities, and building maintenance. A new key skills section has been formed to undertake management of trainees' work placements. Overall responsibility for the management of the Centre lies with the director. The senior management team is made up of the director and two assistant directors with responsibility for curriculum and quality, and core services and finance respectively. Two middle managers co-ordinate government-funded and ESF/FEFC-funded schemes and directly manage six section heads within the teaching department. Section division within this department is based on the funding source for different programmes. A 13-member management committee is responsible for governing the organisation.



Committee members are drawn from a range of local organisations and businesses, including two nominees from Bradford Cathedral and a representative of the student body. Inspectors agreed with the judgements made in the self-assessment report and awarded the same grade as that given by the Centre.

### STRENGTHS

- ◆ aims and values fully understood and supported by staff
- ◆ effective deployment of staff within clearly defined roles
- ◆ open communication and effective dissemination of information
- ◆ strong links and partnerships with outside organisations and agencies
- ◆ thorough induction and continuing support for staff
- ◆ rigorous staff review linked to appropriate staff training
- ◆ good strategic management
- ◆ performance targets set and exceeded

### WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no central administration system
- ◆ underdeveloped management-information systems
- ◆ inconsistency in written procedures

#### GOOD PRACTICE

*Good management practice was seen at the interface of provision for staff development and the open management style of managers. Staff reviews had highlighted staff concern that the rapid expansion in provision and increased trainee numbers was endangering quality of provision at the centre. Managers responded promptly to change the subject matter of the staff training day to encompass the issues raised. Evaluation of the problems enabled a consensus of staff opinion to be identified and implementation of common practices to be agreed. Practical measures to effect improvements were put in place.*

29. Effective leadership in the company has resulted in strong promotion of the organisation's values, mission statement and strategic aims. These are fully understood and supported by the staff and reinforced through daily dialogue and discussions at staff meetings. Staff are well deployed and perform tasks suited to their abilities, experience and preferences. The roles and responsibilities of staff are recorded in their job descriptions and are clearly understood by staff. They are encouraged to seek promotion within the company and apply for job vacancies. Written procedures for recruitment and selection of staff ensure equality of opportunity. Recent changes in the framework for management and the implications for working practices have been clearly conveyed to employed staff and volunteers. The management style is open, with senior managers remaining accessible to all staff for consultation and guidance. Managers have developed a self-appraisal process in which their policies and procedures are monitored and reviewed and they encourage staff to use their initiative and make suggestions. Training policies are comprehensive. However, there are inconsistencies in the format and detail of written procedures accompanying the policies. In some cases, written procedures are scant and provide insufficient guidance to ensure standardised practice.

30. Induction of staff is good. New staff are closely monitored and reviewed on a monthly basis for the first three months. Designated mentors are used effectively to provide additional support and guidance. The recording of personal development plans is an integral part of the induction and support process. Staff

are well supported by managers in all aspects of their work. Working relationships between staff are close and promote teamworking and mutual support. Staff development and review is effective. Twice-yearly staff development reviews are conducted for all staff, including the director. The reviews include a full assessment of individuals' achievements and are linked closely to staff development. Staff development is part of the management strategy and is viewed by senior managers as crucial to the process for continuous improvement. Written policies clearly identify objectives for professional development, and managers systematically identify and monitor any training needs. Equality of opportunity for professional development extends to all staff and volunteers. All new teaching staff are fully supported in the achievement of teaching qualifications within two years of joining the company.

31. The strategic management of the company is effective. Operational aims and objectives are well documented within the business plan for 1999-2000. Business plans identify staff responsibilities and an evaluation of resources and their implications. Performance targets are routinely set. Strategic targets are informed by market forces and by managerial understanding of trends within work-based training. Performance indicators are used to monitor and evaluate trainees' achievements. Targets for trainees' achievement are challenging and consistently exceeded, resulting in revision and expansion of TEC contracts. Lines of communication are well developed and make effective use of good working relationships between senior managers and staff. Informal dialogue and dissemination is complemented by a series of monthly meetings for all staff. Agendas are set and detailed minutes are taken and routinely distributed to all staff. Action points are clearly recorded and action taken is monitored and evaluated.

32. Management-information systems are not fully developed. Recent expansion of trainee numbers and the greater complexity of programmes have placed an increased burden on the Centre's computer-database systems. Present computer software systems are barely adequate to meet the demands of data collection and collation, and to provide managers with prompt and in-depth information with which to guide management decisions. Administrators provide effective support to managers. However, administrators operate within discrete areas of company management and resources are not always shared. Managers and staff have developed strong working relationships with a wide range of outside agencies and organisations. Managers have been particularly proactive in their participation in committees and forums in Bradford and beyond, and networking has contributed to managers' understanding of issues and developments within work-based training.

### **Quality assurance**

### **Grade 2**

33. The Cathedral Centre has a documented quality assurance policy which meets the requirements of Bradford & District TEC, the FEFC and the awarding bodies. Self-assessment leading to action-planning is a central part of quality assurance. Observations of training are used systematically as a performance indicator.

Feedback on the quality of training is sought from staff and trainees through questionnaires and annual surveys. The company has operational policies covering all areas of its activities and some procedures. Inspectors agreed with strengths identified in the self-assessment report. Although they identified additional weaknesses they awarded the same grade as that given by the Centre.

#### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ quality assurance arrangements lead to continuous improvements
- ◆ quality assurance focuses on trainees' learning experience
- ◆ well-established system for observation of training
- ◆ self-assessment is an integral part of quality assurance
- ◆ effective routine analysis of performance data

#### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ underdeveloped evaluation of some of the Centre's work
- ◆ quality assurance lacks a clearly defined structure
- ◆ systems do not ensure consistent practice across all programmes

34. The Centre is firmly committed to continuous improvement. This is clearly stated in the charters issued to staff and trainees. Improvements are evident as a result of extensive consultation with staff and trainees. For example, trainees' induction has been extended to make it more effective. Placement officers have been appointed in response to the need to address a lack of work experience opportunities for trainees. Additional courses have been developed as a direct result of feedback from trainees. Actions taken as a result of feedback from external verification has resulted in revised and improved materials to support trainees' learning in basic skills. Quality assurance arrangements are firmly focused on the learning experience of the trainees. Good use is made of the analysis of surveys and consultation to make improvements. Feedback is regularly sought from trainees. Annual surveys are conducted to elicit their views. Their responses are analysed by the quality assurance manager and passed to staff for comment. There are schemes of work and lesson plans in all training areas. These assure consistency in the way training sessions are taught. Internal verification includes the observation of student assessments. Clear timetabling across the organisation provides a variety of structured learning and training sessions for trainees which address all levels of need. Changes to individual student timetables are negotiated, and agreed where necessary, as part of the review process.

35. Observation of training, introduced in 1997, is well established in the Centre's quality assurance arrangements. Staff are observed by their line manager annually. Clear criteria for observations are in place. Full and constructive feedback is provided to each member of staff who is observed. Guidelines for the grading of observations follow the model used by Training Standards Council. Feedback from staff is gathered after each observation. All staff view the process as a valuable

part of their personal and professional development. An annual report on teaching observations is produced by the quality assurance manager. This is distributed to all staff and the management committee.

36. Analysis of performance data is systematic and effective. Managers routinely monitor and evaluate the company's performance and make use of national and local statistics to compare their performance. Clearly set targets enable them to measure the Centre's performance and to evaluate achievement trends. Evaluation concentrates on the quality of teaching and learning, but does not cover the whole of the organisation's activities. Regular evaluation takes place of courses delivered and annual reports review the quality of teaching and learning. Account is taken of the findings of external audits, such as those of the Employment Service for New Deal training and action is taken as necessary. Some aspects of the Centre's work, however, are not formally evaluated. For example, the effectiveness of the café and nursery facilities and administrative arrangements are not systematically evaluated. Management and quality assurance systems are not evaluated. The Centre's systems do not ensure the consistency of practice across all areas of training. Procedures do not cover all provision, and the format for guidance documents is inconsistent. There is no clearly defined structure to link policy and procedures in order to provide a consistent reference point for staff. Although policies and procedures are reviewed annually, there is no formal auditing to evaluate their effectiveness and there are underdeveloped systems for document control.

37. Self-assessment is a fundamental part of the Centre's quality assurance arrangements. Self-assessment reports are produced through a process of consultation with staff. An analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) contributes to the content of reports. Designated staff groups are assigned the task of identifying strengths and weakness for their area of training as part of the self-assessment process. Self-assessment reports are submitted to the management committee for comment and endorsement. Action plans are in place to address the weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report completed for this inspection. Staff responsibilities are clearly identified and timescales for implementation are realistic. Judgements made in the report are accurate, and the grades given closely concurred with those awarded by inspectors.