



TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL

INSPECTION REPORT JUNE 2000

ITS Training Services

SUMMARY

ITS Training Services offers outstanding training in international trade and services. The organisation uses a wide range of learning resources and methods of training which are well planned, flexible and effective. ITS Training Services' staff make frequent visits to the trainees' workplaces and offer individual training and assessment. Trainees receive a good level of personal support and occupational guidance. Trainees achieve additional qualifications, many of which count towards membership of the industry's professional bodies. Equality of opportunity is promoted widely within the organisation, with employers and in the local community. Management of training is of a good standard, with effective use made of the expertise of staff. Quality assurance is satisfactory, but many quality arrangements have not yet resulted in improvements.

GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Transportation	1

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

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ effective use of innovative learning resources
- ◆ well-planned off-the-job training
- ◆ excellent occupational advice
- ◆ frequent and flexible contact with trainees
- ◆ good short-term target setting in trainees' reviews
- ◆ good retention rates
- ◆ good awareness of equality issues among staff, trainees and employers
- ◆ effective use of staff's expertise
- ◆ good operational teamwork and internal communication
- ◆ effective use of a wide range of feedback to improve training
- ◆ well-planned and thorough internal verification system

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no overall quality framework
- ◆ no structured staff appraisal and development system
- ◆ poor initial assessment
- ◆ missed opportunities for accrediting prior achievement

INTRODUCTION

1. ITS Training Services (ITS) is a private training company, with two partners, which was set up in 1994. The company provides training and qualifications for employees of import, export, shipping and manufacturing companies through commercially funded programmes and those funded by Suffolk Training and Enterprise Council (TEC). It offers national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at levels 2, 3 and 4 in international trade and services (ITAS), management and key skills at levels 1 to 5 for government-funded trainees. Commercially funded programmes are offered additionally in administration, customer service, distributive operations and training in assessor and internal verifier awards. ITS also offers a range of short courses and qualifications, many of which are supported by the Institute of Freight Professionals and the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers.

2. ITS has held a contract with Suffolk TEC since April 1999. There are currently 37 young people in training; 23 modern apprentices and 14 on other work-based training programmes for young people. Twenty-two of the modern apprentices and all those trainees on the work-based training for young people programme are being trained in ITAS NVQs. One modern apprentice is taking a management NVQ level 3. There were too few trainees on this programme to be included in this inspection. All trainees are employed. Most of the trainees are based in Felixstowe, however 11 trainees work in the Ipswich area and two in Tilbury. ITS has in the past also had a New Deal client who achieved units from the ITAS NVQ on the subsidised employment option. This client achieved the qualification aim of the programme and is employed by a local company.

3. ITS operates from a training centre in Felixstowe. The company employs six staff and one freelance trainer. Five, including the two partners are full time and one is part time. The freelance trainer is employed to instruct on training sessions and commercially funded courses as required. ITS has developed and is currently implementing a video-conferencing system to offer training to those trainees who are not able to visit the training centre. An electronic training and assessment system is being piloted so that trainees can be assessed and receive support from assessors through a video-conferencing link. The training centre is well equipped with two lecture rooms. One of the lecture rooms, which is spacious and comfortable, can accommodate groups of up to 10 trainees, while the other room is available for group work for up to six trainees. Training is also given on employer's premises for individuals or groups when trainers and assessors identify training needs.

4. In 1998, the Suffolk Coastal region had a population of 121,200. The unemployment rate for the region in May 2000 was 2.1 per cent, compared with the national rate of 3.9 per cent. Of those people unemployed in April 2000, 22.7 per cent were aged 18 to 24. The labour market is most buoyant in the service industries, which accounts for 77.1 per cent of employment. Transport and

communications is the largest single employment sector, accounting for 26.3 per cent of all employment in Suffolk Coastal area.

5. The 1991 census figures show that 2.2 per cent of the population in the Suffolk TEC area are from minority ethnic groups, compared with 6.2 per cent in the UK as a whole. However these statistics were substantially affected by the inclusion of residents of a local American airbase, which had an estimated minority ethnic population of 1.6 per cent of the Suffolk TEC area. In 1999, the percentage of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 53.8 per cent compared with the national average for England of 47.9 per cent. Careers service figures for 1997 showed that 69 per cent of school leavers aged 16 remained in full-time education compared with an average of 67.9 per cent for the UK as a whole.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

6. One of the partners and two members of staff attended a half-day introduction to a self-assessment workshop run by Suffolk TEC. This was followed up by regular visits from a consultant to assist with self-assessment. ITS produced its first self-assessment report in December 1999, as part of the planned annual quality assurance cycle. The self-assessment report includes feedback collected from members of staff, employers and trainees. The current action plan is updated to reflect where goals have been achieved. The self-assessment report was largely accurate in identifying strengths and weaknesses and the inspectors agreed with most of the grades awarded.

7. A team of three inspectors spent a total of nine days in June 2000, at ITS. They visited 11 work placements, interviewed 15 trainees, 13 workplace supervisors and managers and six of the ITS staff. They observed three training sessions, one of which was awarded a grade 2, the other two were graded 3. Inspectors examined training materials, assessment records, trainees' portfolios of evidence, individual training plans, internal verification records, trainees' and employers' agreements and files, feedback sheets, external verifiers' reports, press releases, statistics, minutes of meetings, policies and procedures.

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Transportation

Grade 1

8. There are currently 36 trainees taking NVQs, 22 are modern apprentices and fourteen are on work-based training programmes for young people. Twenty-five are working towards level 2, 10 towards level 3 and one is working towards level 4. All trainees are employed, working for a range of large and small companies involved in import and export or shipping. Trainees are recruited from employers by ITS trainers and assessors. Most employers have been using ITS since it started in 1994 to provide commercially funded NVQ and professional qualifications. On-the-job training is supplemented by weekly workshops, one-to-one training and distance-learning material. Assessment is carried out in the workplace by ITS staff who are all occupationally experienced and qualified to assess trainees' competence. There are five trainers, four of whom are also assessors.

9. ITS has been running TEC-funded NVQ training since April 1999 and the programme has not yet run a full cycle. Two of the 28 trainees who started the modern apprenticeship in 1999 have achieved their full training programme aims, another has achieved the level 3 NVQ and three trainees who started at level 2 have achieved this NVQ. Two of the three trainees who achieved level 2 have progressed to the level 3 and one who achieved level 3 has progressed to level 4. Five of the 19 trainees who started the work-based training for young people

programme have achieved the aims of their programme.

10. ITS identified a number of strengths and one weakness in the self-assessment report. Inspectors agreed with the main strengths and found that the weakness had been rectified and was no longer applicable. They found an additional strength in the good work placements. Inspectors were unable to identify any significant weaknesses and agreed with the self-assessment grade.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ effective use of innovative learning resources
- ◆ well-planned off-the-job training
- ◆ additional qualifications achieved
- ◆ good work placements

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no significant weaknesses

11. ITS has developed a range of innovative learning resources including distance-learning packs to supplement lectures covering the knowledge and understanding of the NVQ. A number of industry-specific case studies have been developed for the workshop sessions. Case studies cover issues such as recent legal findings and are used to increase the trainees' understanding of how the legal system relates to international trade. A survey to identify the key skills which occur in frequently completed tasks has been carried out. This resulted in a longer case study being developed which aims to cover any key skills that might not be naturally occurring during trainees' normal work. This case study is used in workshops over a 10-week period. Each workshop is two hours long and trainees work through simulated activities which are appropriately timed and presented to reflect the pressures experienced at work. They use a number of skills, including communication, problem solving and application of number. Other key skills are integrated into the NVQ training once the trainee is working towards level 3. Learning resources are up-to-date and include examples from local companies. These have been adapted to cover the full range of local businesses, which include importing, exporting and shipping. Trainees are visited on a weekly or two-weekly basis for individual training and assessment sessions. In addition, trainees attend workshops and lectures either at work or at ITS's premises. Trainees' knowledge and understanding are tested by challenging questionnaires and task sheets which are marked by tutors.

12. Off-the-job training is well planned. Trainees and employers are given a printed programme of training sessions which covers the whole year. A range of workshops and lectures are run during lunchtime and evenings at the training centre and at some employers' premises. Trainees can attend any of the sessions and are notified on a weekly basis of the next subject area and its relevance to their

own training. Tutors advise trainees whether or not attendance is required. Attendance at lectures is high. The trainers and assessors have a wealth of experience from a wide range of international trade occupations. Tutors give training sessions which make the most of their expertise. For example, a trainer with marine insurance experience covers the insurance elements while another trainer with hazardous goods experience teaches the dangerous goods section. Each trainer has a number of trainees whom they visit in the workplace. They carry out assessment by observation, and use both oral and written questions. This is supplemented by candidates' statements countersigned by line managers, copies of evidence produced in the workplace and witness statements. On-the-job training complements the off-the-job training well and trainees are encouraged to apply what they have learned to their own work environment.

13. ITS are able to offer a range of additional qualifications including corporate overseas and shipping training certificate (COAST), advanced certificate in overseas trade (ACOT) and the understanding shipping certificate. Trainees are encouraged to take, and many achieve, these additional qualifications. They count towards membership of the industry's professional bodies.

14. There is strong support from employers. Many of the supervisors and line managers are either taking or have achieved NVQs with ITS. These supervisors are good role models for trainees. Trainees are well motivated and enthusiastic. Many trainees are given study time for their NVQ, including allowances being made for studying in their own time. The trainees are in a wide range of good-quality placements where they can cover the full range of situations needed to achieve their NVQ. A number of trainees have been given extra responsibility as their training has progressed. Trainees and supervisors recognise and value the qualification.

GENERIC AREAS

Equal opportunities

Grade 2

15. ITS has a policy which covers equality of opportunity for all trainees and staff, taking account of relevant legislation. The policy includes equality objectives, how equality of opportunity for trainees is monitored and the recruitment and training of staff to ensure and promote equal opportunities. It clearly explains how relevant data are captured and the policy implemented. Responsibility for equal opportunities is held by the equal opportunities project team, which is made up of three members of staff. This project team was formed in January 2000 to promote equality of opportunity. They also review, monitor and update the equal opportunities action plan produced by the self-assessment process. The team holds bi-monthly meetings and feeds information and decisions into the monthly staff meetings, where equal opportunities features as a standing agenda item. ITS monitors the number of people who start on the programme, early leavers and achievement data on a three-monthly basis. There are currently no trainees from

minority ethnic backgrounds on training programmes. The equal opportunities policy states that it welcomes applications from people with disabilities, but there are no trainees with disabilities on the programmes. Staff are trained in equal opportunities as part of their induction to ITS. Training covers legislation and the implementation of the equal opportunities policy.

16. The self-assessment report identified one strength, in the comprehensive equal opportunities policy, which inspectors agreed with. No weaknesses were identified through self-assessment. Inspectors found one weakness, in the under-representation of minority groups on programmes and some additional strengths. The self-assessment report was mainly accurate for equal opportunities. Inspectors awarded a higher grade than that given in self-assessment.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ effective review of equal opportunities policy and procedures
- ◆ good awareness of policies and procedures among staff, trainees and employers
- ◆ good initiatives to promote equality of opportunity
- ◆ improved participation rates for women trainees

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ under-representation by some minority groups

17. ITS has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy. The equal opportunities policy is reviewed every two months by the equal opportunities project team. Changes have been made to the policy, which has been updated to reflect the decisions of the team and recommendations from the TEC. One such change is that the sexual orientation of staff and trainees is now monitored as part of the standard equal opportunities monitoring system. The use of the electronic training and assessment system has been added to the implementation section, to promote equal access for trainees with disabilities. All staff are updated on changes to the policy through the staff meetings. Employers are invited to participate in these reviews of the policy and have received written details about how to be involved in this process. However, no employers have taken up this opportunity yet.

18. Trainees and employers have a good awareness of the equal opportunities policies, including the grievance and complaints procedures. These are introduced during induction and trainees are able to explain how the policies apply to them. Employers and their managers have copies of these policies. The employers sign an agreement that they will promote equality, comply with statutory obligations and not disadvantage trainees by comparing them with other employees carrying out similar tasks. Many supervisors and managers are also completing NVQs with ITS, and have knowledge of ITS's policies through their own studies. There have not been any examples of grievance, harassment or complaints at the time of inspection. However, there are appropriate policies and procedures to protect

trainees.

19. There has been a wide range of initiatives introduced to promote equality of opportunity. The equal opportunities project team discusses progress towards meeting the targets in the action plan resulting from self-assessment. Initiatives are discussed and actions set for individual team members. ITS took part in an event organised by Suffolk TEC to make the minority ethnic community more aware of the training and career opportunities which are available. An advertisement for modern apprentices has been rewritten to explain that ITS recognises that trainees have differing needs and that it will accommodate various preferences, learning styles and situations.

20. In April 1999, men made up 70 per cent of all trainees. This imbalance in gender has been reduced over the year in which the programme has run. The percentage of women trainees increased from 30 per cent in June 1999, to 38 per cent in October, and 44 per cent in April 2000. ITS raises awareness of its programmes through press releases and features that promote women trainees' success. These are supported with photographs of trainees and articles about their job roles. Achievement of the modern apprenticeship certificate by women has been featured in local newspapers and the in-house newsletter which is given to trainees and employers.

21. A training survey for staff has recently been devised and used. This questionnaire assesses their knowledge of legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act and ITS's recording systems. Many staff identified that they had a training need related to equal opportunities. ITS will introduce training to meet these needs as part of its action plan.

22. There are no participants from some under-represented groups on training programmes, including minority ethnic trainees and people with disabilities. Targets have been set for the recruitment of trainees from under-represented groups. Statistics are monitored and discussed by the equal opportunities project team. The training centre does not have access for trainees with mobility problems, but the flexible methods of training used by ITS mean that trainees who could not attend the training centre are not necessarily disadvantaged.

Trainee support

Grade 2

23. ITS staff visit employers and trainees in the workplace to promote and discuss appropriate training programmes. Prospective trainees are then interviewed and given detailed advice on the vocational and professional qualifications appropriate to their job roles. A detailed training needs analysis is completed by the trainee together with a trainer. This is used to develop individual training plans that include the options that are best suited to the trainee's current job role and career aspirations. The training plan is discussed with the employer along with the employer's responsibilities. There is no initial assessment for basic or key skills at this stage. All trainees receive an induction to the workplace. ITS induction is then

carried out through one-hour training sessions over three or four weeks either at the training centre or on the employer's premises. Trainees enrolled on the modern apprenticeship programme have an interview to assess their key skills training needs. Reviews are carried out every three months and include the trainee, employer and assessor. Employers are either included in the three-way discussion or seen separately after the trainee and assessor have reviewed progress.

24. ITS identified many strengths and no weaknesses in their self-assessment report. Inspectors agreed with strengths related to careers advice and pastoral support, but found that some of the strengths related to the occupational area. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment grade.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ excellent occupational advice
- ◆ frequent and flexible contact and support for trainees
- ◆ good short-term target setting in trainees' reviews
- ◆ celebration of trainees' achievements
- ◆ good retention rates

GOOD PRACTICE

ITS has developed a video-conferencing link to ensure that trainees are not disadvantaged by the geographical location of their workplace. It is being piloted with a modern apprentice whose workplace is located an hour and a half's drive from the training centre. This modern apprentice is able to receive one-to-one training and support through this link. The visual link enables him to see the tutor and his tutor to see his work and his work environment at any time.

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor initial assessment
- ◆ missed opportunities for accrediting prior achievement

25. Trainees and prospective trainees are given an excellent range of occupational advice. ITS is developing an electronic skills assessment which will be introduced into schools to increase awareness of its programmes. The company has its own website which contains information on careers in international trade and advertises job vacancies. One trainee who was made redundant received regular contact from ITS. ITS contacted employers, advised the trainee about vacancies and arranged interviews for her. She is now working for another company and has resumed her training programme. The website also has details of school leavers who are seeking an employer so they can start their training programme. Trainers discuss with the trainee and employer the best options for the trainee's current and future job roles. They cover the options for the NVQ programme and also give advice on the additional qualifications available.

26. Trainees are visited on a weekly or two-weekly basis for individual support, training and assessment. This frequent and flexible contact at work is increased or decreased according to trainees' needs. In addition to this, contact is maintained by telephone, fax and e-mail. All trainees have a computerised file which includes copies of their reviews and action plans. Trainees are able to look at their computerised file from the workplace. A pilot study is being run that uses a video-conferencing link between the trainees' workplace and the training centre. This will enable trainees to have one-to-one sessions with their trainer. At the time of

inspection one of the TEC-funded trainees was involved in this pilot.

27. Individual training and assessment take place during the regular assessor visits and an action plan is agreed between the trainee and assessor. There is excellent short-term target setting, which sets out in great detail what the trainee will be working on, and gathering evidence for, in time for the next visit. These targets are discussed with the trainee at each visit and the trainee is then sent a typed copy of what has been agreed.

28. Trainees' achievements are celebrated. ITS issues trainees with its own certificates when they complete the knowledge and understanding modules of their training. Some of the topics count towards professional qualifications and a representative from the relevant professional body presents these certificates. Key skills certificates are also issued. Success is reported on by local newspapers and the in-house newsletter. Trainees are motivated to succeed by this recognition.

29. Retention in 1999 was excellent with 81 per cent of trainees staying on the NVQ programmes. Two trainees have left since April 2000, which is consistent with the current high retention rate. All of the trainees who entered the modern apprenticeship at level 3, and 89 per cent of the trainees on the work-based training programme for young people, are still on their training programmes. The reason why trainees leave programmes early are monitored and analysed.

30. At the start of their programme trainees undertake a training needs analysis which has been designed with help from industry specialists. The training needs analysis does not include any initial assessment of basic or key skills. Although initial assessment of key skills takes place this is unsystematic and there is no identification of specific support or training needs. There are missed opportunities for accrediting prior achievement. This has been identified as an action point on four external verifier reports over the two years prior to inspection, but ITS still do not have a qualified member of staff. Trainees who have already achieved NVQs in related areas such as customer service are given the same target dates for completion of their NVQ as trainees who do not have these qualifications. Trainees with many years' experience in the industry are not given the opportunity to progress through their programme more quickly.

Management of training

Grade 2

31. ITS operates with an office manager in a co-ordinating role and four staff teams covering training and assessment, administration and information technology, finance and sales. Project teams, consisting of members from across the organisation, were established in January 2000. These teams address specific development areas, some of which have a short lifespan, and others which have a longer-term impact. Project team leaders are chosen for their expertise in specific areas. Each of these teams can make their own decisions and they present their plans to monthly staff meetings. Management systems focus on the operation of training and the resources necessary to support this. Employers share in the

training and development of trainees with ITS and benefit from the industry expertise of ITS and its extensive involvement with professional bodies.

32. The self-assessment report recognised some strengths but did not identify any weaknesses. The grade awarded by inspectors is the same as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good operational teamwork and internal communication
- ◆ effective use of staff's expertise
- ◆ excellent information service for employers

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no structured staff appraisal and development system

33. Internal communication among staff is effective. Staff are trained in the efficient use of computer-based communication systems. Open debate is encouraged and all views and opinions are valued. Staff work together with a common sense of purpose. The management structure is appropriate to the size and type of organisation. Staff are flexible in their roles, covering routine duties where necessary. Full staff meetings are held monthly and key points are accurately recorded. These meetings include feedback and recommendations from project team meetings. Project team meetings are arranged when the need arises. Records of these meetings are kept, with clear action points for staff to follow up.

34. Staff are enthusiastic, well motivated and fully committed to supporting employers and trainees in their training programmes. Individual staff have well-developed and recognised specialist expertise which is put to good use within the organisation. The allocation of staff is well thought out and applied. Staff have contracts of employment and comprehensive job descriptions which make clear their roles and responsibilities. Specialist staff expertise has been developed and encouraged in areas like the transportation of dangerous goods, customer service, administration, management, law and computer functions. This allows the organisation to provide good-quality and well-respected training programmes, which have credibility with employers.

35. Employers benefit from receiving valuable information about changes to legislation, regulations and other industry specific issues. Employers are also able to seek confirmation of facts and obtain guidance on the interpretation of issues, which ultimately benefits the environment and context within which their trainees work. This service is free to employers and provides considerable added value to the training. The service is promoted widely through the ITS website, during face-to-face contact with employers and is also available by fax.

36. Employer agreements are comprehensive and well respected by employers.

Trainers link aspects of on- and off-the-job training satisfactorily and the use of industry case studies complements this process. ITS staff are held in high regard by employers. ITS has adequate systems for the management of information and data, and makes effective use of computers to present statistics.

37. New staff complete an induction checklist and questionnaire to establish their training needs in respect of their job and the business needs of ITS. Some staff have completed a similar questionnaire to update their training needs. There is no structured system for staff development or for reviewing the effectiveness of training. There is no evaluation of staff effectiveness using performance measures or indicators. Staff training has been provided for individuals in areas like management development, dangerous goods updating and communications systems.

Quality assurance

Grade 3

38. ITS has quality assurance policies and procedures which relate to operational matters. They are included in a quality manual. Staff are involved in the formulation and revision of policies in response to operational needs. Business plans are considered at board level on a quarterly basis. Sales and contract targets are set, financial targets are reviewed and business-development projects proposed. Business targets are discussed at staff meetings and all staff are involved in meeting these targets. ITS meets the external quality standards required by Suffolk TEC and the awarding body. There are no other external benchmarks or standards of quality used by the organisation. Data are routinely collected regarding early leavers from programmes and their destinations. It is too early to draw specific conclusions from these data or identify any emerging trends. The importance of continuous improvement is recognised at all levels throughout the organisation. Restructuring of the organisation into project teams was a response to the self-assessment process.

39. The self-assessment report did not recognise the range of quality assurance issues beyond those specifically related to the operational aspects of training. It is insufficiently critical about some quality assurance systems and procedures. The grade awarded by inspectors is lower than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ extensive range of feedback collected and used
- ◆ evaluation improves training programmes
- ◆ well-planned and thorough internal verification system

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no overall quality framework
- ◆ insufficiently established quality system

40. ITS regularly receives information about the quality of training from a large number of employers and trainees. The views of trainees are sought following off-the-job training and during the regular contacts with trainees in the workplace. E-mail and fax communication with trainees is also used to gain valuable feedback. Trainees complete a detailed questionnaire on completion of their training programme or if they leave the programme early. The quarterly review process with employers and trainees also provides information. ITS now produces written records of all visits to employers. Employers discuss training at meetings of trade bodies and report back to ITS. This information has proved reliable and representative as the participants reflect the range of employers for which ITS's trainees work. Feedback from all these sources is considered at many levels within ITS. It is effectively evaluated at project team and staff meetings. The results of evaluation have been key in the restructuring and redesign of training, including the development of materials and resources. This process has produced tangible improvements, which have been acknowledged by both employers and trainees.

41. There is a well-established policy for internal verification. Arrangements for internal verification are thorough and monitored effectively. The programme for internal verification is well planned and applies equally to both vocational qualifications and key skills training. Internal verification checklists are used effectively at three programme stages, initial, middle and final. Feedback to assessors is comprehensive. When assessment issues arise, these are recorded and discussed with the assessor. There is an appropriate follow-up system to ensure that these issues are addressed.

42. There are comprehensive policies and procedures for assessment and verification. However, links to other quality assurance arrangements within the organisation are unclear. There is no overall framework to establish a coherent approach to quality. There are no written policy arrangements for staff recruitment and selection, job descriptions, staff appraisal or staff development. There is little monitoring of some employees' tasks, such as health and safety checks of work placements. ITS has not applied quality assurance systems to the work of the project teams. The project teams do not all function effectively. Some, like the equal opportunities team, have written objectives and clear responsibilities. Others, like the quality assurance team, have no set objectives and their link to, and role within, the overall quality arrangements is unclear.

43. Since the restructuring of the management team and the introduction of project teams there has been some development of quality assurance systems. However, many of these systems have had insufficient time to show development or improvements. The arrangements relating directly to work-based training have contributed to improvements in this area. They have mainly focused on immediate and sometimes short-term concerns. Quality assurance systems relating to other functions of the organisation with more long-term implications are not yet leading to improvements.

44. All staff have been involved in the self-assessment process, which has made



them more effective as a team. It is clear that some areas like equal opportunities have benefited from early action planning and development.