



TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL

INSPECTION REPORT FEBRUARY 2001

Hawk Management UK Limited

SUMMARY

Hawk Management UK Limited provides satisfactory training in business administration to young people and adults in Twickenham, London. Trainees receive good advice and guidance and achieve many learning goals. The training centre has good resources, including hardware, software and learning materials. Most trainees do not have sufficient time or opportunity to achieve NVQs. There are few work placements and employers are insufficiently involved in the training. Opportunities are missed to assess trainees' key skills. Hawk Management UK Limited is well managed and staff work well as a team. Although there is a comprehensive equal opportunities policy, Hawk Management UK Limited does not monitor equal opportunities data to monitor the policy's effectiveness. Staff assure the quality of the training adequately using thorough procedures and responding to feedback from trainees. However, the evaluation of training is not systematic, and data are not used effectively when considering management decisions.

GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Business administration	3

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

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ high rate of achievement of information-technology qualifications
- ◆ good learning resources
- ◆ clear understanding of equal opportunities by trainees
- ◆ good advice and guidance for trainees
- ◆ good staff development
- ◆ effective internal communications
- ◆ good quality assurance of training

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ unrealistic learning goals for youth trainees
- ◆ missed opportunities to assess key skills
- ◆ no reinforcement of equal opportunities during progress reviews
- ◆ insufficient involvement by employers in training
- ◆ unsystematic use of data in planning management decisions
- ◆ unsystematic evaluation of training

INTRODUCTION

1. Hawk Management UK Limited (Hawk) is a privately owned company which provides information technology training to young people and unemployed adults in Twickenham, West London. Hawk has 12 staff, including two directors, who are both shareholders. Hawk has had a contract with West London Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) since May 1999. About 80 per cent of Hawk's business is government-funded training and 20 per cent is commercial training. Hawk has been a private training provider for 11 years, based in Staffordshire and working nationally and internationally. Hawk moved to London in 1998 to provide commercial training for West London TEC and was invited to submit the proposal for a contract for work-based training which it secured. Hawk does not use any subcontractors. Some trainees have work experience with local companies. Eight of the 76 trainees are employed, four of them with Hawk. Trainees work towards qualifications required by employers, key skills, and national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in information technology, administration, management and customer service.

2. Hawk offers a work-based learning programme for young people called Pathway, which aims to provide young people with 12 weeks of support to prepare them for employment. Trainees are classified as national trainees by the TEC, but they do not take NVQs, because the programme is short and does not include work experience. The TEC has an agreement with Hawk that trainees should instead work towards information-technology qualifications and key skills.

3. Most trainees are referred to Hawk from the areas around West London, which include the four London Boroughs of Ealing, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Richmond on Thames. In terms of business and finance, West London is the second most successful subregion of the Southeast after Central London and is an important area of economic growth, creating wealth on a regional and national level. Nearly one in two jobs are within managerial and professional occupations in the area served by the TEC, matching the London average and far exceeding the average for England as a whole. There is also a high proportion of clerical and secretarial workers, primarily serving head-office functions in West London. Low-skilled occupations are less represented in West London than elsewhere in England. West London's workforce is a highly qualified one. The TEC's survey of the local workforce in 1997 found that 37 per cent of the workforce was qualified to NVQ level 4 or above. West London has a high number of migrants to the area because of the attractive residential location and ease of commuting to Central London, as well as the need for workers with high level and specialist skills of companies' head offices based locally. In addition, the international airport close by attracts other related industries. There is a high proportion of young people in West London. Minority ethnic groups make up 24 per cent of the local population. The unemployment rate for London is 3.7 per cent, compared with the national average of 3.5 per cent. The unemployment rate for the areas which trainees are drawn from is higher than the London rate by up to 4 per cent. In 2000, the proportion of



school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSE) at grades C and above was 46.1 per cent, compared with the national average of 49.2 per cent.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

4. Hawk produced its first self-assessment report in August 2000, with support from the TEC. Two members of staff, one from the training team and one from the management team, attended workshops on self-assessment. Hawk's staff identified strengths and weaknesses in the training and agreed on appropriate grades. The self-assessment report included an action plan and referred to a file of evidence prepared by Hawk for the inspection.

5. A team of three inspectors spent a total of 12 days with Hawk in February 2001. They interviewed 28 trainees, representing 35 per cent of the total. They interviewed all 12 members of staff and met five employers. The inspectors reviewed a variety of documents, including trainees' files, training materials, software, procedures, minutes of meetings, assessment and verification records and seven portfolios. They observed and graded seven learning and assessment sessions.

Grades awarded to learning activities

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Business administration		1	5	1		7
Total	0	1	5	1	0	7

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Business administration

Grade 3

6. There are 53 young people working towards two information-technology qualifications, both of which are recognised by the industry, on a 12-week programme. Trainees are registered by the TEC as national trainees. In addition to these qualifications, trainees work towards key skills in communication and information technology at level 2. If trainees find suitable employment, they can progress to a foundation or advanced modern apprenticeship. There are also 17 adult trainees working towards short-term personal targets and information-technology qualifications similar to those taken by the young people in training. The adults have training to prepare them for employment as well. In addition to the trainees on these two main programmes, there are eight apprentices: two foundation modern apprentices and one advanced modern apprentice taking NVQs in customer service; two advanced modern apprentices taking NVQs in administration; one advanced modern apprentice taking an NVQ in management; and a foundation modern apprentice and an advanced modern apprentice taking NVQs in information technology. Four of these trainees are employed by Hawk. All training is given at Hawk's training centre. The self-assessment report identified strengths and weaknesses with which inspectors agreed, but most were

found to be more appropriate to the generic aspects of the training. Inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses, relating to the trainees' achievement and assessment. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good resources for learning
- ◆ high rate of achievement of information technology qualifications
- ◆ good NVQ training and assessment

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ unrealistic learning goals
- ◆ missed opportunities to assess key skills
- ◆ insufficiently demanding training programme for some trainees

7. Hawk has a range of good learning resources for training. There are well-equipped and modern computer rooms which simulate a business environment. Trainees are encouraged to wear casual but smart clothing and must behave in a professional manner. Discipline is good. There are a good variety of training materials. Trainees with no previous computing knowledge are given an interesting training manual, produced by Hawk's staff, which takes them through the basics of word processing. The manual introduces some of the more visual aspects of word processing to help trainees produce professional documents quickly. There are a variety of computer-based learning packages which are attractive to trainees and helpful to those with literacy learning needs. Hawk's staff provide individual tuition when necessary. Some of the more experienced trainees assist new trainees to develop their skills swiftly. This is a good method of teaching because it helps the more competent trainees to have and reinforce their skills while supporting those who are less experienced. There is a full-time technician, who provides expert support and keeps the computer hardware and software up to date. The technician is also available to give individual training to those trainees who are interested in the more technical side of working with computers. There are workshops for groups of trainees on the use of the Internet and e-mail. Trainees can set up their own e-mail account.

8. Over the past year, 81 per cent of young people in training and 84 per cent of adult trainees have achieved qualifications. Nearly three quarters of the adult trainees have an information-technology qualification as the main aim on their individual learning plans, and so 71 per cent of them achieve all the targets on their individual learning plans by achieving these. Others have employment as their main aim. However, the young people have NVQs in information technology at level 2 as the primary learning goal on their individual learning plans, even though they will be unable to achieve these within the 12-week programme and

with little work experience. They are given this learning goal with the approval of the TEC. None has achieved an NVQ. Progress into employment is good for young people, with 61 per cent gaining a job, but only 23 per cent of adults gain employment. There is insufficient work experience for all trainees during their training.

9. There are eight advanced modern apprentices who work towards NVQs and are employed. Their training and assessment is of a good quality. Hawk's staff provide good and timely advice and guidance to these trainees which is occupationally relevant, and they set them challenging targets. The trainees are with good, supportive employers and have plenty of opportunities to gather evidence for their portfolios. Trainees are assessed frequently and receive helpful and clear feedback from assessors. Trainees produce a good range of evidence, which is well presented in their portfolios.

10. The young people who are not in work placements are set unrealistic learning goals. These trainees are classified as national trainees, with NVQs as the learning goals on their individual training plans. They work towards key skills and are registered with an awarding body. This is a contractual arrangement with the TEC. However, the programme is too short for trainees to achieve NVQs and there is insufficient work experience for them to gather evidence for their NVQs. Training staff discuss the NVQs and key skills requirements with trainees, but trainees are confused as to what qualifications they will achieve during their time on the programme. Trainees have to have at least six months' work experience to comply with the awarding body's rules for achieving an NVQ. It is only possible for trainees to gain NVQs if they leave Hawk's training programme and move into employment after 12 weeks or have extended work experience after the programme has finished. Most trainees find their own employment at the end of training, and there is no guarantee that trainees will find jobs with employers which are willing to help them achieve the targets on their individual learning plans. Hawk monitors trainees' progression to the workplace and discusses with employers the benefits of trainees completing NVQs. Only 14 per cent of trainees who have found employment are working towards NVQs.

11. There are missed opportunities to assess key skills. Since September 2000, 31 trainees have left their training programmes without achieving key skills qualifications, even though Hawk has registered them for the award. Naturally occurring evidence for key skills qualifications is not assessed at the training centre. Trainees collect evidence through specific tasks, such as organised debates and essays. There are 14 trainees obtaining work experience through a national fund-raising project who are gathering appropriate evidence for the key skills qualifications at work. These trainees have had their training programme extended to incorporate more work experience.

12. Some of the trainees are not sufficiently challenged by the computer-based learning programme. The initial training activities are the same for all trainees, regardless of their experience. Some trainees are bored by repeating work they are familiar with and do not view their activity as reinforcing their learning. When

there are 15 or more trainees in the group, the two trainers are not always able to monitor the trainees' progress adequately. Trainees use a learning package to teach them to use a computer keyboard for 20 minutes each day. The trainers do not observe whether trainees are using the correct fingering while they are doing this. Trainees are set daily objectives to focus their learning, but do not always make satisfactory progress. Without supervision, the trainees do not always work effectively. Trainees spend an average of 144 hours on the computer during the learning programme to work towards the achievement of two qualifications equivalent to an NVQ at level 2. The recommended time for achieving an NVQ at level 2 is 60 hours of guided time on a computer.

GENERIC AREAS

Equal opportunities

Grade 3

13. Hawk has an equal opportunities policy which states that the company opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic origin, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status or disability. The policy is aimed at staff and trainees, and is reviewed annually. Hawk has guidelines for dealing with harassment, and a complaints procedures. The operations director is responsible for equal opportunities at a strategic level. The recruitment officer is responsible for equal opportunities at an operational level. Among the trainees, 61 per cent are men. Inspectors agreed with the strength in the self-assessment report about the comprehensive equal opportunities policy. Inspectors regarded the other strengths given by Hawk as no more than normal practice. Inspectors identified two additional strengths. Inspectors agreed with the single weakness given, relating to insufficient use of analysed data when planning management decisions. They identified two additional weaknesses and awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ comprehensive equal opportunities policy
- ◆ good understanding of equal opportunities by trainees
- ◆ effective encouragement of trainees from minority ethnic groups into training

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no systematic analysis of equal opportunities data
- ◆ no reinforcement of equal opportunities during progress reviews
- ◆ poor access to training centre for those with mobility difficulties

14. Hawk has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy which covers all

aspects of the training programme. The policy covers the selection, recruitment, promotion and training of staff. Equal opportunities is promoted in all marketing material. The curriculum materials are also checked to ensure that their content demonstrates equal opportunities. Staff have received equal opportunities training. The operations director, who has taken responsibility for equal opportunities at a strategic level, has attended training from the TEC and passed this on to all other staff. Although equal opportunities is not a fixed agenda item for meetings, the operations director does present reports on the progress and implementation of any actions regarding equal opportunities at both staff and management meetings.

15. Trainees are informed of the key issues in the equal opportunities policy, and of their rights and responsibilities, during their induction programme. Trainees are aware that equality of opportunity extends beyond race issues. They have a good understanding of equality of opportunity and know their rights about receiving fair and equal treatment. Trainees are aware of the complaints procedures and know how to use them. Complaints are recorded and dealt with promptly, usually within 48 hours. Trainees are aware that they will be disciplined if they treat fellow trainees or staff unfairly. Verbal warnings, when issued, are recorded in the daily incident book. Some trainees have attended an equal opportunities workshop given by Hawk's staff. This is the same workshop which staff have received from the operations director.

16. Hawk has set targets to encourage applications for training from people from the various minority ethnic groups in the local population. The operations director has started to develop partnerships with local minority ethnic community groups, with the aim of making Hawk's training more broadly accessible. Hawk's efforts are proving to be effective. Minority ethnic groups constitute approximately 24 per cent of the local population, but, in the current contractual year, 52 per cent of trainees are from minority ethnic groups.

17. Hawk records information on the recruitment and achievement of trainees on a database. However, it does not systematically use this information to plan future recruitment. Achievement data for each ethnic group are not analysed to identify any emerging trends. The equal opportunities policy states Hawk's commitment to maintain statistics about trainees' access to programmes and their progression in terms of gender, race and disability, but it has yet to do this. Similarly, it has not yet analysed data to identify areas of under-representation among trainees. It is not effectively monitoring the targets it has set.

18. The trainees' progress reviews are not used to reinforce their understanding of equality of opportunity. The trainers do not discuss issues of fair or unfair treatment in the workplace or at the training centre. Employers agree to abide by Hawk's equal opportunities policy, but there are no formal arrangements with which to monitor equal opportunities in the workplace. Hawk is located on the second floor of an office block. Access to the upper floor is only possible by a staircase. This makes access to the training centre troublesome for trainees with mobility difficulties. Hawk is aware of this weakness and intends to make arrangements for such trainees to use laptop computers at home and be supported

by its trainers. However, these arrangements are incomplete and are not being used.

Trainee support

Grade 2

19. Young people are recruited into training through the careers service, by responding to advertisements or by personal recommendation. Adult trainees are referred to Hawk by the Employment Service. The recruitment officer responds to all referrals by checking applicants' eligibility and arranges initial interviews. Eligible trainees receive an induction from the recruitment officer, which includes an initial assessment of their abilities. Trainees are tested for their basic skills abilities and for their occupational and key skills knowledge and skills. Staff use materials which they have produced for initially assessing trainees. Trainers, operational staff and the recruitment officer conduct progress reviews with the trainees. Trainees receive employment-preparation training. All staff are responsible for supporting the trainees. Training staff are working towards, or have achieved, training and development qualifications. The self-assessment report identified learning resources as a strength, but inspectors judged this to be more appropriate to the occupational area. Inspectors did not agree with the other four strengths identified by Hawk. Inspectors identified other strengths and a weakness and awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good use of short-term targets to encourage trainees' progress
- ◆ good advice and guidance for trainees
- ◆ wide variety of links with external support agencies

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ missed opportunities to access additional support

20. Hawk sets good short-term targets for trainees. Trainees clearly understand what tasks have to be completed and by when. There is a 12-week training schedule, which outlines the topics which need to be covered. Training covers induction, information technology, business skills, job-search training and activities and progress reviews. Trainees are given weekly objectives, which are recorded on a weekly planning sheet. The trainers monitor these sheets and review the general progress of the trainees during the formal progress-review meetings. Trainees are able to chart their progress on 'skills profile' sheets. These sheets describe the occupational skills for each level of competency. At any point during their programmes, trainees are able to check what they have learned and what target they need to work towards. Trainees attending work placements maintain weekly planning sheets themselves to enable them to record their work activities and to identify how the activities can be linked either to their NVQs or key skills

qualifications.

21. Trainees receive good advice and guidance. Staff at all levels within the organisation are very approachable and have good professional working relationships with trainees. Photographs of staff with their job titles are displayed in the reception area for all trainees to see. Staff also wear identity badges. Trainees' progress reviews are held on average every two to three weeks, which exceeds the contractual requirement for reviews to take place every four weeks. Progress reviews are used to discuss any concerns which the trainee might have. Pastoral care for trainees is satisfactory. There are frequent visits to trainees on work experience or in full-time jobs. However, employers are not fully involved in the progress reviews and do not always have a three-way meeting with the trainer and the trainee. Trainees receive comprehensive initial assessments. Results from the initial assessment of their basic and key skills are used by Hawk to identify how it can help trainees to address their individual learning needs. Actions are recorded onto their individual learning plans. However, the results of the vocational assessment are not always used by the trainers to select appropriate starting points for trainees' computer training. The initial assessment of key skills has only just begun, and so it is too early to evaluate its effectiveness. Adult trainees have additional advice and guidance through a specific assessment of their employability in relation to jobs available in the area local to the TEC. The job-search training has recently been revised to include more advice and guidance on how to obtain and sustain employability. Trainees are referred to the careers service for more detailed advice if necessary. These improvements to job-search training are too recent for their effectiveness to be evaluated. There are good records of the advice and guidance received by trainees. Hawk has good links with external agencies for specialist advice in areas such as housing and benefits. Staff have worked well to develop effective links with a wide range of external agencies. There are good working relationships with the careers service. The recruitment officer visits each of the five regional offices of the careers service both to promote Hawk and to exchange information relevant to trainees. The recruitment officer also visits the Employment Service to promote Hawk's training programmes. The operations director has developed links with an agency which specialises in placing trainees with learning difficulties into employment. Hawk uses this agency particularly if it is unable to meet the learning needs of a trainee.

22. Hawk recruits approximately 70 per cent of its trainees from direct marketing activities, and so they do not automatically receive an interview with the careers service. Hawk was not aware of the possibility of using the careers service to endorse the level of trainees' learning needs in order to provide and fund additional support for trainees. This issue is now being looked into, but some trainees are not able to access this support at present. Trainees have a satisfactory induction, and Hawk is just beginning to evaluate the quality of its inductions. Hawk does complete individual learning plans as required by the TEC contract, but not all of these include target dates for the achievement of key skills.

Management of training

Grade 3

23. Hawk has a managing director and an operations director and 12 staff. There are three trainers, four assessors and two internal verifiers. There is a finance manager, an operations manager, and a technician. Hawk has had a contract with the TEC since May 1999. In the first year of contracting, it had four advanced modern apprentices. Hawk also provided assessment for 120 young people as a subcontractor to the TEC. This year's contract is for 80 young people on a pre-NVQ programme called Pathway, for 170 adult trainees, for three foundation modern apprentices and for five advanced modern apprentices. The self-assessment report identified three strengths and three weaknesses. Inspectors regarded the strengths regarding staff's teamwork, their professional experience and Hawk's good working relationship with the TEC as no more than normal practice. Inspectors did not agree with the significance of the three weaknesses given, relating to an inadequate staff recruitment policy, the need to formalise an induction for staff and the need to have an agenda for staff meetings. Inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses and awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ clear focus on achieving training targets
- ◆ good staff development
- ◆ good internal communication

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ unsystematic collection of management data
- ◆ insufficient work experience for trainees
- ◆ unclear contractual arrangements

24. Hawk has clear targets for training, which are shared with all staff and monitored each month. The finance manager provides staff with a summary of the targets set in the TEC contract, which specifies the jobs, qualifications and financial results to be achieved by trainees and Hawk. Many of the staff keep the summary prominently on their notice boards. The recruitment officer has a white board with the recruitment targets displayed. Staff are aware of the progress they are making towards the targets through daily discussion, weekly team meetings and monthly monitoring. Hawk is run well as a business and staff are clear about their contribution to this.

25. Hawk's staff have educational and commercial experience and qualifications in education, training, information technology and management. New staff have had their training needs identified through the annual appraisal process and are working towards NVQs in training at levels 3 or 4. Some members of staff are

advanced modern apprentices and are working towards NVQs in customer service or administration and key skills. One member of staff is working towards the NVQ in management at level 4. Staff are encouraged to address their own learning needs or interests by the senior management team. The trainers and assessors are frequently observed by the operations director and receive good feedback, which is relevant and helpful to their development.

26. Hawk has a business plan, which is produced by the managing director and shared with the staff. Staff are aware of the long-term aim of the business, which is to meet the TEC's contractual targets, successfully manage the transition to funding from the local learning and skills council and extend commercial activity through a computer-based training initiative. Hawk is currently on course to meet its targets. Staffing procedures are clear and given to all staff as part of a handbook for employees. Staff understand their roles well and are good at covering one another's jobs, when necessary. The management team is involved in the operational work of the business through members' roles as assessors and internal verifiers.

27. Hawk does not make good use of its management data. During the past two years, it has maintained information on the trainees, but not in a consistent or routine fashion. Some data were lost recently when a new database was developed. Inspectors requested a range of information on the quality of training and the achievement and retention of trainees. Three different versions of performance data were given to inspectors during the inspection. Hawk had not produced such information previously. Data are not considered when planning future business targets in a systematic way.

28. There are insufficient work placements for trainees. Eight out of the 78 trainees are employed, four of these by Hawk itself, and 14 have work experience with a national fund-raising project for six to eight weeks. Key skills training uses simulated case studies rather than real work to generate evidence. There are no work-based assessors. Employers do not always contribute to the content of the off-the-job training. They do not influence the curriculum, and Hawk does not request their views on the training. Employers do not take part fully in the trainees' progress reviews. Hawk plans assessment for trainees, but there is no formal training plan with which to structure the on- and off-the-job training to support the trainees in their development of skills and achievement of NVQs. Employers are not aware of the targets set by Hawk to meet the TEC's contractual requirements.

29. The contractual arrangement with the TEC is unclear to trainees, staff and inspectors. Trainees are classified as national trainees. Their individual learning plans have a primary learning goal of an NVQ. There are 48 trainees registered with an awarding body to achieve NVQs and the trainers promote the NVQs as long-term goals for trainees. However, the short length of the programme prevents trainees from achieving NVQs or key skills qualifications. The NVQs can be achieved only through work experience or employment. Hawk does not provide work experience for all its trainees. Hawk is new to work-based training and is unfamiliar with some of the requirements of the contract. There has been some

confusion about initially assessing the additional learning support needs of young people when they start training. Hawk recognises it needs to work more closely with the careers service on this issue.

Quality assurance

Grade 2

30. Hawk has a quality assurance policy and procedures which cover all aspects of training, from recruitment to completing the programme. Hawk is audited by the TEC. Some concerns were raised in a recent audit regarding young people in training, but no concerns were raised regarding adult trainees. This was based on an analysis of the systems and documents Hawk uses. Hawk works with three awarding bodies and an industry training body. Hawk internally audits trainees' files. Each trainer has an operating procedures file, which specifies the curriculum and assessment requirements for each programme. Self-assessment is new to the company, but was completed involving all staff. Inspectors agreed with two of the strengths given for quality assurance in the self-assessment reports, but did not agree with the weaknesses. Inspectors identified another weakness and awarded a higher grade than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ clear, well-used quality assurance procedures
- ◆ good implementation of action plan

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no systematic evaluation of training

31. Hawk has a comprehensive set of quality assurance procedures which cover all aspects of the training, such as induction, progress reviews and assessment. Each procedure is well written and easy to follow. Staff have their own copies of the procedures. Trainers have the set of procedures, which includes the content of the curriculum for programmes, a 12-week training schedule and details on the qualifications offered. The trainers refer to the operating-procedures file regularly to check their understanding and confirm their practice with trainees. The procedures have recently been reviewed and reproduced in individual files for staff. The quality assurance procedures are discussed at team meetings and during the day, as particular quality assurance issues arise. The review of quality assurance procedures has led to a greater recognition by staff of their value in ensuring consistency of training. The work-based training contract is still new to Hawk, but the performance in this aspect has improved since last year.

32. As part of the self-assessment process, Hawk produced an action plan which identified areas for development. It also identified individuals responsible for

actions, and has been meticulously followed up. There has been much progress on the actions, including revising the job-search training, introducing a new progress-review document, training staff, establishing a new database and starting to gather feedback on the quality of training. This is all forming part of a system for continuous improvement. The progress-review document was revised following a survey by two of the trainees as part of their apprenticeship. Monitoring by the apprentices following these revisions indicated an improvement, and this also provided good evidence for their NVQs in customer service.

33. There is no routine evaluation of the quality of training throughout the year, at each stage of the training cycle or with each group of trainees. Hawk seeks feedback from trainees during progress reviews and has recently requested feedback following newly introduced training in key skills. The feedback given by trainees during progress reviews is not anonymous or objective. Some feedback is not analysed or summarised. Some trainees have also given feedback at the end of their programmes. Feedback is not regularly gathered from employers or other agencies which support the trainees. The careers service gathers feedback from trainees and gives a copy of this to Hawk.

34. Recently, the internal verification of programmes has fallen behind schedule. Records have not been maintained of interim verification of portfolios, and some incomplete assessment forms were signed and dated by trainees. This conflicts with the guidance for awarding bodies in the *Common Accord*. The assessors and internal verifiers have not met since December 2000 to discuss standardisation of assessment and good practice or to move forward planned improvements. The meeting was postponed to concentrate on preparation for inspection. All staff were involved in developing the self-assessment report, but it was not copied to all staff when completed. The operations director collated the self-assessment report after staff agreed on the strengths, weaknesses and grades. The five new members of staff were not familiar with *Raising the Standard* and did not fully understand the self-assessment process or the reason for inspection. Inspectors found some strengths to represent no more than normal practice. In addition, some strengths and weaknesses were inappropriately placed in the generic areas. However, inspectors did agree with all the grades given, except for quality assurance, for which they awarded a higher grade.