



TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL

INSPECTION REPORT NOVEMBER 1999

REINSPECTION FEBRUARY 2001

# Crawley College Managing Agency

## SUMMARY

Crawley College Managing Agency offers good training in construction, engineering, hospitality, and hair and beauty. Trainees' achievement and retention rates in most of these areas are high. At the time of the first inspection, training in business administration was unsatisfactory. Trainees received too much assessment under simulated, rather than real, work-based conditions. Improvements have since been made and this occupational area is now satisfactory. There are now some work-based assessors, and the college undertakes more assessment using visiting assessors. Resources for off-the-job training are good, and include open-learning and information technology facilities. The college ensures that all trainees are treated fairly. Trainees are well supported, both in the college and on the job, but reviews of trainees' progress are not always well recorded. Trainees receive insufficient assessment in the workplace, and employers lack awareness of trainees' progress on the programme. Management of training is satisfactory, but there are weak links between on- and off-the-job training. Some employers have little involvement in the training process. The self-assessment process is thorough. Staff understand the importance of maintaining effective quality assurance systems and they carry them out well. The internal verification system is not effective in business administration.

**As a result of the reinspection of Crawley College Managing Agency, the original report text for business administration has been replaced by new text, which makes reference to the previous findings. The summary page, the overall report introduction and the inspection findings introduction have also been amended to reflect the inspection findings. All other sections of the report, which have not been subject to full reinspection, have been left in their original published form.**

### GRADES

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

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

REINSPECTION	GRADE
Business administration	3

### KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ carefully planned and well-structured off-the-job training
- ◆ high level of additional support for trainees
- ◆ opportunities for trainees to acquire a wide variety of additional qualifications
- ◆ effective self-assessment process



- ◆ clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities by all staff
- ◆ strong links with employers
- ◆ good programme of staff training related to equal opportunities

#### **KEY WEAKNESSES**

- ◆ poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training across curriculum areas
- ◆ no integration of key skills with training programmes in most areas
- ◆ ineffective implementation of some subcontractors' service agreements
- ◆ no work-based assessment in most occupational areas
- ◆ no procedures for monitoring promotion of equal opportunities in the workplace

## INTRODUCTION

1. Crawley College Managing Agency (CCMA) is a unit within Crawley College. The CCMA is responsible for the management of government-funded, work-based training programmes. The unit is under the direction of the contracts manager, who is a member of the college's management board. The contracts manager reports directly to the director of operations, who is also the deputy principal. In addition to the contracts manager, there are nine staff in the unit and they include staff with responsibility for trainee support, training co-ordinators, and administration officers. The college is a general college of further education offering education and training across a diverse range of occupational areas. At the time of the first inspection the college had over 12,000 full and part-time students. There are now over 16,000 full- and part-time students, including 4,000 in adult education. The main college campus is located in the centre of Crawley, West Sussex. It was built in the late 1950s. The college also uses two other sites within the town. It has one centre in nearby Horsham, and also uses accommodation in East Grinstead, primarily for adult education. CCMA has office accommodation on the ground floor of the main college building, near the entrance and reception area.

2. Most of the college's work is funded through the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC), with approximately 84 per cent of the students' being aged 19 or over. At the time of the first inspection, 306 trainees were on government-funded, work-based training programmes. They included 15 New Deal clients on the full-time education and training option. Owing to small numbers of trainees within certain occupational areas, 54 trainees were not under the remit of the inspection. At the time of reinspection, 309 trainees were on government funded work-based training programmes. This included 10 New Deal clients. The agency has contracts with two training and enterprise councils (TECs). These are Sussex Enterprise, and Surrey TEC, the former being the co-ordinating TEC for the first inspection and the reinspection. Of the TEC-funded trainees at the time of the first inspection, 81 were modern apprentices, 28 were national trainees, and the rest were on other work-based training programmes for young people. This is still the case. The college works with 22 partners in care partnership, providing work-based training and assessment. The college employs 594 staff. Of these, 364 are teaching staff deployed across three faculties. Staff from appropriate faculties carry out the majority of off-the-job training and assessment. Other providers provide a small proportion of off-the-job training.

3. Training is available in a range of construction crafts, engineering, business administration, retailing and customer services, hospitality, hair and beauty, and health, care and public services. At the first inspection, there were small numbers of trainees in retailing and customer services, and health, care and public services and these areas were not inspected. CCMA serves the economically buoyant areas surrounding Crawley and Gatwick. These areas provide 31 per cent of the total employment in Sussex. Gatwick airport is close to Crawley and the majority of local employment is in the transport industry. Other major sources of employment

in Sussex include manufacturing, retail and distribution, and business services, with a predominance of small businesses. Only 548 employers in the Sussex area employ more than 100, and out of the estimated 60,000 businesses in the county, 75 per cent employ fewer than five people. This had not altered by the time of reinspection. The main areas for employment in Surrey are in banking, finance and insurance, distribution, hotels and restaurants, public administration, education and health.

4. At the time of the first inspection, the unemployment rate in Sussex was low at 3.4 per cent of a working population of approximately 535,000. The figure for the Crawley, Horsham and mid-Sussex area in January was 1.3 per cent, compared with the national unemployment rate in August 1999 of 5 per cent, and in January, of 4.6 per cent. Unemployment in Surrey was also low at 1.2 per cent out of an approximate working population of 550,000. Unemployment in Crawley now stands at 0.8 per cent of the working population, compared with a national average of 3.3 per cent. In Surrey, 85 per cent of the workforce have achieved national vocational qualifications (NVQ) at level 2, and 54.1 per cent have achieved them at level 3. In Sussex, 44 per cent of the workforce have achieved NVQs at level 3 or equivalent. The proportion of people from minority ethnic groups in the Crawley borough is 8 per cent, and it is lower in Horsham at 1.3 per cent. Minority ethnic groups in Surrey account for 2.8 per cent of the population, compared with the national average of 5.5 per cent. In 1999, the proportions of school leavers in East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey, who obtained grade C or above in five or more subjects in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) were 49.6 per cent, 53.7 per cent and 56.6 per cent, respectively, compared with the national average for England and Wales of 47.9 per cent.

## INSPECTION FINDINGS

5. All sections of the college carry out an annual self-assessment. CCMA carried out its first self-assessment in March 1997, and this was updated in November 2000 in time for reinspection. The self-assessment report for the first inspection was the third that CCMA had produced. In preparation for self-assessment, all of CCMA's staff were consulted, at all levels and across all faculties within the college. Feedback was also sought from all employers. Trainees' feedback was also incorporated into the recent updated self-assessment report. The co-ordinating TEC helped with the process of self-assessment for the first inspection, with advice and training.

6. For the first inspection, a team of seven inspectors spent a total of 28 days at the college in November 1999. They were joined by inspectors from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). They visited 41 work placements, and interviewed 36 employers or workplace supervisors. They also interviewed 104 trainees, and 22 members of staff. A broad range of documents was examined, including TEC contracts and audit reports, trainees' portfolios, assessment records, reviews, trainees' files, internal verification records, and awarding body reports. Inspectors also observed 18 training sessions, and seven reviews of trainees' progress. Where it was appropriate to the TSC inspection framework, evidence gathered by the FEFC inspectors was taken into account when grading work-based training.

7. For the reinspection, a team of two inspectors spent a total of four days at CCMA during February 2001. The FEFC was not involved in the reinspection. Four employers were visited, nine trainees were interviewed along with four workplace supervisors. Five of CCMA's and the college staff were also interviewed. All key documentation relating to training in business administration were inspected. This included internal and external verification documents, schemes of work for off-the-job training, trainee files, portfolios of evidence, and assessment records. One off the job training workshop was observed but not graded.

#### Grades awarded to instruction sessions

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Construction		2				2
Engineering		5	3			8
Business administration			2			2
Hospitality		2				2
Hair & beauty	1	3				4
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>

## OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

### Construction

### Grade 2

8. Crawley College Managing Agency has 48 trainees on construction work-based training programmes that cover a range of occupational areas. These included electrical installation, brickwork, wood occupations, plumbing, and painting and decorating. There are six clients following New Deal programmes. Seventeen trainees are working towards NVQs in electrical installation. Twelve of these are modern apprentices. Four trainees are working towards NVQ 2 in brickwork. Six trainees were working towards NVQs in carpentry and joinery and a further six were on plumbing programmes. Four trainees are working towards painting and decorating qualifications, and there are three trainees following construction technician courses. The New Deal trainees are following the full-time education and training option across a range of construction crafts. All trainees have employed status, and attend Crawley College for one day a week, where training and assessment in building crafts are carried out. The self-assessment report identified some strengths which inspectors considered to be normal practice. They found further strengths and weaknesses and awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

### STRENGTHS

- ◆ trainees' high retention and achievement rates
- ◆ well-structured off-the-job training
- ◆ clearly presented portfolios of evidence
- ◆ well-resourced college facilities
- ◆ strong links with employers
- ◆ wide range of training opportunities in the workplace

## WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poorly planned on-the-job training
- ◆ no work-based assessment

9. The training programmes are clearly written and there are well-developed systems for recording trainees' progress. Learning support materials and assessment packs have been produced, and these help trainees to produce portfolios of assessment evidence of a high standard. Trainees also well receive good advice and guidance on the development of their portfolios, through the review and tutorial system. Trainees have access to good-quality training materials. In electrical installation and plumbing, tutors have good links with local companies and these have donated a range of equipment for the college's workshops. Trainees have a high regard for the quality and range of the college facilities available to them. College tutors make themselves readily available to carry out assessment at times that suit the trainees.

10. Employers recognise the importance of providing good training in the workplace. On-the-job training is good. All trainees are given a diversity of work experience that enables them to cover the range of competencies they need to cover for their NVQ. College tutors have developed strong and effective links with local employers. Tutors have developed good off-the-job training programmes, although training on-the-job is poorly planned, and opportunities to co-ordinate on and off-the-job training are missed. Trainees work is, however, of a consistently high standard. Tutors in the electrical sector have devised a training programme in electrical installation leading to a qualification that has been accredited as an NVQ. Local employers support this programme well. The organisations providing work placements are chosen carefully. Employers are supportive of training, and trainees are able to gain occupational experience through job rotation. Trainees are well motivated and recognise the links between workplace training, and-off-the job training. In 1998-99, trainees' retention rates were high.

### GOOD PRACTICE

*The plumbing sector has developed links with a large multi-national organisation. The company is one of the leading providers of boilers and equipment. They have assisted in the development of oil technology training, which has led to help and support from the manufacturer. These initiatives have enabled the college to acquire state-of-the-art equipment and the trainees have access to this for their off-the-job training.*

11. Trainees are encouraged to obtain witness testimony of their competence in the workplace. This is checked and verified by the college tutors. Currently, no work-based assessment is taking place. However, tutors in electrical installation are planning to carry out work-based assessment in the future, to comply with recently updated awarding body requirements. Employers receive information from CCMA about the NVQs that their trainees are following. Some employers, however, are insufficiently aware of the requirements and structure of the training programme, and the NVQ specifications. Trainees on modern apprenticeships have little understanding of the requirement for them to demonstrate competence in key skills. Training in key skills is not yet fully integral to their programme.

12. Some trainees are placed on inappropriate programmes and courses. Two trainees on a NVQ level 1 foundation programme in carpentry and joinery had received no formal theory lessons for a term, and were expected to cover theory work at home. One trainee is on the second year of the programme and has still not

completed work for NVQ level 1.

## Engineering

## Grade 2

13. CCMA has 88 trainees on engineering programmes. Fifty-four trainees are on mechanical engineering, five on electrical engineering, 28 on automotive engineering courses, and one is on a technician programme. There are 34 modern apprentices, 16 national trainees, and 38 trainees on other training. Seven New Deal full-time employment and training option clients are also in training. All trainees have employed status. Employment opportunities vary from small garages to major franchises for motor vehicle trainees and medium-sized high-tech engineering companies for other engineers. Staff from Crawley College carry out off-the-job training and work placement reviews. The college has a peripatetic vocational assessor who regularly assesses in the workplace. Trainee numbers have increased over the past three years, with significant increases in the number of motor vehicle trainees. Inspectors agreed with some of the strengths and most of the weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report and found additional strengths and weaknesses. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

### GOOD PRACTICE

*Automotive engineering tutors at the college training facility, go on one week's work experience and industrial training secondment every year. They also participate on short training courses designed to keep them up to date with the latest technology in the motor industry. They are able to update their knowledge of the latest petrol injector and direct diesel injector systems, as well as automatic braking systems.*

### STRENGTHS

- ◆ good progression routes for trainees
- ◆ innovative use of photographic evidence in mechanical engineering
- ◆ wide range of learning opportunities in the work place
- ◆ regular assessment in the work place

### WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no planned programme of progress reviews in the workplace
- ◆ automotive engineering trainees' poorly presented portfolios
- ◆ unsafe working practices in some off-the-job training

14. Mechanical engineering trainees have access to up-to-date photographic equipment to produce records of work produced during workshop training in the college. This enables them to make a clear record of the various stages of manufacture and the finished article. The photographic evidence is verified by the tutor and placed in the trainees' portfolios. All the work placements visited are small to medium-sized businesses and offer trainees a wide range of relevant learning opportunities. Many motor vehicle trainees have contact with customers and are encouraged to gain experience both on the telephone and at the reception desk. Some mechanical engineering trainees have access to computer-numerically controlled (CNC) equipment and gain experience of using information technology equipment through programming and setting operations. Trainees have good opportunities for progression. After obtaining their NVQ at level 3, some motor

vehicle and mechanical engineering trainees progress to higher national certificate or other higher courses. Additional courses undertaken by trainees, include computer-aided design (CAD), computer-integrated manufacture (CIM), and special welding courses. Individual training plans are constantly updated to reflect the additional training. Trainees whom the inspectors interviewed, understood and appreciated CCMA's role in providing them with support. All the tutors on engineering programmes at the college have relevant academic and industry-related qualifications. Most tutors benefit through their visits to employers, many tutors are able to update their industrial and technological experience.

15. One of the engineering tutors is responsible for ensuring that key skills training is an integral part of the NVQ programme. Training in key skills at levels 1 and 2 is now fully integrated into the programme. It is intended that key skills training at level 3 will be integral to programmes by the beginning of the next academic year. Some tutors spend additional time, often after normal college hours, to help trainees with their key skills, and portfolios.

16. Trainees' progress reviews are conducted every eight weeks. There is, however, no systematic schedule for the reviews and they are arranged on an internal basis. During their reviews, trainees are not set target dates for the completion of NVQ units. Work-based supervisors and employers are not informed of targets for on-the-job training which trainees have to achieve between one progress review and the next. Motor trainees' portfolios are poorly presented. There are stains on some work sheets which obscure diagrams. Some trainees have illegible handwriting and their spelling is poor.

17. During inspection, several motor vehicle trainees were observed to be without protective overalls, and wearing training shoes in the college's motor vehicle workshops. Trainees had been instructed to wear overalls and stout footwear. The provider was immediately informed that the trainees were at risk, and action was instantly taken to provide them with safety shoes and protective overalls.

## **Business administration**

## **Grade 3**

18. There were 21 trainees on a variety of business administration programmes at the time of the first inspection. There are now 17 trainees, including six advanced modern apprentices working towards NVQs in information technology, five at level 2, and one at level 3. There are nine trainees working towards business administration NVQs, of whom one is an advanced modern apprentice at level 3, and five are foundation modern apprentices at level 2. Three trainees are working towards an NVQ at level 2 in accounting. There are also two advanced modern apprentices, working towards at NVQs at level 3 in accounting. All trainees are employed locally. The college employs some of them in administrative roles. Trainees attend the College for off-the-job training on a day-release basis. Trainees on accounting programmes attend college for two evenings a week, or they can attend during the day if preferred. The college also offers a weekly key skills workshop for all business administration and accounting trainees. Inspectors

identified additional strengths and weaknesses TO THOSE given in CCMA's self-assessment report, although the CCMA did recognise the improved retention rates and the comprehensive initial assessment of key skills. Inspectors agreed with the grade given in the updated self-assessment report.

At the first inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ trainees' poor retention and achievement rates
- ◆ over-reliance on assessment under simulated, rather than real, work-based conditions
- ◆ poorly planned assessment
- ◆ inadequate arrangements for the accreditation of prior learning
- ◆ failure to carry out continuous internal verification

19. A detailed action plan was produced to address the strengths and weaknesses identified at the first inspection. Since then, improvements have been made to the quality of training in business administration. More use is made of work-based evidence, and more assessment carried out in the workplace.

#### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ good retention rates on business administration programmes
- ◆ comprehensive initial assessment of trainees' key skills
- ◆ good work placements
- ◆ good administration portfolios

#### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ some poor internal verification practices
- ◆ some missed opportunities for assessing key skills in the workplace
- ◆ some ineffective use of assessment documents
- ◆ action plans not shared with all employers

20. CCMA has undertaken several initiatives to improve retention rates since the first inspection, including improving the resources in administration and information technology. Hardware and software have been replaced and upgraded to industrial standards and to meet local business requirements. A new full-time member of staff has been appointed to co-ordinate the administration programmes as well as undertaking work-based assessments so that more assessments can be carried out in the workplace. In information technology, CCMA conducted a survey of employers and, using the results of this, designed an information technology programme. This is a 12-week programme which aims to equip trainees with the minimum skills required for employment in the sector. They learn a range of basic skills, and practical skills such as keyboard handling. Retention rates are

now improving. Eighty one per cent of trainees have remained on programmes so far this year. Of the 16 trainees who started in 2001, 13 are still on their programmes.

21. Trainees' portfolios of evidence for information technology and accounting are well organised. They show progressive assessment and demonstrate commercial standards of work. Administration portfolios of evidence are of a high standard. They contain a good variety of evidence. Including photographs, graphics and printouts in colour with a wide range of fonts, as well as witness statements, and observations. Photographic evidence includes hazards identified for a health and safety unit where wires from computer equipment were a risk, and plug sockets were overloaded. The quality of the correspondence, incident forms, questionnaires, reports and trainees' statements is good. Portfolios are clearly indexed and well organised. All trainees understood the requirements and criteria of the NVQ units they were working on.

22. All work placements offer good opportunities for trainees to learn and obtain evidence for a wide range of the NVQ requirements. Employers are checked carefully to ensure that good training opportunities are available. Workplace supervisors are briefed about the requirements of the NVQs that trainees are working towards. They sign witness statements which are discussed with trainees. The assessment process has been improved since the first inspection and work-based assessments are now planned in advance. Assessors take every opportunity to appraise trainees' workplace evidence on a regular basis. Staff make frequent visits to the workplace to observe trainees' performance. They also maintain regular contact with supervisors and employers. Employers also encourage trainees to develop additional skills in the workplace alongside their NVQ. This includes opportunities for trainees to attend courses on file management, safety awareness, suspect packages, powerpoint presentations, customer care and hearing awareness.

23. At the time of the first inspection, trainees key skills were initially assessed to support their learning. This is continuing, and CCMA now accredits the key skills to trainees who have already achieved them on other training programmes. Trainees use the specially designed workbooks which enable them to work at their own pace. Trainees in administration and accounting are assessed separately for key skills. Assessment documents are not used effectively to exploit the range of tasks that trainees carry out in the workplace. Key skills work is not always co-ordinated with theory work and trainees sometimes repeat tasks when they attend the college for off-the-job training.

24. Although CCMA has taken some action to address the original weakness relating to a failure to carry out continuous internal verification, there are still some poor practices and procedures relating to internal verification across all programmes. The college has an internal verification handbook containing details on planning, sampling, recording and monitoring. It also contains documents to be used, and reporting structures. These guidelines are not always followed. A range of documents is used across the three areas of information technology, accounting and administration. Detailed sampling plans are used in information technology,

where as in administration and accounting there are no detailed sampling plans available. Portfolios of evidence for these areas are verified at the end of the training programmes. The quality of the recorded feedback to assessors is poor in some areas. For example, some feedback sheets are not dated and others contain comments about evidence that is missing, but do not identify which NVQ units or elements this refers to. This does not help assessors to improve the quality of assessments. Assessments are not regularly observed to check their quality. Some assessment documents in trainees' portfolios are not signed or dated.

25. Assessment documents are not used in the same way across the training programmes. Different formats are used for witness testimonies, with some on headed paper and others on plain. Some witness testimonies are poorly recorded. Some observation records contain details of how the evidence can be cross-referenced to other NVQ units, while in others this is not the case. There are no common observation records for the NVQ and key skills. Good practice is not shared across the different areas of business administration.

26. Action plans are sometimes completed separately to the trainees' progress review process. This means that potential workplace evidence, is not always negotiated with workplace supervisors or employers. Trainees are sometimes on the programme for several months without achieving any NVQ units.

## Hospitality

## Grade 2

27. There are currently 44 trainees on hospitality and catering programmes. Of these, six are modern apprentices working towards an NVQ at level 3 on the kitchen and larder or patisserie option. There are 14 national trainees undertaking NVQ level two in food preparation and cooking. Two trainees are working towards a professional body qualification. The remainder are on other work-based programmes for young people. At present there is one New Deal client on the full-time education and training option. All trainees on food preparation programmes study for the basic food hygiene certificate as an additional qualification. Trainees are all employed within a wide variety of catering establishments in the local area. Trainees attend college on a day-release basis for off-the-job training and this complements their on-the-job training. All assessments take place at college. There is no assessment in the workplace. Inspectors agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report and with the grade the organisation had awarded.

### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ trainees' good retention and achievement rates
- ◆ carefully structured and well-managed off-the job-training
- ◆ well-developed portfolios
- ◆ wide variety of well-established and co-operative employers

### WEAKNESSES

- ◆ some unstructured on-the-job training
- ◆ failure of individual training plans to include demanding targets
- ◆ some missed opportunities for work-based assessment

#### GOOD PRACTICE

*A modern apprentice in hospitality and catering was nominated for the 1998 Sussex Enterprise trainee of the year award. This was in recognition for hard work and high achievements on the programme. This trainee was among the final seven candidates, and achieved third place.*

28. Trainees are employed in a variety of catering establishments within the Crawley area and these are all of a high standard, with employers and supervisors who are highly supportive of the trainees. They recognise the benefits to the trainees and also to the business, although some do not fully understand the NVQ process. Trainees attend Crawley College for off-the-job training on one day a week. Induction is well developed and ably managed, and takes place during the first week of the programme. All trainees are assessed in order to identify their learning support needs and the college meets these where appropriate. The assessment processes for NVQ programmes are clearly understood by trainees, and they are explained during the induction process.

29. Regular reviews of trainees' progress take place, and these involve supervisors in the workplace. During the reviews, trainees are not set sufficiently challenging targets before the next review. Off-the-job training is well planned and effectively implemented and it meets the required occupational standards. Objectives are specified and trainees understand what is required of them in order to achieve the qualification. At present, on-the-job training is covered sufficiently in individual training programmes and links between training at college and in the workplace are underdeveloped. Key skills training has not been fully integrated into the programme. Trainees' progress is carefully monitored and well recorded. Portfolios of evidence are well-organised and thorough. Tutors give trainees clear feedback on the quality of the portfolios. There is good use of photographic evidence of trainees' work and tutors authenticate this. Good working relationships exist between trainees, their supervisors, college tutors and staff within the managing agency.

30. Trainees work to the appropriate standards and often with little or no supervision. Additional qualifications can be achieved such as those in basic food hygiene and first aid. Trainees working for the professional body qualification may also achieve an NVQ in food service at level two. Trainees are not sufficiently involved in deciding when assessment should take place. No assessment takes place at their place of work. Opportunities are missed to assess trainees at work, even though some workplace supervisors are qualified assessors. At present, trainees take two years to obtain an NVQ at level two or level three. There are no arrangements for accelerating trainees' progress towards achievement of their qualifications. For example, their previous work-based experience is not taken into account in individual training plans. Procedures for accrediting trainees' prior learning are underdeveloped. In 1998, the trainees' retention rate was high at 79 per cent. The trainees' achievement rate was also high at 71 per cent.

31. Off-the-job training is well resourced. There is a wide variety of modern equipment of current industrial standard. Resources in the workplace are good. Trainees work on up-to-date equipment. Learning materials for off-the-job training are good, carefully developed and well presented. Off-the-job trainers have relevant industrial experience and appropriate educational and training qualifications.

## **Hair & beauty**

## **Grade 2**

32. CCMA has 44 trainees on hairdressing programmes. There are four trainees on modern apprentice programmes, 28 national trainees and 12 on other training programmes. Trainees are on NVQ level 1, 2 or 3 hairdressing programmes. Trainees also have the opportunity to obtain a computer literacy and information technology award as part of the key skills programme. All trainees have employed status and work in one of the 26 hairdressing salons currently used for placements. Most of the trainees attend the college one day each week for off-the-job training where they have theory and practical hairdressing sessions. Three hairdressing salons, however, have requested that they might provide all the practical training within their own establishment. The 10 trainees in these three salons go to the college for half a day every week, to attend the theory sessions. Assessment for these trainees is carried out during the off-the-job practical sessions, even though there are seven staff in salons who are qualified assessors. In the three salons which provide their own practical training, assessment is carried out by in-house assessors. A college tutor visits most trainees at least once every 12 weeks to carry out reviews of their progress. One tutor is contracted to monitor the quality of provision at the three salons where practical training is carried out. The tutor is also responsible for the internal verification of assessment at the salons. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses stated in the self-assessment report. They found both strengths and weaknesses, however, which CCMA had not identified. They awarded a lower grade than that given in the self-assessment report.

### ***STRENGTHS***

- ◆ well-planned and effectively implemented off-the-job training
- ◆ flexibly arranged training to meet employers' and trainees' needs
- ◆ good resources and suitable accommodation for off-the-job training
- ◆ trainees' good retention and achievement rates on the NVQ level 2 hairdressing programme
- ◆ trainees' success in information technology skills

### ***WEAKNESSES***

- ◆ poor communication with employers about off-the-job training

- ◆ unstructured planning of some on-the-job training
- ◆ most trainees' poor understanding of the training programme

33. The off-the-job training provided at the college is good. All the training sessions have clear aims and objectives. These are shared with trainees. The sessions are well planned. They motivate trainees to work hard and they sustain their interest. Staff have a wide range of teaching methods and they use appropriate learning resources well. Learning activities are varied and include group work, role-play and appropriate exercises. Trainees benefit from internally produced learning packs. These include clearly presented information, specific tasks and exercises for strengthening the trainees' learning. There is effective use of the internally produced learning packs, which combine information, tasks and exercises. In practical sessions, staff carry out effective demonstrations of various hairdressing techniques. They help trainees who are treating clients. Staff have good relations with the trainees who are highly responsive during training sessions. The quality of accommodation for both theory and practical sessions is good. The salons are spacious, well equipped and up to good commercial standards. The equipment used by trainees is up to date. Trainees use good-quality hairdressing products when working with clients. Staff encourage trainees to work to professional standards. All trainees wear the college uniform during their training.

34. CCMA demonstrates flexibility in allowing employers to opt for their preferred arrangements for training. The three employers who carry out their own practical training are most appreciative of the college's willingness to respond to their needs. They are given additional support by a college tutor with specific responsibility for liaison with these salons.

35. Although the college has clear schemes of work for all the programmes these are not shared with the trainees or the employers. Trainees do not always know in advance the topics to be covered each week. They do not have a clear idea of the content and scope of the training programme carried out at college. Some employers question trainees on the work they have completed but there are no systematic arrangements to ensure that employers are informed of and involved in the training programme. Some salons offer trainees good training opportunities with model nights and careful supervision. Other salons offer far less by comparison. There is little formal planning of the salon training by employers. Training in the salon is not linked to training at the college. There is little co-ordination of the on- and off-the-job training.

36. All trainees have information technology sessions as part of the college training day. Trainees are encouraged to obtain an information technology award during these sessions; four trainees have done so. All the exercises completed during these sessions are related to hairdressing. Trainees design leaflets and consultation documents, which can be used in their salons. All trainees work on individual computers that have a wide range of up-to-date programmes.

37. Trainees have little understanding of the training programme frameworks. Many do not know which programme they are on. Employers also lack knowledge of the content and specifications of the various programmes. Trainees are informed of the content and scope of their training programme during their induction. Most trainees have a full induction programme comprising induction provided by CCMA, the college programme area, and the employer. Some trainees have poor recall of what they were told during their induction.

## GENERIC AREAS

### Equal opportunities

### Grade 2

38. CCMA staff are all employees of Crawley College and are covered by the college personnel procedures and the college's equal opportunities policy. This policy extends to trainees. Copies of it are issued to all new trainees at induction. Employers also receive a copy of the policy. Trainees with special or additional training needs are identified through initial assessment procedures and are provided with appropriate additional support. Inspectors agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report. They awarded the same grade as that given by CCMA.

#### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ comprehensive equal opportunities policy and procedures
- ◆ effective promotion of equal opportunities through marketing materials
- ◆ accessibility of off-the-job training facilities for those with limited mobility
- ◆ good staff training in equality of opportunities

#### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ under-representation of trainees from minority ethnic groups
- ◆ most trainees' poor understanding of equal opportunities
- ◆ no formal procedures for monitoring promotion of equal opportunities in the workplace

39. The organisation has a strong commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities. There is a comprehensive equal opportunities policy and this is subject to regular review by an equal opportunities committee. The college handbook, which is given to all trainees, contains clear information on how the college ensures equality of opportunity for all staff and students, and it gives details of the facilities for the disabled, and the grievance and appeals procedures. Work-based training is promoted to under-represented groups through links with external agencies. College staff meet regularly with community leaders from

minority ethnic groups to ensure that the organisation of the training programmes takes into account particular cultural or religious traditions. Marketing materials used by the company promote positive images to counteract stereotyping; in addition, information about the training programme is produced in minority ethnic languages. To encourage respect for other traditions, the full range of religious festivals and holidays is recognised in the college calendar, which is given to all trainees. The agency recognises its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act and the college premises are accessible to those with disabilities. There is an effective development policy relating to equal opportunities training. All staff have undertaken training in interview techniques.

40. Although CCMA has taken specific action to recruit trainees from minority ethnic groups, the under representation of these trainees on programmes remains an issue. Only 2 per cent of trainees are from a minority ethnic group, whereas the proportion of persons in the population of Crawley from these groups is 8 per cent. Many trainees have a low awareness of equal opportunities. Trainees have a poor understanding of equal opportunities and of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour such as harassment and bullying. CCMA has no systematic procedures for monitoring that trainees are fully aware of the issues relating to equal opportunities, which are set out in the college handbook. The agency does not check employers' understanding of, and commitment to, equality of opportunity. Although employers sign a contract, which makes reference to equal opportunities, the agency does not monitor employers' promotion of equality of opportunity.

## **Trainee support**

## **Grade 2**

41. Crawley College Managing Agency (CCMA) recruits trainees from a number of sources. Most trainees are recruited through direct contact with employers. Others are recommended by the Employment Service and careers service or contact CCMA themselves. All potential trainees undergo a basic skills agency test to enable their need for additional learning to be assessed and analysed. They are then interviewed by CCMA staff, and a tutor from the appropriate occupational area, who knows the applicants' test results. Applicants are then matched to job opportunities. They are given help in writing a curriculum vitae. After interviewing applicants, and in some instances, giving them company tests, employers make the decision whether to offer them a job or not. Potential trainees whose aspirations cannot be met are referred to another provider or placed on a full-time course, if appropriate. A comprehensive programme of induction is given to all trainees and staff from CCMA and the college and employers, take part in this. Induction covers an introduction to the programme and the NVQ system, health and safety issues, and equal opportunities. Inspectors agreed with the strengths and weaknesses stated in the self-assessment report but found some CCMA had not identified. They awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ carefully planned training to meet individual trainees' needs in most occupational areas
- ◆ high levels of additional support for trainees
- ◆ opportunity for trainees to work towards additional qualifications

### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ insufficiently thorough reviews of trainees' progress

42. Training programmes and training methods have, where necessary, been tailored to meet the specific requirements of the individual trainee or his or her employer. A trainee from a thermoplastic fabrication company wished to be trained to NVQ 2 level but there were no directly relevant NVQ units available. Staff therefore devised an appropriate programme for the trainee made up of suitable units from an engineering production foundation NVQ at level 2. A small engineering company decided to train an employee as a modern apprentice but could not afford to lose his services for a whole week. A successful compromise was arrived at whereby the trainee would be trained to NVQ level 2, the requisite industry standard, on two days a week in the first year, and on four days a week in the second year.

43. In all occupational areas, there are clear progression routes for trainees. For example, in engineering, trainees are on modern apprenticeships and work towards NVQ level 3 and a number of craft engineering qualifications. They are then able to progress to further qualifications such as those of professional bodies.

44. Trainees receive a high level of wide-ranging additional support. They have access to counselling, accommodation advice, and careers advice. Once their basic skills agency test results are known, trainees are sent to the appropriate occupational tutor who will decide what type and level of support they require. The college has a central unit responsible for support and guidance. For example, a trainee who had weak skills in reading and writing was given learning support on a one-to-one basis throughout the programme and was able to complete it successfully. Another trainee was enabled to fit in better with other trainees at the college, after receiving personal counselling.

45. While on the programme, trainees can achieve a wide variety of additional units or qualifications in all occupational areas. Last year, one trainee gained eight additional NVQ units. Trainees can work for other qualifications such as the abrasive wheel regulations certificate, first aid certificate, and basic food hygiene certificate, and a computing and information technology award. They can also acquire additional skills in welding.

46. All employers are very supportive of their trainees. Most allow them time off to complete logbooks or work on their portfolios. One engineering employer

bought a computer and digital camera in order that his trainee might produce photographic evidence of his work. In many occupational areas, trainees' success is celebrated with a prize-giving event.

47. Trainees' progress reviews are recorded in insufficient detail. Trainees are not set targets or objectives during their progress reviews. Although trainees receive pastoral support during reviews, details of this are not recorded. Employers receive a copy of the record of reviews. They said that a more detailed record would help them to ensure they met the individual training needs of trainees more effectively. Previously, initial assessment procedures were in the hands of the different occupational areas and they were not standardised. In some instances, initial assessment was not carried out thoroughly, if at all. Since April, 1999, CCMA has taken over direct responsibility for initial assessment.

## Management of training

## Grade 3

48. The contract manager for CCMA is a member of the college management board, and reports directly to the deputy principal of the college. The college was awarded Investors in People status in January 1999 and will be re-assessed for this in January 2000. Trainees attend day-release classes in the college together with the college's own part-time students. There is an annual staff appraisal system and details of this are given in the procedures manual. Meetings for all staff are held at the end of each quarter. There is an action plan for rectifying the weaknesses identified through self-assessment. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths cited in the self-assessment report. They considered some strengths, however, to be no more than normal practice. They found weaknesses CCMA had not identified and they awarded a lower grade than that given in the self-assessment report.

### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ regular reviews by staff of progress towards reaching targets
- ◆ well-planned staff appraisal and staff development
- ◆ staff members' clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- ◆ regular strategic planning of training as part of the college's provision

### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- ◆ no work-based assessment in some occupational areas
- ◆ failure to make key skills training fully integral to most training programmes
- ◆ employers' lack of awareness of trainees' progress towards achievement of the NVQ

49. The agency is well managed. Staff work as a cohesive team and have a clear and shared understanding of the organisation's policies and procedures. Staff numbers have been increased from four to nine within the last eighteen months. Individual team members have, between them, obtained a range of appropriate qualifications through the college's staff development programme.

50. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. There is a clearly defined management framework specifying lines of accountability. All training co-ordinators have specific occupational area responsibilities and these are set out in a detailed operational chart. CCMA maintains effective links with the college and the contracts manager is a member of the college's management board. CCMA holds regular staff meetings to discuss the training programmes, the reviews of trainees' progress and issues arising from these.

51. All CCMA's staff contribute to the business plan, which is taken into account in the college's strategic plan. Once a year, all staff attend a training day in a local hotel where the business plan is discussed. The business plan is comprehensive and covers the quality of provision and financial and strategic management. The plan encompasses equal opportunities, health and safety, marketing, staff development and resources. Through its business plan, CCMA plays a key role in the core business of the college.

52. Full-time staff receive a complete annual appraisal. Staff who work more than six hours per week also receive a complete annual appraisal. Staff who work fewer hours than this receive a more simplified appraisal. Appraisals normally take place in January when the business plan and contract bids are being negotiated. A key part of the annual appraisal scheme is the identification of the training needs of individual members of staff, in order that CCMA may achieve its objectives. All staff are offered staff development training. There is a database giving details of a wide variety of courses attended by CCMA staff. Four members of staff have attended health and safety certification courses, three staff are working to become qualified assessors and two staff are taking qualifications in personnel and marketing. Staff who attend courses and take part in staff development activities evaluate them and disseminate key lessons learnt from them to other members of staff.

53. CCMA acknowledges that the poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training across all occupational areas is a key weakness, and an appropriate action plan with clearly identified deadlines has been written to rectify it. In automotive engineering, employers do not understand the NVQ requirements and the work trainees carry out in the workplace is not always relevant to these. Employers are usually unaware of the extent of trainees' progress towards their NVQ qualification. There is no work-based assessment in business administration, construction, and hospitality. In these areas, nearly all assessment is carried out under simulated work-based conditions. Work-based assessment in engineering however, is particularly good. In some occupational areas, there has been slow

progress in developing key skills training as an integral part of provision. In some cases, key skills training is added on at the end of the training programme. So far, few trainees have produced evidence of attainment in key skills.

## Quality assurance

## Grade 2

54. CCMA meets all of the requirements of the awarding bodies. It has adopted all the quality assurance systems and procedures of Crawley College and CCMA staff are involved in many of the college working parties for these. CCMA uses a computerised management information system that collates all training data for external and internal use. All trainees answer questionnaires at various stages of the course, and their responses are collated. There is a clearly written internal verification policy. Inspectors considered some of the strengths identified in the self-assessment report in relation to quality assurance, to be no more than normal practice. They found both strengths and weaknesses CCMA had not identified. They awarded the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report.

### *STRENGTHS*

- ◆ effective action on feedback from trainees
- ◆ good use of comprehensive quality assurance procedures
- ◆ effective self-assessment process
- ◆ flexible and robust management information system

### *WEAKNESSES*

- ◆ failure to use management information system data regularly in programme planning
- ◆ failure to implement some subcontractors' service level agreements in full

55. The college's feedback procedures are used for gathering the views of trainees on the quality of their programmes. Trainees are asked to respond to questionnaires at various stages in their programme. A summary and analysis of their response are made. Findings are communicated to CCMA through the curriculum areas. Action plans to address issues raised by the trainees are drawn up by working groups at management level. Improvements have resulted from such action. For example, in response to the trainees' views, workshop space has been extended and the quality of some tools has been improved. The college has a review and evaluation process which involves meetings of student representatives from courses. TEC-funded trainees are not involved in this process and are not represented at these meetings. CCMA trainees can however, raise issues and concerns during their progress reviews, and informally with their training co-ordinator.

**GOOD PRACTICE**

*Staff who visit the workplace have received specific training in health and safety. In addition, all staff who monitor health and safety in the workplace receive two day's training through a programme developed by CCMA and the local TEC.*

56. The contracts manager is a member of the college management board and is able to represent CCMA at every level of decision-making on quality assurance, including action planning and the internal inspection process. CCMA has links with quality assurance groups within the college, which identify standards for each curriculum area. These are regularly revised and updated, and are specified within the college's quality assurance handbook. There is an action plan for the improvement of provision. This has realistic targets for the completion of action. The current action plan was updated in August, and again in October of this year. A review of progress in implementing the plan has been carried out.

57. All members of CCMA staff were involved in the self-assessment process. Staff were knowledgeable about the report's content and were aware of the importance of the self-assessment process. All employers were asked for information for the report, but only some provided it. The self-assessment report identified aspects of the self-assessment process itself that need to be improved.

58. CCMA has recently installed a new computerised management information system. This is used not only to provide CCMA with essential information but also to produce the TECs with the information required by contract. CCMA could not, however, provide information on retention and achievement rates on business administration programmes. CCMA managers regularly review progress towards meeting contractual targets and report back on this at staff team and curriculum area meetings. At these meetings, staff also report on their progress towards meeting their personal targets in relation to the programmes. Although an analysis is made of data on early leavers, and trainees' retention and achievement rates, this is not taken into account in the planning of programmes.

59. Before trainees begin their on-the-job training, employers sign up to an agreement that sets out their obligations and they are given information on CCMA's policies. Employers were unable to recall this information and many were unclear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to training. Most trainees were unsure of the NVQ appeals procedure.

60. CCMA has drawn up new service level agreements with the majority of the college's curriculum areas that offer off-the-job training. However, all parties have not yet agreed these agreements. Service level agreements have not been extended to cover other subcontractors.