



TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL

INSPECTION REPORT NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999

REINSPECTION MARCH 2001

Hammersmith and West London College

SUMMARY

Hammersmith and West London College has a business development unit; its staff manage the work-based training programmes. Training in construction and business administration is satisfactory. Trainees benefit from good resources and modern equipment within the college. However, there is a lack of work placements in both sectors. In construction, there is no assessment in the workplace and trainees' progress towards completion has been slowed. At the time of the first inspection, training in hair and beauty was unsatisfactory, with ineffective reviews in the workplace and poor integration of key skills with the vocational work. Since then, changes have been made, and it is now satisfactory, with an extensive range of college facilities and good retention and achievement rates for New Deal clients. Off-the job training for modern apprentices is more flexible, but training and assessment are not co-ordinated and target setting at reviews is sometimes ineffective. Equal opportunities policies and procedures are well established, with a high level of respect given to all trainees and staff. Trainee support is good and offers a wide range of facilities: pastoral care, advice, counselling and learning support. Management of training is satisfactory in terms of the college-based training, but there is a lack of involvement by employers in the training process. Although self-assessment is part of the college's annual quality assurance cycle, the system does not assure the quality of work-based training.

As a result of the reinspection of Hammersmith and West London College the original published report text for hair and beauty has been replaced by new text which makes reference to the original inspection findings. This summary page, the overall report introduction and the inspection findings introduction have also been amended to reflect the findings of the reinspection. All other sections of the original published report, which have not been subject to full reinspection, have been left in their original form.

GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Construction	3
Business administration	3
Hair & beauty	4

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

REINSPECTION	GRADE
Hair & beauty	3

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ good off-the-job training in construction
- ◆ diverse range of qualifications in construction and hair and beauty
- ◆ excellent retention rates on the work-based training for adults programme
- ◆ extensive range of facilities at college



- ◆ effective targeting of under-represented groups
- ◆ high levels of support for trainees with learning difficulties
- ◆ good staff development programmes

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ insufficient work placements in construction and business administration
- ◆ no work-based assessment in construction
- ◆ poor achievement rates in business administration
- ◆ fragmented training and assessment for modern apprentices in hair and beauty
- ◆ inconsistent induction
- ◆ poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- ◆ failure of system to assure quality of on-the-job-training

INTRODUCTION

1. Hammersmith and West London College is a general further education college situated in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The college provides government-funded work-based training in construction, business administration, hair and beauty and retailing and customer service. The college also operates construction programmes from a site five miles away at Lime Grove, shared with a further and higher education college of art. The area of retailing and customer service was not inspected, owing to the low number of trainees. The college has been providing government-funded training since 1996. At the time of the first inspection, there were 39 trainees on programmes, of whom three were modern apprentices, three were national trainees and 33 were on work-based training programmes for adults. There were also 46 New Deal clients participating in the full-time education and training option. There are now 21 trainees on hair and beauty programmes, one of whom is an advanced modern apprentice and 10 are foundation modern apprentices. The rest are on work-based training programmes for young people. There are 10 New Deal clients participating in the full-time education and training option. The college decided to end the contracts for training in construction and business administration. The business development unit manager, with the support of two full-time staff, runs the FOCUS Central London Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) vocational training contract. A director oversees the New Deal contract with the Employment Service. He manages a team of four full-time staff and two part-time staff. The college has diverse sources of income: 76 per cent from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC), and the remaining 14 per cent from tuition fees, the European Social Fund (ESF), Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and the contracts with FOCUS TEC and the Employment Service.

2. Hammersmith and West London College serves the local community as well as central London. Trainees and clients come from all over London, but they all work within the FOCUS TEC area. This area has a population of approximately 1.5 million, with 23 per cent from minority ethnic groups (population census 1991). The number of college students from minority ethnic groups is substantially higher than this at 37 per cent. The borough of Hammersmith and Fulham is ranked as the 18th most deprived district in Britain. Unemployment in London generally has been declining steadily since its peak in 1993. In June 1999, unemployment in the area stood at 6.4 per cent, higher than the national average for November that year of 3.8 per cent. However, there was a wide variation in the unemployment rates across the wards. White City and Shepherds Bush had an unemployment rate of 12.9 per cent, while in the Palace ward it was only 2 per cent. This reflected the socio-economic diversity of both the area and London itself. In January 2001, the unemployment rate in Hammersmith and Fulham stood at 3.9 per cent compared with the national average of 3.5 per cent. In June 1999, 15 per cent of those unemployed were in the 18 to 24 age range. In January 2001, this figure had increased to 16.3 per cent. The employment growth sectors are banking, finance and insurance, distribution, hotels and restaurants, media, construction,



entertainment and hair and beauty. In 1999, the percentage of school leavers achieving five general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 48.9 per cent compared with the national average of 47.9 per cent. In 2000, this had increased to 50 per cent compared with the national average of 49.2 per cent.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

3. In early 1999, the business development manager was given guidance and assistance by the local TEC to complete a self-assessment tool kit. The process involved reviewing work-based training for young people against the quality statements in *Raising the Standard*. The business development manager involved the managers from the occupational sectors of construction, business administration, retailing and customer service and hair and beauty. The director of quality and planning reviewed the self-assessment report and discussed the actions with all divisional managers involved with work-based training for young people. An initial report was produced in March 1999. The work-based training for adults programme started in September 1999 and was not covered in the initial self-assessment report. In August 1999, a second self-assessment report was produced by the director of quality and planning for the joint inspection of the college with the FEFC. This second self-assessment report was based on the one produced for the FEFC inspection and adapted to meet the quality statements in *Raising the Standard*. Many of the strengths were more relevant to college-based training rather than work-based training or for New Deal. In November 1999, a separate self-assessment report for New Deal was prepared against the *Partners in Quality* framework. An action plan, developed after the inspection, was used to consolidate strengths and address the weaknesses identified by self-assessment and inspection. A second self-assessment report was produced in December 2000 in preparation for reinspection. Staff were involved in the process. Trainees and employers' feedback was gathered and contributed to the self-assessment report.

4. The first inspection was carried out by a team of five inspectors, who spent a total of 20 days at Hammersmith and West London College in November/December 1999. The team worked jointly with a team of FEFC inspectors during this time, sharing information and each other's findings. The occupational areas inspected jointly were business administration and hair and beauty, along with the generic aspects of provision. Construction was inspected in different weeks. Inspectors met with a total of 14 trainees, nine New Deal clients and five employers. Six work placements were visited. Inspectors had a total of 33 interviews with staff, representing the business development unit, the New Deal unit, senior and middle managers and curriculum staff. A comprehensive selection of college documents was provided for both teams and training and assessment was observed and graded as shown in the table below.

5. Reinspection was carried out by a team of two inspectors, who spent a total of six days at Hammersmith and West London College during March 2001. They interviewed 16 trainees and eight staff. They visited four workplaces and interviewed four employers. They examined documents including 12 NVQ portfolios, trainees' assessment records, trainees' files and session plans.

Grades awarded to instruction sessions at the first inspection

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Construction		2				2
Business administration	1	1	3			5
Hair & beauty		1	2			3
Total	1	4	5	0	0	10

Grades awarded to instruction/assessment sessions at reinspection

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Hair & beauty			10	2		12
Total	0	0	10	2	0	12

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Construction

Grade 3

6. In construction, there are two trainees on TEC-funded programmes, and 16 clients on the New Deal full-time education and training option. The TEC-funded trainees are on a wood occupations modern apprenticeship. New Deal clients are 18 to 24 years old and on schemes in the following areas: six in wood occupations, two in plumbing, two in painting and decorating, two in plastering, two in electrical installation, one in brickwork, and one in sign work. All trainees and clients are working towards NVQs at levels 1 to 3. Some New Deal clients are receiving additional support for literacy, numeracy, or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). New Deal clients spend 30 hours a week at the Lime Grove centre. Modern apprentices spend one day a week at the centre and the remaining four days with their employer. There has been an increase in the number of New Deal clients in recent months, although there has been no recruitment of TEC-funded trainees in this occupational area for the past two years.

7. Assessment takes place at the college, with trainees occasionally visited in the workplace by staff. Staff are well qualified occupationally and all hold the appropriate assessor and verifier awards. Retention and achievement data show that 59 per cent of New Deal clients withdraw before completion of the programme. Of the 16 New Deal clients retained on construction programmes, eight have so far achieved their original qualification aim. The two modern apprentices have achieved their level 2 NVQ and are due to complete level 3 in June 2000.

8. The self-assessment report acknowledged many weaknesses in training. Inspectors identified further weaknesses and additional strengths to those given in the report. The grade remains the same as that given by the college.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good-quality off-the-job training
- ◆ good access to additional qualifications and experience for trainees
- ◆ good key skills training

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no assessment by observation in the workplace
- ◆ lack of work-based evidence
- ◆ no work placements for New Deal clients

9. Training at the Lime Grove centre is well planned and effectively delivered. Theory sessions are traditional with effective use of question and answer techniques, and regular checks for learning. Progress is well monitored with trainees aware of their achievements and the tasks that need to be undertaken to complete the qualification. Trainees work independently in practical sessions and are able to initiate assessment, choosing tasks from the course manual, which is duplicated on the intranet for some trades. Training and assessment are well separated with trainees and clients all aware of when assessment is taking place. Portfolios in electrical installation are neat and well referenced. Feedback on assignments is detailed and valued by clients. Staff expertise and input is valued by trainees and clients, who work to high occupational standards. Most clients, many of whom have been unemployed for several years, are well motivated. Staff at the centre are aware of the needs of their trainee population, and give useful advice on building projects in the area as well as help with interview techniques.

10. Trainees and clients in wood occupations have a comprehensive and structured programme. Each has an individual timetable detailing location and activities. Clients take part in existing full-time courses with other students, then attend either key skills sessions, additional learning support or private study. A member of staff who teaches on national and higher national certificate courses is also available every two weeks for extra sessions on supervisory skills, design and specification of cabinets and other craftwork. All activities are monitored by staff, with additional support available for anyone at any time.

11. Clients in brickwork can learn German in addition to their craft. The college has links with an institution in Germany and trainees and clients alike are able to visit on exchange projects. Many bricklayers from England undertake contract work in Germany, and the learning of another language enhances job prospects and confidence. Tutors share many of their experiences and skills in the local building industry, giving trainees and clients an insight into the nature of work undertaken by local employers. Extra help in developing locally used skills, such as the specialist fibrous plastering technique used in renovation of older properties, builds clients' confidence and assists in their search for employment. Many trainees and clients also gain additional first aid and health and safety certificates.

12. Key skills are effectively taught for all trainees and clients. A new member of staff has been appointed who has responsibility for key skills in the New Deal across the college. Training takes place in a new learning resource centre. There are good examples of the way key skills have been integrated into the occupational and overall development of trainees and clients. One New Deal client applied for a discretionary grant to obtain tools and equipment for plastering. The tutor asked the client to research costs and availability of equipment taking into consideration quality and suitability for the employment aims of the client. The project was well researched and designed on a computer using different software programmes. The result enabled the client to claim additional funding at the same time as developing valuable key skills competencies. The resource centre provides current construction journals. Computers are linked to the college's intranet and are used by trainees to research assignments and access details of practical work. Each occupational craft has an intranet site. Details of qualifications, including schemes of work and individual practical jobs, are included on each site. Some occupational sites on the intranet are new and have yet to be fully developed.

13. Employers are good, providing a wide range of learning opportunities for trainees. The tasks undertaken in the workplace use many of the occupational and key skills competencies required by the construction NVQ. However, there is no assessment by observation in the workplace. The college has yet to come to terms with the requirement for work-based assessment and continues to assess in a simulated environment. Trainees are not encouraged to present job records, drawings or photographs of workplace activity for accreditation against assessment criteria. They are largely unaware that they are able to use records of their workplace experience as evidence. This causes unnecessary duplication of tasks and is an inefficient use of time and college materials. It also fails to maximise the potential in the flexible learning schemes that are being developed at the college.

14. Work placement opportunities are not yet available for New Deal clients. Work placement is a mandatory requirement of the option and is vital in developing the commercial skills that complement off-the-job training. Level 3 NVQs require evidence to be produced in the workplace, and clients are aware that the lack of placement opportunities may hinder their progress towards employment as well as successful completion of the qualification. The college is in the process of recruiting a work-placement co-ordinator to ensure this aspect is met for clients. The job description for this person shows that they will help monitor the work of the modern apprentices and assist in securing placements for New Deal clients.

Business administration

Grade 3

15. There are presently 33 trainees on the work-based training for adults course, and 23 clients on the New Deal full-time education and training option. Part of the New Deal provision is subcontracted to a private training provider. The work-based training for adults programme has been running since February 1999, and has a course structure that lasts eight weeks. The programme updates trainees' office and personal skills, and prepares them for employment. Trainees are initially

assessed to ensure that they have some computer skills, have a reasonable standard of English and that they have the right attitude to returning to work. Trainees are not assessed on their numeracy skills prior to entry on to the programme. There is no final qualification or accreditation of learning at the end of the work-based training for adults course. New Deal clients have individual timetables and attend mainstream teaching sessions at the college. The successful outcome of the New Deal programme includes a formally recognised qualification. These range from a language support and administration NVQ at level 1 to business administration advanced general NVQ (GNVQ) and courses that prepare clients for higher education.

16. The self-assessment report for this sector was poor and did not reflect the nature of the training. The final report is inaccurate and fails to identify any of the strengths and weaknesses, concentrating instead only on aspects of the mainstream provision that are not TEC or Employment Service funded. The inspectors identified different strengths and weaknesses and awarded a lower grade than given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ well-motivated trainees
- ◆ excellent retention of trainees
- ◆ good job-search training and support
- ◆ widely available computer facilities

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor achievement rates
- ◆ few real work opportunities
- ◆ some ineffective work-based training for adults

17. Trainees are attentive and studious and make a valuable contribution in training sessions. They ask challenging and relevant questions of their tutors, and willingly participate in both group and individual activities which support learning. Attendance is good on the work-based learning for adults course, but this is not always the case for New Deal clients who tend to be late or absent without prior agreement. Trainees value their learning opportunities and readily acknowledge the new skills they are acquiring, especially in computing. Work is handed in to tutors on time, and new assignments are tackled with enthusiasm. Trainees have a strong desire to use their time on the programme to prepare themselves for the workplace and are keen to return to employment as quickly as possible. Most of the trainees remain on the programme for the full duration of their course. Since September this year, when these trainees were first monitored as a discrete group, a total of 30 trainees have started the course and only one has left early. Retention of New Deal clients is also good, with 65 per cent remaining on the programme

until completion.

18. The emphasis of the programme is to secure employment for trainees. Specific job-search training is an integral part of the course. During the first three weeks, trainees attend sessions which teach them about preparing a curriculum vitae and completing application forms. They also learn about interview techniques. The tutors present them with comprehensive lists of appropriate job vacancies, which they find through journals, newspapers, recruitment agencies and the Internet. Representatives from recruitment agencies make presentations and participate in role-play activities to demonstrate good and bad interview styles. After this initial period, trainees continue to attend job-search sessions once a week so that they further develop these skills and others, such as personal appearance, general communication and telephone techniques. Each trainee is guaranteed personal, one-to-one interview practice prior to the real appointment. The actual job vacancy advertisement and completed application form are used to simulate the planned interview.

19. Trainees have good opportunities to bring their computer skills up to date. The programme includes word processing, spreadsheets, e-mail, using the Internet and presentation software. The college has extensive industry-standard computer facilities in an open learning resource centre. Trainees can book time on the computers to practise their skills. However, they do not always use these facilities. Although trainees are informed about these at induction, they are not clearly shown how to book time on the computers.

20. The number of trainees who gain employment or who move into further education are the measures of the success of the programme. Of the 151 trainees who have been on the programme since it started, only eight have secured jobs, and only four have started new further education courses. Managers have reacted swiftly to this trend and have re-designed the structure of the programme. A new system was introduced in October 1999. There is now a more informative initial assessment and selection process, clearer targets for achievement and better course materials. The new style course has only been run twice and early indications are that there is a marked improvement in achievement rates. The statistics for New Deal clients show that 49 per cent achieve their chosen qualification.

21. Neither the work-based training for adults nor the New Deal programme include workplace experience as part of the course structure. Two or three trainees have had opportunities to experience real work in the college, but this is exceptional. Managers have recognised this and have been contacting local employers, some of whom are interested in sponsoring placements. The college is aiming to develop a list of employers able to provide placements which give good opportunities to progress into full employment. Progress is being monitored weekly but most employers contacted so far have not been enthusiastic about supporting the programme.

22. The work-based training for adults programme lasts eight weeks. The course starts on a Monday when trainees receive their induction. They then start a well-

structured programme of training. They only attend college from Tuesday to Friday for the next two weeks, which brings them to the end of their three-week intensive programme. For the next five weeks, they attend a minimum of one job-search training session each week, but are invited to attend two. The rest of the time is used for self-study and, in particular, for seeking employment. The registers show that most trainees only attend one of the weekly job-seeking sessions. They must complete diaries of their activities for the time they are not at college to demonstrate they have been active on the programme for a minimum of 16 hours each week. This stage of the programme lacks any structure and, although checks are made, there is a dependency on trust and goodwill that the contractual requirements are being fulfilled. Most trainees do not feel that the three-week block course is adequate to prepare them for the workplace. They would prefer more time to practise their computer skills. The pace of learning puts them under pressure and does not give them opportunities to revisit lessons or reinforce their learning other than in their own time. A session is delivered and the trainees swiftly move on to the next phase. The way that the course is structured at the moment is not fully meeting the learning styles and abilities of all trainees.

Hair & beauty

Grade 3

23. There are 10 foundation modern apprentices, one advanced modern apprentice and 10 New Deal clients in this area. All of the foundation modern apprentices are working towards level 2 NVQs in hairdressing. The advanced modern apprentice has recently achieved an NVQ at level 2 and is working towards the level 3 in hairdressing. All trainees attend off-the-job training sessions at the college. Most attend for one day each week. They are taught in discrete classes for theory work and integrated with full-time students for practical sessions in the salon. Individual programmes are negotiated to meet the needs of trainees and these include attending evening sessions and Saturday morning salon sessions. All 11 trainees are working towards key skills in order to achieve the hairdressing frameworks. The 10 New Deal clients are on the full-time education and training option. They are working towards a range of qualifications, selected on an individual basis from the hairdressing and beauty courses. They are taught in college groups alongside full-time and part-time students. The hair and beauty division has a centralised resource room enabling all staff to share materials and information. The college's facilities include five hairdressing salons and six beauty therapy salons, a wet area for beauty therapy treatments and a dispensary. A reception area serves all the salons. Assessments are carried out by college staff in the college and in the workplace.

At the first inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ little flexibility in structure of training programmes
- ◆ ineffective workplace reviews
- ◆ lack of individual targets slows trainees' progress

- ◆ poor integration of key skills

GOOD PRACTICE

New Deal clients working towards make-up artists qualifications have good opportunities to gain extensive work and commercial experience. They accompany one of the college tutors at weekends when he carries out commercial agency work. In addition, these clients participate in a variety of national shows, events and competitions. Their programme also involves visits to film studios and a specialist special effects company.

24. Following the first inspection staff drew up a comprehensive action plan in order to address the weaknesses. The changes to address the first two weaknesses have been more effective than those for the last two. A work-based co-ordinator was appointed in September 2000 to carry out work-based reviews and assessments, but this appointment was not successful. Two members of staff are now involved in these activities until a new appointment is made. Inspectors agreed with most of the 11 weaknesses identified by the college. However, many of the strengths were regarded as no more than normal practice or were identified at reinspection as being satisfactory practice. The grade awarded by inspectors was the same as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ extensive range of facilities at the college
- ◆ wide range of specialist qualifications taken by New Deal clients
- ◆ good retention and achievement rates on New Deal

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ fragmented training and assessment for modern apprentices
- ◆ some ineffective target setting
- ◆ poor implementation of key skills on modern apprenticeship programme

POOR PRACTICE

An example of the poor understanding and planning for workplace practical assessment was observed during inspection. The trainee's assessment plan was completed in the workplace salon while the trainee's client waited. The specific hairdressing skills the trainee suggested for assessment with her client she had already achieved. The college assessor used the assessment to address other NVQ criteria and asked oral questions to use the time allocated. The trainee and assessor were together at college the previous day when the assessment could have been planned in a more timely fashion.

25. The college has an extensive range of salons. The large dispensary is staffed full-time by technicians and supplies the salons with a range of good products. The public can enter the large reception area serving the salons from the outside of the college, with the entrance being easily accessed by a series of ramps and steps. Displayed around the seating area in the reception are products and hair and beauty photographs. All trainees and clients are supplied with a personal tool kit by the college. New Deal clients are given financial support to buy materials required for the specialist qualifications. However, there are no clear criteria to define what is essential equipment and what is desirable.

26. New Deal clients select their individual timetable for the full-time education and training option, from a wide variety of hair and beauty qualifications offered at the college. The hairdressing and beauty therapy qualifications offered include NVQs at levels 2 and 3 and higher national certificates. In addition, specialist qualifications are offered to enhance clients' main qualifications and increase their chances of gaining employment. These include Indian head massage, body massage, manicure, cosmetic make-up, remedial camouflage, fashion photographic

make-up, ear piercing, advanced nail techniques and nail art, henna skin design skills and reflexology. Most clients attend a mixture of daytime and evening sessions alongside full- and part-time students. A number of New Deal clients attend the college's commercial salon on Saturdays to gain work experience. Others are gaining work experience on a block- or day-release basis.

27. Retention and achievement rates are good on the New Deal option. In 1999-2000, six clients started the option, five of whom completed their programme and gained qualifications. Two clients gained an NVQ at level 2 in beauty therapy. Both gained additional qualifications in ear piercing and body massage. One of these clients also gained a diploma in advanced nail technique and nail art. One client gained an NVQ at level 3 in hairdressing as well as additional qualifications in Indian head massage and an assessors' award. Another client completed a higher national certificate in hairdressing. The fifth client gained an NVQ at level 2 in hairdressing and additional qualifications in ear piercing and manicure. All five clients achieved the working-with-others key skills unit. Of these five clients, three are employed in salons, one is working towards a book-keeping qualification and the destination of one is unknown. In the current contractual year, 10 clients have started on the option. Of these, nine are still in training and are working towards additional qualifications. One client has left without completing a qualification or gaining employment.

28. In the past three contractual years seven advanced modern apprentices have joined the scheme. Of these, one gained the full apprenticeship, one gained an NVQ in hairdressing at level 2, three left early with no qualifications and two are still in training. One advanced modern apprentice who started the programme this year has gained an NVQ at level 2 in hairdressing and is still in training. Five modern apprentices joined the foundation apprenticeship scheme over the last three contractual years. Of these, one gained an NVQ at level 2 in hairdressing and another additional qualifications. One is still in training and on target to complete the framework this month. In 2000-01, of the seven modern apprentices who have started on the programme all are still in training.

29. Some trainees who have started training in this contractual year are making steady progress towards their NVQ. They have had their target completion dates on their individual training plan brought forward from October to June 2001. However, others are making erratic progress. Recently, workplace assessments have taken place across a range of NVQ elements relating to clients' treatments and the salon activities. However, the training and assessment is fragmented with few links between college and workplace activities or vice versa. To address the lack of flexibility in the programme as identified at the first inspection, a new timetable was introduced in January 2000 specifically for level 2 trainees in hairdressing. The timetable includes nine NVQ units and the 18-weeks programme can be joined any time throughout the year. However, there is no strategy to ensure that trainees gain the appropriate units early in the programme, such as health and safety and consultation skills. On the grid timetable, target dates for written assignments follow the theory sessions. These targets are not reinforced and practical assessments are not carried out to systematically coincide with the theory

work. Practical assessments in the salon depend upon clients' availability and on the trainee organising the assessment. Practical assessments at the college are reliant upon bookings by clients and most trainees have around one client a week in their college salon sessions. These bookings do not always enable them to practise new skills or be assessed. Some trainees have off-the-job training sessions at their workplace salons, while others learn alongside senior staff during everyday salon duties. College staff do not systematically record the new skills trainees learn in their workplace salons or on manufacturers' courses or seminars. In addition, the college does not adequately analyse and record trainees' occupational skills on joining the programme in order to plan the training programmes appropriately.

30. Although reviews are now held in the workplace, workplace supervisors are not always involved, although a comment is recorded on the review forms. Workplace supervisors are not given any useful written information about the content of the programme, to help to relate on- and off-the-job activities and programme requirements. Targets set for trainees at reviews are general statements relating to NVQ units rather than specific skills to be practised or NVQ criteria to be met and assessments planned. Trainees do not fully understand the process of compiling their NVQ portfolio and the college's staff cross-reference much of the evidence for them.

31. Key skills work is still not satisfactory, a point identified by the college. Staff lack awareness of key skills developments by the hairdressing lead body and awarding body. Individual training plans are inaccurate. Although New Deal clients' key skills are assessed, the college does not assess trainees' key skills. A key skills tutor teaches the specified number skills to the group regardless of their abilities or prior achievements. This session is held at the end of the day as other students are leaving. There is no strategy to deal with trainees who miss the four planned application of number sessions. Key skills assessments are not integrated with NVQ assessments. Although the college has plans to do this, staff and trainees are unclear as to exactly how this will happen. Information technology sessions are planned to take place at the end of the first year of the modern apprenticeship programme, and in the meantime, trainees can use the college's open-learning facilities. Use of these facilities is not monitored and word-processing of hairdressing assignments is not actively encouraged. This means that trainees do not gather evidence which can be retrospectively cross-referenced to key skills information technology units. It is planned that the key skills communication module will be covered by the hairdressing staff, but this has not yet started, despite staff talking about it to trainees during salon sessions.

GENERIC AREAS

Equal opportunities

Grade 2

32. The college has an equal opportunities policy which is regularly reviewed and

updated, as well as strategies for disability, language development, and additional learning support. Hammersmith and West London College is in an area of cultural and ethnic diversity. Twenty-three per cent of the local population are from minority groups, with Arabic, Spanish and Albanian among the most widely spoken languages. Of the college's full-time students, 37 per cent declare themselves on enrolment monitoring documents to be non-white. This figure rises to nearly 60 per cent of 16-19 year olds. The college has an equal opportunities committee which meets regularly to discuss college activities and ways in which participation may be increased. Data on applicants, retention and achievement are collected and analysed to influence college strategy. Staff are well trained in equal opportunities.

33. Some of the strengths in the self-assessment report were considered to be no more than normal practice, but inspectors agreed with the weaknesses identified in the workplace. Inspectors identified additional strengths and awarded the same grade as that in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ effective marketing of programmes to under-represented groups
- ◆ well-promoted and easily accessible complaints procedures
- ◆ good implementation of equal opportunities
- ◆ staff well trained in equality of opportunity

GOOD PRACTICE

This is an example of trainees' awareness of cultural diversity. Trainees on a business administration course were undertaking part of their programme which deals with greeting visitors. Trainees were discussing putting on a buffet lunch for visitors. Much attention was given to the dietary requirements of various religions, allergies that people may suffer from and religious occasions such as Ramadan during which Muslims do not eat during the day.

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ lack of monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace

34. The college community has a high level of awareness of equality of opportunity. All staff, ranging from those on the senior management team to support and security personnel, are highly skilled and show respect for trainees. Staff have had training in equal opportunities, inclusiveness and how to detect and help trainees with dyslexia. The college seeks to broaden students' learning experiences through open access, such as by allowing all students and trainees access to the Internet and the college's intranet during hour-long sessions on the computers in a common area.

35. The college has a policy of inclusiveness which aims to attract people from all parts of the local area. Promotional material has been used to target people in particularly deprived areas, resulting in increased participation. There are several examples of trainees on programmes that would not be considered traditional. Women partake in many construction programmes and there are several men training towards hairdressing and business administration qualifications. There is good access at both sites for those using wheelchairs.

36. The complaints procedure is well publicised and accessible for all at the college. A leaflet outlining the procedure for complaints includes a section on

GOOD PRACTICE

This is an example of the celebration of cultural diversity. The Windrush project, celebrating the anniversary of the first black Caribbean immigrants to the UK, was used to raise awareness of staff and students at the college. Several visitors gave talks and a black poet gave recitals in the library and to the board of governors. The events were well attended and the links that were made have had a lasting effect on all involved. Pictures of all events are posted on the college intranet, and posters reminding all to show respect for fellow individuals adorn the walls of the college.

which to detail any grievance. Complaints are sent directly to the head of student services, who keeps records so that trends or particular areas of difficulty can be identified. This recent initiative has allowed staff to identify some trainees with language difficulties who have been dissatisfied with the level of their course for some time, but have had difficulty in expressing their thoughts. Prompt action has been taken and the situation resolved. Staff have a positive attitude to complaints and look upon them as a vehicle for raising standards at the college. Follow-up letters to complainants ensure that any situation is resolved. Three differing stages of the procedure allow trainees to discuss problems informally first with a member of staff who is a trained counsellor. This discussion is useful for identifying underlying reasons for complaints and for reminding trainees of their responsibilities as well as their rights. The three stages of complaint can be circumvented, allowing serious issues to be referred directly to the principal.

37. Hammersmith and West London College celebrates the diversity of all its trainees. An equal opportunities committee, drawn from members of the senior management team and the delivery and support staff, meets regularly to discuss future initiatives. The committee works at an operational level, and members see themselves as people able to make a difference in everyday practice.

38. There is a low emphasis on equal opportunities with many of the employers used by this provider. Monitoring the employers' commitment to equality is poorly carried out. Many employers do not have a policy regarding equal opportunities and are not aware of the college's policy. The policy used in much of the college's literature is dated 1993, although it was reviewed after this date.

Trainee support**Grade 2**

39. Hammersmith and West London College provides trainees with the individually tailored support necessary to help them achieve their qualifications and to prepare them for work. Trainees access a variety of initial assessments and undergo an induction into their programme. College tutorial reviews are scheduled for all trainees to ensure continual pastoral support is maintained. New Deal clients have access to the New Deal co-ordinator whose role is to act on the clients' behalf when dealing with a number of personal issues. A range of welfare and personal services is available across the college. The self-assessment report identified a number of strengths and weaknesses, some of which represent no more than normal practice or with which inspectors did not agree. Inspectors identified a number of additional strengths and awarded the same grade as that claimed by the college.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ high levels of support for trainees with learning difficulties
- ◆ wide range of counselling and advice facilities
- ◆ comprehensive review and monitoring of trainee support

- ◆ good promotion of workplace discipline to enhance employability

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ inconsistent induction
- ◆ inadequate initial assessment of basic and key skills
- ◆ inconsistent use of accreditation of prior learning

GOOD PRACTICE

This is an example of action taken from the evaluation of support services in the college. A review and monitoring system is used by the college to analyse which of the advisory and counselling services are used by trainees. The review identified that one of the most frequent concerns for trainees related to financial difficulties. The college made arrangements with a major bank to open accounts for trainees based on the recommendation of the college, rather than the trainee having to work through the usual selection criteria. This has made access to bank accounts far easier for trainees.

40. All trainees and New Deal clients are well supported by a range of tutors who deal specifically with learning difficulties. College-based additional learning support tutors work closely with the divisions to ensure trainees receive support relevant to their individual requirements. Additional learning support sessions are scheduled into the hairdressing programme for an hour each week, to provide trainees who use English as a second language with support through theory learning packs. The college promotes support for those with dyslexia, through pictorial posters, simple literature and tailored support services. Within the construction division, a New Deal client has been receiving effective support for dyslexia. He is integrated well into the occupational area and has received individual support with assignments.

41. Trainees have the opportunity to access a wide range of counselling and advice facilities and services, which are well advertised across the college. The new counselling service is offered as a drop-in service five days a week. This service has been reviewed and monitored as part of the comprehensive systems implemented within the college to measure the effectiveness of the trainee support services available. The counselling service was used 50 times during the first half term of this academic year. Changes to the booking procedure were made as a result of the evaluation of the service use. The advisory system within the college ensures welfare support is available for those who require information relating to benefits, housing and financial issues. Effective one-to-one support from course tutors is also available during the programmes to deal with day-to-day concerns. The New Deal co-ordinator is very aware of clients' individual circumstances and has managed, on several occasions, to secure funding to meet individual clients' needs.

42. The college works hard at promoting a culture of punctuality and attendance to enhance employability. A system is in place to counteract problems relating to punctuality. Trainees are asked to complete a 'late slip' when arriving late for off-the-job training sessions. The system is effective. On one occasion, peers within a business administration session placed pressure on latecomers to arrive on time.

43. Induction onto programmes varies depending upon when a trainee or client joins the programme, which division they join and who carries it out. At the beginning of the college academic year, a three-day induction fair takes place which offers a comprehensive tour of the college, including membership of the

students' union. For those few trainees and clients who join out of this period a much more basic introduction is given to the college and to their programmes. Some trainees in the hairdressing programme were unaware of the assessment appeals procedure and missed basic information with regard to the programme. These trainees receive a personal notebook and diary which contains all relevant information regarding timescales, schemes of work and programme details. Some trainees who speak English as a second language find this information difficult to understand and, where induction depends on this booklet, trainees and clients find aspects of trainee support and programme-related details are omitted.

44. The college operates a variety of initial assessment systems which relate to the various work-based training programmes. These are not always appropriate for trainees and clients. In construction, a New Deal client in plumbing, who is a university graduate with a diploma in management studies, is undertaking key skill numeracy at level 1. Within business administration there is no numeracy testing. Initial assessment is carried out through interview and the completion of a proof-reading test. Similarly, the procedures for assessment of prior learning across the occupational sectors are underdeveloped. In hairdressing, a trainee who had worked for one and a half years within the industry completed a tick list to identify previous skill levels. The trainee's perception was that five units had been accredited as a result. This trainee proceeded to work within a structured programme completing tasks relating to basic hairdressing skill levels.

45. Trainees have a review of their progress every two weeks at their tutorial. Realistic targets are set which focus on their NVQ, but relate only to work carried out in the college. Tasks carried out in the workplace are not recorded. Employers are not involved in reviews and trainees are not given a copy of the completed paperwork.

Management of training

Grade 3

46. The college has a senior management team of seven directors led by the principal, which has a strategic role. The team meets weekly to determine the framework of policy and strategy for the college. The 12 divisional managers, managed by the principal, form part of the college management team together with senior managers. This team meets fortnightly to make operational decisions and consult on the development of strategies and policies. There is also a college management group which meets monthly and brings together senior management, divisional managers and support service managers. The college was recognised as an Investor in People in July 1999. The work-based training contracts for youth and adults are managed by the business development unit, which forms part of the employer-sponsored and overseas programmes directorate. The managers and staff of the relevant division carry out the actual teaching and management of training. Each division represents a specific occupational area or service. There are youth trainees in the division of building crafts, and hair and beauty. All adult trainees are in the business and information technology division. The New Deal contract is managed by the adult, higher education and community programmes directorate. There is one full-time New Deal programme manager who oversees the training in

nine occupational areas. There are four full- and two part-time staff involved in the provision of New Deal. There are two subcontractors used to provide specific subject areas within the New Deal programme.

47. Many of the strengths identified in the self-assessment report did not relate specifically to work-based training. Inspectors identified different strengths and weaknesses. The grade awarded was the same as that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ effective internal communication systems
- ◆ good staff development programmes
- ◆ well-structured management of the New Deal

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ lack of programme information available for employers and trainees
- ◆ poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- ◆ informal management of trainees' progress

48. Internal communications are conducted in a number of ways, including presentations by the principal, publication of annual self-assessment reports, regular meetings, briefing notes, posters and a widely used intranet. The principal gives presentations to all staff twice a year. The senior management teams and college teams meet on a regular basis. Posters are used throughout the college to promote its values and aims. The college has an intranet system with a home page which is a bulletin board where useful and important information can be shared. In January 1998, the college produced and distributed a consultation paper called *Tomorrow's College* requesting comments from all staff and other stakeholders. This paper is being used to re-structure the college and to establish the strategies to improve six issues identified as critical to the college's future.

49. The intranet allows staff and trainees to get information on the college's policies and procedures and operational plans for every division and directorate. The policies and procedures are developed through consultation with staff involved in implementing the procedures. There are formal meetings every term in each area to review the teaching and learning processes of off-the-job training. Induction, off-the-job training and attendance is well recorded. Specific procedures are available for some aspects of work-based training, but there are only limited details on assessments and reviews, and none on on-the-job training.

50. Staff training and development needs are identified through staff appraisals, divisional self-assessment reviews, college strategic plans and various new learning initiatives. The staff development manager co-ordinates the divisional training plans and prepares an annual training programme for the college. All staff

are computer literate. Programmes include inclusive learning development days and essential updates for all internal verifiers. Training programmes are run on teaching and learning techniques, quality assurance, information technology, health & safety and management development. All assessors have their assessor awards and there are a number of staff with internal verifier awards. Only two members of staff are qualified to assess prior learning and achievement. Plans are in place to train more staff.

51. There is a full-time manager for the New Deal contract who is supported by one of the directors. Most clients join various mainstream courses and are supported by the trainers running the courses. There are two part-time information technology trainers and one full-time key skills trainer dedicated to supporting the New Deal clients. Clients receive computer training, key skills training and job-search training as part of their programme. There are plans to recruit a work placement officer to provide additional support. The New Deal contract is reviewed by a steering group which meets every three months and is chaired by the principal of the college. The director of adult, higher education and community programmes conducts weekly meetings with the New Deal managers and the relevant divisional managers to discuss and review action plans.

52. When trainees start with the college, their employers are given an information pack which contains a workplace agreement, a health and safety check and an overview of the programme frameworks produced by the relevant training boards. There is no information on the employer's role and responsibility for the delivery of the programme. Some employers are not aware of the programme their trainees are following. There is insufficient marketing information available for potential trainees about national traineeships or modern apprenticeships.

53. Employers are not involved in, or aware of, trainees' progress towards achievement of their NVQ. On-the-job training is carried out by the employer to suit the employers' needs. There is poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training. Trainees are not encouraged to link the training they receive on the job with their NVQ programme or the off-the-job training. In construction, the college assessors do not visit the workplace and employers do not plan on-the-job training. In hairdressing, the assessors visit the workplace, but they do not encourage the employer to become involved in the delivery of the programmes.

54. The occupational tutors monitor trainees and clients' progress. Different methods are used in each area. There is no formal structured system across all of the programmes to record trainees' progress. Managers are not easily able to monitor trainees to identify those who are progressing slowly. Managers have informal discussions with relevant staff to monitor trainees' progress. Issues relating to slow progress are not easily identified in a way which would allow appropriate action to be taken.

Quality assurance

Grade 3

55. The college has a director of quality and planning who has overall responsibility for the quality assurance frameworks and systems. The business development manager is responsible for the quality assurance of work-based training. Similarly, the divisional managers are responsible for the quality of training within their own divisions. Annual quality audits are conducted using agreed checklists. Every division conducts a self-assessment review every academic year. A variety of questionnaires are used to collect feedback from staff, trainees and employers. The college publishes an annual report on quality assurance and self-assessment. Each division prepares an annual operational plan. The principal reviews the operational plans and achievement data for each division, including the business development unit four times each year.

56. The college's self-assessment of quality assurance for work-based training identified some strengths and weaknesses that were more appropriate to management of training. Whilst inspectors endorsed some of the strengths and weaknesses, they identified some additional key areas of strength and weakness. Inspectors gave the same grade as that proposed in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ well-structured quality assurance audits
- ◆ effective operational action plans
- ◆ well-established and thorough self-assessment process

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ little analysis of trainees' achievements and destinations
- ◆ poor definition of performance targets for work-based training
- ◆ failure of system to assure quality of on-the-job training

57. The quality assurance system incorporates a number of clearly defined processes and procedures. Quality audits are conducted by the quality audit team, which includes all the members of the senior management team. The audits are annual and use an agreed set of questions and suggested evidence. A senior manager audits each division and cross-college area. Senior managers do not audit their own areas. The audit is structured so that the overall operation of the procedures can be measured as a percentage. The team discusses any weaknesses identified during the audit and the relevant managers are provided with guidance and support to address the weaknesses.

58. Questionnaires are used to collect information from trainees, staff and employers. Trainees' questionnaires are used in the self-assessment process and course reviews. Staff questionnaires are sent out annually. The results of these are analysed and used to inform the staff development process and to inform the senior

management team. Sixty per cent of the employers providing work placements responded to the college's questionnaire and specific issues were addressed. The questions for employers are basic and lack qualitative or quantitative information. The college has an internal verification strategy, which is followed by each division. The director for quality and planning reviews external verifiers' reports. This year, the college carried out observations to grade the quality of all the teaching. Tutors awarded low grades are reviewed by the staff development manager and additional support given where appropriate. These observations have not been carried out at subcontractors' premises or to review training carried out outside the college.

59. Each division prepares an annual operational action plan based on its self-assessment review, the course evaluation reviews, local market information and the college strategic targets. These action plans detail improvements and targets. The principal reviews the action plans four times a year to drive improvements. The structure of the course for work-based training for adults was not helping trainees to gain employment. The course was restructured at the beginning of September and is being monitored to measure the improvements. The college is currently working towards contract compliance. The division managers do not have clearly defined performance measures or benchmarks, against which the quality of work-based training can be assessed. All college-based courses have targets and benchmarks against which trainees' retention, achievement and attendance can be measured. It is not possible to differentiate between college-based students and work-based trainees. The director responsible for the New Deal is discussing new performance measures with the principal, but these have not yet been finalised or used.

60. Some data are collected on the achievements and destination of trainees. The small number of trainees on the work-based training for youth programme has meant that the data have not been systematically analysed and trends are not significant. The data available on other work-based programmes are not analysed to provide information for use in the operational action plans.

61. Self-assessment review processes are well established. Each division reviews and evaluates its activities twice a year based on various evidence and data. A report is produced which the divisional and senior managers review. All reports are monitored and verified by the director of quality and planning. The college produces an overall annual report on quality and self-assessment. Although the quality assurance system focuses predominantly on college-based provision, specific procedures are in place to address some aspects of work-based provision.

62. The college has used self-assessment as a key aspect of its quality assurance arrangements for several years. It has developed and improved the process over this time. The report was structured predominantly to address the requirements of the inspection of college-based provision, but additional information was included to refer to issues specific to work-based training. The college identified some of the areas of quality assurance that need further development.