

TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT
JANUARY 2000

ADULT LEARNING INSPECTORATE REINSPECTION JUNE
2001

Tile Hill College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based training within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- ◆ work-based training for all people over 16
- ◆ provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- ◆ the University for Industry's *learnirect* provision
- ◆ adult and community learning
- ◆ training given by the Employment Service under the New Deals.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Grading

In summarising their judgements about the quality of provision in curriculum or occupational areas and about the quality of leadership and management, including quality assurance and equality of opportunity, inspectors use a five-point scale. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- ◆ grade 1 – outstanding
- ◆ grade 2 – good
- ◆ grade 3 – satisfactory
- ◆ grade 4 – unsatisfactory
- ◆ grade 5 – very weak.

SUMMARY

The original inspection of Tile Hill College was carried out by the Training Standards Council's inspectors. The inspection resulted in less than satisfactory grades being awarded for health, care and public services and management of training. These areas have been reinspected against the requirements of the *Common Inspection Framework* by the Adult Learning Inspectorate, which replaced the Training Standards Council on 1 April 2001. The sections of the original report dealing with health, care and public services and management of training have been replaced with the findings of the reinspection. Also, the report summary, report introduction and introduction to the inspection findings have been updated and reflect the findings of the reinspection. Sections of the report, dealing with areas which have not been reinspected, have been left in their original form. The amended inspection report is published on the Adult Learning Inspectorate's website (www.ali.gov.uk).

Tile Hill College and its subcontractors provide good work-based and off-the-job training in engineering. Learners benefit from a wide range of industry-standard engineering equipment. Training in health, care and public services is now satisfactory; there are delays in assessment of learning in the workplace and key skills training is not well linked to the vocational training programme. However, retention rates are good and most learners are on target to achieve their intended qualification. The college's promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The resources for supporting learners are good and the support they are given is adequate. Learners' progress reviews do not result in adequately planned actions and targets. There are now effective communications between all parties and close monitoring of learners' progress and retention rates. Some employers and learners are unclear about the requirements of the qualifications. Quality assurance is satisfactory. Internal auditing, self-assessment and action-planning are used effectively to maintain and improve the quality of work-based training, but there is insufficient use of data to help in these activities.

GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Engineering	2
Health, care & public services	4

GENERIC AREAS	GRADE
Equal opportunities	3
Trainee support	3
Management of training	4
Quality assurance	3

REINSPECTION	GRADE
Health, care & public services	3

REINSPECTION	GRADE
Management of training	2

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ wide range of industry-standard resources in engineering
- ◆ effective restructuring of off-the-job training in childcare
- ◆ good rates of retention and progression in care

- ◆ effective strategies to improve retention
- ◆ strong promotion of equality of opportunity to prospective trainees
- ◆ good support for trainees by the training services division
- ◆ good college resources to support trainees
- ◆ effective management of work-based training

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ slow implementation of workplace assessments
- ◆ little integration of key skills
- ◆ weak reviews of trainees' progress and action planning
- ◆ poor jobsearch arrangements for New Deal clients

INTRODUCTION

1. Tile Hill College was established in 1969 as a general further education college. Its main site at Tile Hill, a suburb of Coventry four miles from the city centre, serves the west of the city and the centres of population which lie between Coventry and Birmingham. The centre of Birmingham is 15 miles away. The college's other sites include specialist facilities for business training, a workshop for engineering and outreach centres in the north of Coventry. At the time of the original inspection, there were 8,750 students at the college. Of these, 1,228 were full time. The college employed 473 teaching and administrative staff. The college now has 8820 students. Of these, 1751 are full time. The college employs 565 teaching and administrative staff. Of these, seven are employed full time to manage the work-based training and New Deal contracts. The college has extended the work-based training programmes on offer to include agriculture, manufacturing, foundation training, media studies, retailing and customer service as well as courses in engineering, health, care and public services and business studies.

2. At the time of the original inspection, the college had contracts with Birmingham and Solihull Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) and with Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise (CCTE) to provide work-based training. The CCTE took the co-ordinating role for the inspection. At the time of the original inspection, there were 251 trainees on government-funded work-based training programmes, and 16 New Deal clients funded by the Employment Service. There were 150 modern apprentices, 45 national trainees and 56 trainees on other training programmes. The college provided work-based training for 185 learners in engineering and for 28 learners in health, care and public services. There were 38 learners in other occupational areas, but too few in any single area to warrant inspection. The college now has a contract with Coventry and Warwickshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for its further education programmes and most of its work-based training. Some engineering trainees are funded through the Birmingham and Solihull LSC. At the time of the reinspection, there are 333 learners on government-funded work-based training programmes, including six New Deal clients funded by the Employment Service. There are 223 advanced and 51 foundation modern apprentices, 44 trainees on other national vocational qualification (NVQ) training programmes and nine foundation trainees. The college provided work-based training for 236 learners in engineering, 27 in health, care and public services, 33 in business administration, 13 in retailing and customer service, two in agriculture, 12 in manufacturing, one in media and nine in foundation training. Coventry and Warwickshire LSC is the co-ordinating LSC for the reinspection.

3. The college is a national training centre for the training of engineers working in the passenger-carrying vehicle sector. The work-based and New Deal training are managed by a small administrative training services division based on the main college site. It was established in May 1998. The college's vice-principal has overall responsibility for its work. Since the original inspection, the training services division has increased its staffing levels and now consists of a full-time manager, an assistant manager and a team of five other staff who provide, co-ordinate and administer work-based and New Deal training. Off-the-job training takes place in the college's eight schools. Heads of schools are responsible for providing, quality assuring and assessing the training. Engineering training is subcontracted to five other further education colleges, one in Warwickshire, one in Coventry and three in Birmingham.

4. At the time of the original inspection, the rate of unemployment in Coventry was 4.7 per cent. This was similar to that of the West Midlands region as a whole, but higher than the national average of 4.4 per cent. By May 2001, the unemployment rate in Coventry had dropped to 3.6 per cent compared with the national rate of 3.1 per cent. Coventry has a long history of motor vehicle engineering and manufacturing. Seventeen per cent of employees in Coventry and Warwickshire work in manufacturing. One in five of the manufacturing jobs is in vehicle assembly. The Tile Hill area of Coventry benefits from its proximity to the buoyant economies of Solihull and Birmingham. Based on the 1991 census data, the proportion of the population of Coventry from minority ethnic groups is 11.9 per cent, compared with the national ratio of 6.2 per cent. In 1999, the proportion of school leavers in Coventry achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 39.1 per cent, compared with the national average of 47.9 per cent. In 2000, the proportion for Coventry had improved to 40.8 per cent, compared with the national average of 49.2 per cent.

TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT: TILE HILL
COLLEGE JANUARY 2000 ADULT LEARNING INSPECTORATE
REINSPECTION JUNE 2001

Breakdown of trainees by occupational area and type of training at reinspection:

	Advanced modern apprentices	Foundation modern apprentices	Other youth training	New Deal Clients	Total
Agriculture			2		2
Engineering	183	43	9	1	236
Manufacturing			12		12
Business administration	26	1	3	3	33
Retail & customer service		3	10		13
Health, care & public services	14	4	8	1	27
Media				1	1
Foundation training					9
Total	223	51	44	6	333

INSPECTION FINDINGS

5. Tile Hill College produced its second self-assessment report for work-based training in July 1999. It was updated in November 1999 in preparation for the inspection. The manager of the training services division, the vice-principal responsible for work-based training, and the college's senior manager responsible for quality assurance, produced the report. Heads of the college's teaching schools produced the occupational area sections of the report. They consulted all relevant staff in the schools. The staff of the training services division contributed to the evaluation of the generic aspects of training. Employers, learners and subcontractors did not contribute to the report. The strengths and weaknesses identified in the report were carefully considered and the evidence for them was clearly stated. After the original inspection, the college prepared a post-inspection action plan. This included a detailed improvement plan for work-based training. The college prepared, as part of its annual cycle of self-assessment, another self-assessment report six months after the original inspection. In preparation for its reinspection, the college prepared an up-to-date action plan for the whole of its work-based training provision and a new set of strengths and weaknesses for the two areas being reinspected.

6. For the original inspection, four inspectors spent a total of 14 days at Tile Hill college during January 2000. The team worked jointly with Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) inspectors, sharing information and findings. Generic aspects and engineering were inspected jointly, but health, care and public services was not inspected by the FEFC. Forty-one work-based trainees were interviewed by Training Standards Council (TSC) inspectors. Seventeen employers were visited, and 17 workplace supervisors were interviewed. Twenty-four staff of the college and its subcontractors were interviewed. Inspectors examined trainees' portfolios, assessment and review records, college policies and procedures and a range of other records. They observed one assessment and observed and graded off-the-job training sessions, the grades for which are recorded in the first table below.

7. The reinspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors, who spent a total of nine days at Tile Hill College in June 2001. Inspectors examined trainees' portfolios, qualification progress records and action plans and statistical performance data. They interviewed eight employers/workplace supervisors, 25 members of the college's staff, and 26 trainees. Inspectors also reviewed new management procedures, staff development and appraisal records, internal audit records and minutes and notes from meetings. Inspectors observed and graded three training sessions.

The table below shows the grades awarded to instruction sessions at the original inspection

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Engineering			3			3
Health, care & public services			2			2
Total	0	0	5	0	0	5

The table below shows the grades awarded to instruction sessions at the reinspection

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Engineering						
Health, care & public services			3			3
Total			3			3

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Engineering

Grade 2

8. Tile Hill College has 185 trainees on work-based training programmes in engineering. Most of these are on the passenger-carrying vehicle training programme which has 121 trainees who are employed by organisations in all parts of the country. The trainees attend the college for blocks of about five or six weeks on a residential basis for off-the-job training. They are working towards NVQs at levels 2 and 3 in maintaining and repairing passenger-carrying vehicles. The programmes are accredited by the national body for passenger transport vehicles.

9. Eleven locally based trainees on a light vehicle engineering training programme attend the college one day each week to work towards NVQs at levels 1, 2 and 3. One of these trainees is a New Deal client. A further 33 trainees are employed by a major local car manufacturer. Tile Hill College has a contract for their training in engineering, but subcontracts the off-the-job elements to two other further education colleges. The remaining 20 trainees are on other engineering programmes.

10. Off-the-job training at the colleges includes theoretical and practical sessions. Trainees receive on-the-job training in the workplace, where they are assessed by a trainer from Tile Hill College. Trainees also work towards craft and technician qualifications, as well as numberpower and wordpower qualifications where appropriate. The self-assessment report identifies strengths and weaknesses and gives grades for each of the three aspects and for the different engineering programmes. Inspectors agreed with some of the strengths and weaknesses identified, and with the overall grade for engineering which the college provided during the inspection.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ wide range of industry-standard resources
- ◆ good off-the-job training
- ◆ wide range of additional training opportunities taken by trainees
- ◆ well-planned on-the-job training

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ insufficient workshop space for passenger-carrying vehicle engineering
- ◆ delays in workplace assessments

GOOD PRACTICE

Employers of trainees on the passenger-carrying vehicle engineering programme are very involved in the off-the-job training. Senior managers of the employers meet every term at the college. Before the meeting, they talk as a group to all the trainees to gather their views. The managers bring the trainees' views, as well as their own, into the meeting with the college staff.

11. The standard of off-the-job training is high. The light vehicle workshops at Tile Hill College are good. There is an ample supply of current motor vehicles. The vehicle body repair workshop is well resourced. It includes all the equipment found in a commercial repair workshop. Trainees work on real customers' vehicles during their practical off-the-job training as well as in the workplace. Foundation engineering training at the subcontractors is good. Training sessions are well designed with helpful supporting materials for both training and assessment. The resources for off-the-job training in passenger-carrying vehicle engineering are good. However, the workshop is located in temporary accommodation with insufficient space.

12. Trainees are able to supplement their NVQ training with a wide range of additional qualifications. These are usually craft or technician certificates appropriate to the occupational area which enhance trainees' knowledge and understanding. Guest speakers from industry are invited to discuss developments in the sector.

13. On-the-job training is well planned in the larger companies. A plan is produced at the beginning of each year setting out the areas of the company in which trainees work. They spend a fixed time in each area to give them the maximum experience. Towards the end of their training they specialise in particular areas. Staff have been slow to respond to changes in the awarding body requirements for the passenger-carrying vehicle qualifications. Workplace assessments have been delayed and some trainees in the second year of their programme have not yet been assessed. Action has been taken to increase the rate of assessment, and two new staff have been appointed. The achievement rate within the target period for trainees on the passenger-carrying vehicle training programme has been low. However, most trainees are continuing their training with the intention of achieving the qualification.

Health, care & public services

Grade 3

14. There are currently 27 learners on health, care and public services training programmes. Those in childcare are either employed, or on work placement in, private day nurseries and crèches. Trainees involved in care for the elderly are either employed, or on work placement, in private residential or nursing homes. Twenty-four of the 27 learners are employed. All off-the-job training is provided on a day-release basis, throughout the year, in the school of health at the college. The off-the-job training day is split into key skills training in the morning and theory and practical training in the afternoon. One-to-one coaching is given in the workplace for learners who are unable to attend college. College staff carry out most assessments in the workplace. Staff who teach and assess are experienced in their vocational areas and are appropriately qualified. Learners are allocated a tutor and assessor at the start of their training. Inspectors agreed with one of the four strengths and two of the three weaknesses in the self-assessment report. The other three strengths were judged to be no more than normal practice. Inspectors found other strengths and weaknesses and agreed with the grade given by the college.

Breakdown of those on training programmes at reinspection:

Area of learning	Advanced modern apprentices	Foundation modern apprentices	Other youth training	New Deal Clients	Total
Early years care	10	0	5	1	16
Care for adults	4	4	3	0	11
Total	14	4	8	1	27

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ weak links between on- and off-the job training
- ◆ lack of integration of key skills
- ◆ poor practice in assessment
- ◆ poor retention and achievement rates

15. Tile Hill College has made good progress in dealing with the weaknesses identified at the original inspection. Three of the four weaknesses have been remedied. The college has developed its links with employers and this has improved the co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training. Retention rates are now good and most learners are making good progress towards their qualifications. Assessment practices are now satisfactory. Key skills training is still poorly linked to the vocational training.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good retention and improving achievement rates
- ◆ particularly effective training

GOOD PRACTICE

Care employers are encouraged to participate in the initial assessment and interviewing of prospective trainees. This practice has helped to improve employers' understanding of the training programme and provided potential trainees with a useful insight into the realities of care work.

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ no integration of key skills training
- ◆ some delayed work-based assessment in childcare

16. The retention and achievement rates of trainees on both the adult and childcare training programmes have improved since the original inspection. Retention rates for trainees starting in 1999-2000 and 2000-01 are 87 per cent for advanced modern apprentices, 66 per cent for foundation modern apprentices and 100 per cent for other youth trainees. Improved communication with employers has led to better monitoring of attendance and retention at work and college. The college has recently appointed a new co-ordinator to contact learners who do not attend college for day-release training. The co-ordinator informs tutors of any reasons for poor attendance and, and if required, initiates any support arrangements to help the trainee to continue attending. Course organisers have been allocated extra time to allow them to carry out more frequent visits to learners in their workplace. The college has encouraged employers to ensure that they plan their staffing rotas so that learners can be released for training. If a learner's course of study is interrupted, college staff help the him or her to complete the coursework and prepare to return to study.

17. Seventy per cent of the learners are progressing well and are on target to complete all of their qualification requirements within the time shown on their individual training plans. The other trainees are on target to complete their qualification soon after the completion time shown on their individual training plans. Sixty-two per cent of those trainees who require key skills as part of their qualification have already completed all or most of the key skills requirements. The other trainees are on schedule to complete key skills training and assessment before their training programme is due to end.

18. Training in care is good, varied, and meets the needs of the learners. Learners work with qualified and experienced staff in a wide range of work placements. They are given good opportunities to practise and demonstrate all the skills necessary for achieving their qualification. They often participate in additional courses provided by the care homes, such as those in first aid, manual handling and basic food hygiene. They are also trained to deal with problems such as dementia and incontinence. The college's care tutors are occupationally competent and qualified to teach. They are encouraged to take additional training and one member of staff is taking a course to help learners with dyslexia. Off-the-job training is planned to meet the needs of all learners. As well as day-release training at the

college, tutors provide one-to-one training in the workplace. For example, one nursery has two trainees and only one can be released for day-release training each week. A tutor visits the other trainee in the workplace. Another trainee who works a long way from the college can only attend once a month. Tutors visit this trainee each week to provide the necessary individual training and support. Trainees are encouraged to undertake relevant additional qualifications at college, such as first aid, basic food hygiene and reflexology.

19. There is insufficient integration of key skills training with the vocational training programme. Key skills training and assessment is still provided separately from the vocational training, during individual lessons in college. Trainees prepare a separate portfolio of evidence for key skills. There is no cross-referencing of the work which trainees complete for the NVQ which could be used to meet key skills requirements. As a result, there is some duplication of evidence in trainees' portfolios. Some trainees and employers have a poor understanding of the importance of key skills. Nevertheless, trainees have made good progress towards completing their key skills. The key skills tutors and the care tutors in college are working together to improve the integration of key skills training into the NVQ workplace assignments. Care tutors have also attended key skills training sessions.

20. Assessment practices have improved since the original inspection and are now satisfactory. When assessment takes place, it is well planned, and verbal and written feedback is given to learners. All stages of the assessment process are recorded and copies of these records are kept in trainees' portfolios of evidence. Staff who assess are qualified assessors. Assessors and verifiers on both the adult and childcare training programmes meet monthly to share good practice and monitor learners' progress.

21. There have been some delays in assessment for childcare trainees, some of whom have not been assessed in the workplace for up to six months. Some staff who were able to assess left the college and it took some time to replace them. Insufficient use was made of witness statements from workplace supervisors during this period. Newly appointed staff have responded rapidly to this situation and trainees are now having their individual assessments brought up-to-date.

GENERIC AREAS

Equal opportunities

Grade 3

22. Tile Hill College has an equal opportunities policy which covers work-based training. The policy was last reviewed and updated in July 1999. Trainees are informed about equal opportunities at induction, and are given a booklet with information about their rights and responsibilities. Twenty-one per cent of the

trainees are women and 5 per cent are from minority ethnic communities.

23. Statistical information is collected on trainees' background and analysed by the training services division. The division has developed an action plan to improve equality of opportunity in work-based training. The college has an equal opportunities committee which meets every three months. The training services division is represented on the committee. The college has a complaints procedure which work-based trainees are entitled to use. Inspectors agreed with some of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report. They awarded a lower grade than that given in the report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ strong promotion of equality of opportunity in the recruitment of trainees
- ◆ effective implementation of equality of opportunity

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ lack of awareness of equal opportunities by trainees and employers
- ◆ insufficient staff development in equal opportunities

24. The equal opportunities policy is comprehensive. The college promotes equal opportunities by reaching out to different communities in the Coventry area. Its outreach centres in the north of the city are located in minority ethnic communities. The main college site is accessible to those using wheelchairs. Families have been encouraged to come to the college. A family "Dyslexia Day" held on a Saturday attracted over 30 people, including parents with dyslexic children. The college has some new projects for disaffected and vulnerable groups to promote social inclusion which are relevant to work-based training.

25. The number of trainees from minority ethnic groups on work-based programmes exceeds their proportion of the local population. For example, eight of the 16 clients on the New Deal programme are from minority ethnic communities. The training services division offers an extended NVQ level 1 programme to enable trainees with special training needs to remain on the programme for up to two years rather than the usual period of one year. This allows trainees with learning difficulties a better opportunity to become ready for work. Good work placements are provided for trainees with learning difficulties. They have the opportunity to experience work and training in the same kinds of organisations as other trainees.

26. Some trainees have little understanding of equal opportunities. They are not aware of the college's policy or of its relevance to their own training, experience and behavior. Few recall discussing equal opportunities during their induction. Some employers have a college booklet, but are unaware that it contains the

college's equal opportunities policy. They have a low awareness of their responsibility for equal opportunities regarding other trainees.

27. Staff in the training services division have received no training in equal opportunities. In the college as a whole, there has been a delay in providing staff with equal opportunities training. The need was identified in 1998 but no action has yet been taken. Nevertheless, staff are aware of the importance of equality of opportunity.

Trainee support

Grade 3

28. Trainees are referred for recruitment onto the passenger-carrying vehicle engineering programme by their employers. Most other trainees are referred to the college for work-based training by the careers service. They are invited to attend the college before starting their training to assess the suitability of the training on offer. All trainees take part in college inductions. Trainees who have identified learning difficulties have an additional induction programme. On this they have the opportunity to undertake first aid, health and safety and food hygiene certificates, and to begin to develop employability skills. All trainees complete a literacy and numeracy test. Trainees who require additional support in basic skills attend the college one day a week. Group training sessions in key skills are provided in the learning support centre as part of trainees' off-the-job training. A tutorial system provides help and advice on personal and social problems as well as training issues. College staff make regular visits to trainees in the workplace. The self-assessment report identified many strengths and few weaknesses. The strengths were mainly concerned with the college's pastoral support systems. Inspectors found that many of these were no more than normal practice. They identified a substantial weakness in the reviewing of trainees' progress which was not included in the self-assessment report, and awarded a lower grade than given in the report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good college support resources
- ◆ good initial assessment

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ weak reviews of trainees' progress and action planning

29. Trainees are well supported by staff in the teaching schools and by staff of the training services division. Staff in the training services division provide good pastoral support to trainees who call in to their office. Trainees are confident about asking for help with a wide range of concerns. These include difficult personal

issues such as domestic problems, childcare provision, homelessness and court appearances. Staff are well aware of the individual needs of trainees. Trainees who experience difficulties in their workplace receive more frequent visits. The college's resources for student support are good, and they are available to trainees. The resources include accommodation, welfare, careers advice and guidance services. The college has a school of learning support in addition to the vocational schools. The staff of the school of learning support specialise in helping students, including work-based trainees, with learning difficulties or disabilities.

30. All trainees are given tests to measure their ability in literacy, numeracy and information technology on entry. If the initial assessment indicates that a trainee has difficulty in numeracy or literacy then support for basic skills is included in his or her individual training plan. Initial assessment is used to select the programme trainees will follow. For example, trainees are only selected for modern apprenticeships if they are capable of achieving the necessary key skill levels. Otherwise they are advised to join a national traineeship programme. Depending on their employer, trainees in engineering often take a mechanical aptitude test at the selection stage, as well as the basic and key skills tests. There is no written procedure for the accreditation of prior learning. However, in practice, appropriate credit is given to trainees on the passenger-carrying vehicle training programme, which accounts for most of the college's work-based trainees. Trainees who already have a light vehicle engineering qualification are not required to attend one or more blocks of off-the-job training, which repeat material they have already learned.

31. Trainees' action plans and reviews are not adequately completed. The records of progress review meetings contain insufficient information. Other than on passenger carrying vehicle programmes, targets are rarely set in action plans and timescales are not identified either for assessment or for completion of personal or vocational goals. The extent to which employers are involved in trainees' reviews varies widely, and some have not been involved at all. Some employers have little understanding about what the trainee is doing in off-the-job training and how this relates to training in the workplace.

Management of training

Grade 2

32. The college's vice-principal is the senior manager responsible for work-based training. The manager of the training services division is responsible for the contract with the Coventry and Warwickshire LSC. Heads of school in the college are responsible for providing and monitoring the training and for the pastoral support of learners. The training services division manager prepares termly reports for the senior management team on work-based training. Inspectors agreed with four of the six strengths and only one of the three weaknesses given in the

college's self-assessment report. The self-assessment report did not recognise the efforts made to improve retention rates or the poor arrangements for jobsearch for New Deal clients. Inspectors agreed with the grade given by the college in its self-assessment report.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ inadequate tracking procedures
- ◆ some poor internal communications
- ◆ slow implementation of staff development
- ◆ insufficient work experience for New Deal clients

GOOD PRACTICE

A training event has been organised for companies involved in the passenger carrying vehicles sector. The event is designed to train company-based mentors to support trainees in the workplace and to work in partnership with the college. As a result of this, mentors are able to offer much more effective support to learners.

33. Since the original inspection a detailed action plan has been produced to rectify the original weaknesses. Work-based training is now well managed throughout the college. Good support for learners and improvements in the monitoring of their progress and attendance rates have had a positive effect on retention rates. Where new procedures have been introduced, efforts have been made to ensure that they are implemented consistently by staff.

34. Staff and learners now have a good understanding of the roles of individual staff. There is a clearer system for reporting on work-based training to senior managers. Additional staff have been appointed to monitor the progress of learners and to support them in the workplace. New NVQs have been offered to meet identified needs in customer service, information technology and hospitality and catering. Links with employers are good. Staff have been trained as assessors and internal verifiers. Work experience arrangements for New Deal clients are now satisfactory and all clients are placed with appropriate employers.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good management of work-based training
- ◆ effective links with employers and other external organisations
- ◆ effective methods to improve retention

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor understanding of qualification requirements by some employers and learners
- ◆ poor jobsearch training in New Deal

35. The management of work-based training is good. The training services division has a designated manager and a deputy manager. There is a specialist co-ordinator for New Deal training. They are also responsible for monitoring the progress at work of learners on motor vehicle engineering training programmes.

These learners account for 67 per cent of all work-based trainees in the college. A senior manager is responsible for the overall management of the work-based training at the college. Heads of school are responsible for the work-based training and assessment in their school. The training services division manager prepares three reports for the senior management team each year. The reports examine the training provision against agreed targets and are used as part of the annual self-assessment process. Systematic self-assessment has led to the production of action plans, which are regularly monitored. For example, the monitoring of feedback from learners about their induction resulted in a shorter, more relevant induction. More recent feedback on the new arrangements show high levels of satisfaction with the induction. Internal communications have improved since the original inspection through meetings of managers and the development of service level agreements between the training services division and each school. Staff clearly understand their own responsibilities and those of other staff.

36. College tutors understand fully the provision, organisation and monitoring of NVQ training. They meet termly to develop college-wide arrangements for the teaching and assessment of NVQs and key skills. They also consider internal verification issues and any points raised by external verifiers and check any changes to college procedures before they are implemented. Other meetings of managers and staff are less well planned and recorded.

37. The engineering training programme includes a training arrangement with a large motor vehicle manufacturer, involving over 100 learners and five other colleges. The training programme allows trainees to progress from a level 2 NVQ to a degree. This initiative is well managed through regular meetings and thorough monitoring. There are fortnightly meetings to review different aspects of the training programme. Good use is made of standard forms and paperwork to avoid any confusion in the recording, monitoring and reviewing of learners' progress. A member of staff advises the company-based mentors who support learners in the workplace. The college has run an extensive programme to train company-based mentors. There is a broad range of policies and procedures to support the management of training. All of the companies have well-structured arrangements for reviewing learners' progress, but some reviews have been delayed as a result of staff absences. Most staff, learners and employers understand these procedures.

38. The college is testing a computerised system for monitoring achievements across three training programmes. This will provide staff with detailed information on learners' progress. There has been good monitoring of progress made on aspects of the post-inspection action plan. Data on learners' performance from year to year on all training programmes are now available to staff. Feedback from learners and employers is analysed and is used effectively by management to set targets for improvement in the training. A recently appointed co-ordinator contacts learners who show poor attendance or who are not making good progress. Tutors

are informed and short-term action plans are drawn up to rectify any problems. Staff identify and respond effectively to the needs of those learners most at risk of not staying on the training programme. The college has successfully raised the retention rate across all of the work-based training programmes over the past two years. In particular, retention rates in care have improved, to 84 per cent.

39. Employers receive comprehensive information outlining their responsibilities for equal opportunities and health and safety and the requirements of the training programmes. Employers can attend training sessions to raise their awareness of the requirements of the NVQ training programmes. Some employers and learners have poor understanding of the qualification and assessment requirements. Some learners do not provide the necessary workplace evidence required in their portfolios. Employers and trainees do not understand the importance of key skills and have not developed effective ways of identifying and recording evidence of key skills competences while at work.

40. Jobsearch training for New Deal clients on the full-time education and training option is not provided on a weekly basis. The college only provides jobsearch training during holiday periods in the college. Jobsearch is not given a sufficiently high priority for New Deal clients.

Quality assurance

Grade 3

41. The training services division has written quality assurance procedures which define the management and training processes needed to ensure a satisfactory standard of training. Monthly audits check that key stages in training and support are being carried out by the teaching schools. The college collects and analyses data on student achievement and retention. Internal verification is the responsibility of the teaching schools. The standard of training is reviewed with the teaching schools involved in work-based training. Students' experience of the college is monitored through perception surveys, discussion groups and the use of comment cards. Work-based trainees are included within this. The self-assessment report identified strengths and weaknesses, including the weakness in internal verification. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses identified, and with the college's grade.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ effective internal audits of work-based training
- ◆ good use of action planning to manage improvements

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ insufficient analysis and use of data on work-based training
- ◆ weak internal verification in care programmes

POOR PRACTICE

This is an example of poor practice in internal verification. In an area of engineering there is only one internal verifier. He also assesses trainees' competence but has no one available to verify his assessments.

42. The college introduced the current written quality assurance procedures and the internal audit arrangements because it recognised that essential stages in work-based training, such as regular trainees' progress reviews, were being missed. The procedures and the audits provide an effective means for the college to check, through the training services division, that the teaching schools are doing what is required at the proper time.

43. The college began formal self-assessment in 1995-96, and the process is well established in the teaching schools. Regular self-assessment with action planning is the college's principal method of improving quality. Action plans are reviewed every six months. The records clearly show how regular self-assessment and resulting action plans are used to manage continuous improvement in the college. Separate self-assessment for work-based training is relatively new. The self-assessment process has been completed twice, and detailed action plans have led to improvements in work-based training. In addition, the teaching schools have held two termly programme review team meetings for college staff involved in work-based training. At these meetings issues are discussed, good practice is shared, and targets for action are agreed. It is too soon to judge the impact of the two meetings on the training. The college has a well-established lesson observation system, but the schools do not make systematic use of its findings.

44. The college collects and records data on the retention and achievements of all its students and trainees, but has not analysed work-based trainees' data separately. Data are not available to show trends in the retention and achievement of work-based trainees. The college's systems for gathering feedback from students are extensive. The questions asked in surveys of student opinion cover the quality of the teaching and the learners' experience in lessons. However, the feedback from work-based trainees has only recently been separately analysed, and the results have not yet been used to make improvements. There is no system for obtaining feedback from care trainees about their on-the-job training. Feedback from engineering employers is obtained systematically through regular meetings. Targets for achievement and retention are set on engineering programmes.

45. The internal verification of work-based training is unsatisfactory on care programmes. There is no planned schedule for internal verification, and the assessments are not regularly verified. There is insufficient feedback on verification to assessors. There are too few qualified internal verifiers.