

INSPECTION REPORT

Huddersfield Textile Training Limited

14 August 2001



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and in New Deal options. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

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.

Inadequate provision

A provider's provision will normally be deemed to be less than adequate where

- one third or more of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas and New Deal options are judged less than satisfactory, or
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. The overall judgement as to whether the provision is adequate or inadequate is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

SUMMARY

The provider

Huddersfield Textile Training Limited is an employer-led training organisation based in Huddersfield. It has 74 member companies and primarily provides training for textile and clothing manufacturers. The inspection covered work-based learning for 111 young people in textile manufacturing, business administration and customer services and warehousing. At the time of inspection, Huddersfield Textile Training also has a small number of learners on Foundation for Work and New Deal training, but not enough to inspect.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Work-based learning in business administration is good, in customer services and warehousing and manufacturing it is satisfactory. Huddersfield Textile Training's leadership and management are good.

Work-based learning for young people

Overall, Huddersfield Textile Training has poor retention and achievement rates. There are good resources for off-the-job training. Learners obtain useful additional qualifications and their achievements are celebrated. Work-based learning in manufacturing is satisfactory. A good proportion of learners achieve useful additional qualifications. There is insufficient identification of learners' additional support needs and individual learning plans are inadequate. Some training lacks structure and learners make slow progress with their national vocational qualification (NVQ). Training in business administration is good. There is effective individual tuition. Assessment practices are good. In customer service and warehousing, most learners are found permanent employment and receive good support from their employers. However, on-the-job training, for many of these learners, is poorly planned and the key skills training and assessment is not integrated with the vocational training. Retention and achievement in NVQ training has improved over the past three years.

Leadership and management

The staff appraisal and training systems are well established and effective. There is clear strategic planning, which involves all staff. HTT has good local, regional and national links with external organisations. Managers make effective use of data and the internal audit system is comprehensive. However, the quality assurance system is not implemented consistently. There are some good initiatives to attract under-represented groups, but there is poor awareness of equal opportunities among some learners and employers. Overall, there is insufficient planning of on-the-job training.

The internal verification system is thorough and effective.

GRADES

Engineering, technology & manufacturing	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Business administration, management & professional	2
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

Retailing, customer service & transportation	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Leadership and management	2
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	3

KEY STRENGTHS

- excellent off-the-job training resources
- effective links with employers
- good achievement of additional qualifications
- thorough internal verification
- effective staff development system
- clear strategic planning process
- good initiatives to attract under-represented groups
- effective internal audits

KEY WEAKNESSES

- insufficient identification of additional support needs
- poor retention and achievement rates on most foundation modern apprenticeship programmes
- insufficient planning of on-the-job training
- some poor equal opportunities awareness
- inconsistent implementation of quality assurance system

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more effective induction
- better arrangements for key skills training
- more effective use of review documents
- more active promotion of equal opportunities
- more effective use of learners' feedback

THE PROVIDER AND ITS CONTEXT

1. Huddersfield Textile Training Limited (HTT) is an employer-led training organisation based in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. It was formed by the current chief executive in 1976 to meet the training needs of local textile manufacturers. A board of directors comprising representatives from member companies controls HTT. At the time of its formation HTT had seven member companies. It has expanded significantly since then and now has 74 member companies. In January 1998, the Huddersfield and District Textile Training Co Ltd was formed, with HTT as a subsidiary company. In May 1998, Clothing Group Training, which had been formed by a group of clothing manufacturers, was incorporated into HTT. In February 1998, HTT was recognised as a Textile Centre of Excellence by the regional development agency Yorkshire Forward, which gave financial support to HTT from its skills development fund. HTT currently employs 27 members of staff. Most training takes place at work, with off-the-job training at HTT's training centre at a subcontracted college. There are 111 learners in the inspected areas.

2. Training at HTT is funded through a contract with the West Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). In June 2001 unemployment in the Huddersfield travel to work area was 3.5 per cent, compared with 3.9 per cent for the Yorkshire and Humberside region and 3 per cent in England as a whole. Huddersfield has a significant minority ethnic community which accounts for 8.9 per cent of the population, compared with 4.4 per cent for the Yorkshire and the Humber region and 6.2 per cent nationally. In September 2000, the proportion of school leavers in Calderdale and Kirklees achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 44 per cent, below the national average of 49.2 per cent.

THE INSPECTION

3. A team of six inspectors spent a total of 22 days at HTT during August 2001. Inspectors interviewed 42 learners, conducted interviews with HTT's staff, visited 22 employers and interviewed 25 workplace supervisors. Inspectors observed training and assessment sessions and learners' progress reviews. They examined a range of documents including learner's portfolios of evidence, learners' records, HTT plans, policies and procedures, promotional literature and reports from external verifiers. Inspectors also studied HTT's self-assessment report and data about learners' retention and achievement rates.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Total	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	6

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	90	3

4. HTT offers manufacturing qualifications to local textile and garment manufacturing companies. At the time of inspection there were 90 learners, of whom 42 were on advanced modern apprenticeships in textiles, 44 were on foundation modern apprenticeships in textiles and four were taking NVQs in performing manufacturing operations. The learners are taking NVQs in performing manufacturing operations, engineering maintenance and manufacturing textiles. Their work involves a wide variety of textile operations including carding, spinning, weaving and dying and specialised areas such as card-clothing manufacture. Two learners are in work placements at the HTT training centre, while the others are employed in 32 small to medium-sized textile companies. Identified members of HTT's staff are responsible for the recruitment and placement of learners, before the learners start training, though some learners have been employed for some time before they start training with HTT. Learners are given an individual induction by their assessor in addition to the employer's own induction. They receive an additional briefing about their NVQ when they start the qualification. Most advanced modern apprentices attend off-the-job training at a subcontracted local college of further education, or training at HTT's premises given by staff from a college. Ten of the foundation modern apprentices attend a basic textile training course at HTT's training centre for half a day each week for nine months. All learners are offered courses in basic health and safety and first aid at HTT's training centre. HTT has 13 qualified staff who provide the training and assessment and five members of staff are also internal verifiers. Most assessments take place at employers' premises, though where this is not practical, assessments are carried out at the training centre. Two employers have qualified assessors, who carry out assessments for six learners. Most learners receive a formal progress review every three months. All learners are given feedback after each assessment visit.

HUDDERSFIELD TEXTILE TRAINING LIMITED

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of inspection.

Work-based learning for young people										
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started			40		36		56		0	
Still in training			0	0	9	25	35	62	0	0
FMA framework completed			13	32	3	8	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed			24	60	12	33	2	4	0	0
Left without completing the framework			27	68	24	67	21	38	0	0

Work-based learning for young people										
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started	34		14		30		20		0	
Still in training	1	3	5	36	18	60	18	90	0	0
AMA framework completed	15	44	1	7	2	7	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed	2	6	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 3 completed	15	44	1	7	2	7	0	0	0	0
Left without completing the framework	18	53	8	57	10	33	2	10	0	0

NVQ Training										
NVQ Training										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started	98		94		13		14		0	
Still in training	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	29	0	0
Individual learning plan completed	48	49	51	54	11	85	9	64	0	0
Left without completing individual learning plan	50	51	43	46	2	15	1	7	0	0
NVQ level 1 completed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed	46	47	46	49	4	31	2	14	0	0
NVQ level 3 completed	0	0	5	5	7	54	7	50	0	0
NVQ level 4 completed	2	2	3	3	7	54	7	50	0	0

STRENGTHS

- excellent off-the-job training resources
- effective links with subcontractors
- good links with employers
- good achievement of additional qualifications
- good celebration of learners' successes
- thorough internal verification
- good retention and achievement rates on NVQ training

WEAKNESSES

- inadequate individual learning plans
- insufficient identification of additional support needs
- insufficiently structured training for some learners
- slow progress with NVQs for some learners
- weak review process
- low retention and achievement of frameworks for modern apprentices

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better arrangements for key skills training
- more structured and consistent induction and initial assessment
- more control over portfolios by learners

5. HTT has a training centre which provides excellent accommodation and a high standard of specialist equipment. The facilities include a technical workshop with good industrial machinery for carding, spinning and weaving. There is also a good testing laboratory and a complete workshop for sewn products. The range of equipment HTT purchased was based on detailed consultation with local employers and the further education college which provides most off-the-job training. The training centre has specialist facilities which complement those at a local college. The workshops are clean, tidy and well maintained and are an excellent learning environment. There are several seminar rooms, which are also very well equipped. The learners also have access to a well-equipped computer suite to work towards their key skills qualifications. The off-the-job training is carried out by experienced staff who have excellent knowledge and expertise across all aspects of the textile industry. Some advanced modern apprentices

attend a national certificate course which is run by a local college at the HTT training centre. Other learners attend local colleges or training providers who are able to offer specialised training such as dyeing and engineering as well as higher vocational qualifications. These qualifications are highly regarded by the industry, but sometimes they take precedence over the NVQ training. A quarter of the foundation modern apprentices attend a basic textile training course for half a day each week over a nine-month period.

6. HTT has good links with employers. Employers have a very high regard for HTT as a specialist training provider. Many employers use the training centre for training courses such as health and safety and supervisor training as well as the modern apprenticeship programmes. Working relationships between employers and staff at HTT are very effective and HTT staff are well respected for their knowledge and expertise. When assessors visit learners in the workplace they always meet employers to discuss their learners' progress. When problems occur, such as redundancy, HTT works with employers to find new positions for the learners. Where employers cannot offer the range of work experience required for the NVQ, learners attend the training centre or another employer to develop appropriate skills. Employers appreciate the additional qualifications offered by HTT as part of the modern apprenticeship training, which include national and higher national certificates in textiles. Nearly all learners complete a basic health and safety course, and some take first aid, computer literacy and information technology courses as well. HTT celebrates learners' success effectively. There is a well-established annual awards ceremony to which all learners who have achieved qualifications are invited, along with their employers and parents. There is a learner of the year award for each training programme. All learners have official photographs taken, and HTT displays photographs of award winners in the training centre.

7. There is a thorough internal verification system. Internal verifiers have a clear annual plan for every assessor and learner. The two work-based assessors are included in the plan and given additional support by the internal verifiers. Learners' work is internally verified either through checking of their portfolios or through observation of assessments and questioning of the learners. Internal verifiers check a sample of the different types of evidence used in the portfolios. There are quarterly meetings between the assessors and verifiers to discuss any problems raised by the awarding body or through internal verification.

8. HTT does not use initial assessment to identify learners' additional support needs. One learner who said that he is dyslexic has not received any additional support and the assessor was unaware that this learner might need help. Assessors provide some additional support if they identify any problems during the training. HTT has developed questionnaires to initially assess learners' key skills. However, these are used when the learners start their key skills work, rather than when they begin training.

9. Individual learning plans are inadequate and are mainly used as audit documents for the local LSC. Individual learning plans do not specify what training the learners will

receive, when it will be carried out and where it will take place. The plans lack detail and are sometimes incomplete. For example, one plan stated that the learner had previously achieved an NVQ at level 2, but did not record what vocational area the NVQ was in and when it was achieved. Nor do the individual learning plans record additional qualifications that are planned or completed. Target dates for achievement for the units of the NVQ and key skills are the same as the completion date for the whole modern apprenticeship framework. There are no individual targets for different parts of the framework.

10. Training for some learners is not planned or structured. For example, three-quarters of foundation modern apprentices do not receive any structured off-the-job training. They have insufficient training materials to learn the theory relating to their practical work. HTT expects most foundation modern apprentices to do their own research to learn the background knowledge required for the NVQ. However, the learners are not routinely given time for this aspect of their training. In general, the training given by employers is not planned or structured. Most learners develop their practical skills by working alongside an experienced colleague. Few learners learn from experienced trainers who can train them to specific levels of skill and competence. On-the-job training is governed by employers' business requirements and does not always match the requirements of the NVQ.

11. Many learners experience significant delays in starting work on their NVQ and then make slow progress in completing it. Although they attend off-the-job training, most learners do not start their NVQ work until six months after starting their training. Two learners did not start until 11 and 18 months after they entered training. On the advanced modern apprenticeship training programme, almost half the learners inspectors interviewed waited between 12 and 21 months to start their NVQ and did not collect evidence from their workplace during this period. Once learners start on the NVQ there is insufficient planning of assessments by many assessors. Only one assessor gives the learners a clear overall plan for proposed visits and assessments. Other assessors do not plan regular visits or set challenging targets for the learners. Most assessors keep all the assessment records, so learners do not know what they have achieved and what they still need to do. Learners do not take full responsibility for completing their portfolios, as the assessors cross-reference the evidence to meet the NVQ requirements.

12. The progress review processes used by HTT are poor. Learners receive a review and feedback after each assessment visit, but these are not always frequent enough. Although learners sign the review report they are not given a copy and some of them do not remember what they have to do before the next visit. A few learners have not been visited or had their progress reviewed regularly and have waited up to five months between visits, which are supposed to take place every three months. Review documents contain bland statements about the learner's progress and some are incomplete. Most reviews are conducted between the learner and assessor without the learner's workplace supervisor being present. However, some supervisors add their comments to the form after the review is completed. Some learners and employers are

unclear about the learner's progress. Many learners have only recently started their key skills training, as there was a delay in receiving the relevant materials from the awarding body. The assessors are now starting to develop training materials to meet the new key skills requirements.

13. HTT is the largest provider of textile modern apprenticeships in England, and is currently the only organisation whose learners have completed the foundation modern apprenticeship. However, the retention and achievement rates on the advanced and foundation modern apprenticeships are poor. The retention rates for foundation modern apprentices starting between 1998 and 2001 are low. Between 1998 and 2001, 55 per cent of starters left without completing their framework. NVQ achievement is also low among foundation modern apprentices. Nationally over 80 per cent of all advanced modern apprentices who have completed their framework are from HTT. The completion rate for advanced modern apprenticeships between 1997 and 2000 was 20 per cent. Over the same period, 46 per cent of learners left early without completing their framework. Over a third of those starting in 1999-2000 have already left without completing their apprenticeship framework. Retention and achievement rates on NVQ training have improved over the last three years and are good.

Good Practice

One assessor used a digital camera to take photographs of a learner's work during an individual training session. The learner made good use of these photographs as evidence in his portfolio.

Business administration, management & professional**Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	10	2

14. HTT offers modern apprenticeship training in administration, comprising NVQs in administration at levels 2 and 3 and key skills qualifications at levels 1, 2 and 3. Training lasts for up to two years. At the time of inspection there were four foundation modern apprentices and six advanced modern apprentices. All learners are employed. Most work in administrative posts in local textile manufacturing companies. Other employers include an Internet design company and a car sales company. Two learners work at HTT. Learners are recruited to fill advertised vacancies. HTT's staff interview the applicants and match them to an appropriate employer. Employers then interview and select the most suitable applicant. Any potential learner with less than 4 GCSEs at grade C and above is asked to carry out an assessment. HTT uses the results of this to establish the correct level of training for the learner. There is a one-day induction at the HTT training centre which covers the training regulations. Learners also receive a workplace induction from their employer, and an individual NVQ induction with their assessor. In addition to the individual learning plan, all learners have a personal development plan, which gives details of additional training they will receive related to their job. Additional training may include telephone techniques, reception duties or using computers. Most foundation modern apprentices attend the HTT training centre every week for theory and computer training. Advanced modern apprentices and foundation modern apprentices who are unable to attend the training centre due to pressure of work, have individual training in the workplace. HTT's staff visit learners at work to carry out assessments and to review progress.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of inspection.

Work-based learning for young people										
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started			4		7		3		0	
Still in training			0	0	2	29	2	67	0	0
FMA framework completed			1	25	2	29	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed			1	25	2	29	0	0	0	0
Left without completing the framework			3	75	3	43	1	33	0	0

Work-based learning for young people										
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started	8		3		4		4		0	
Still in training	0	0	1	33	1	25	4	100	0	0
AMA framework completed	4	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed	4	50	1	33	0	0	3	75	0	0
NVQ level 3 completed	3	38	1	33	1	25	1	25	0	0
Left without completing the framework	4	50	2	67	2	50	0	0	0	0

NVQ Training										
NVQ Training										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started	8		3		1					
Still in training	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Individual learning plan completed	5	62	2	67	0	0				
Left without completing individual learning plan	3	38	1	33	1	100				
NVQ level 1 completed	0	0	0	0	0	0				
NVQ level 2 completed	5	62	1	33	0	0				

STRENGTHS

- effective individual training
- good assessment practices
- wide range of additional qualifications
- good training resources
- effective internal verification

WEAKNESSES

- poor achievement of apprenticeship frameworks
- poor use of target-setting

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better induction materials
- clearer understanding of framework requirements by learners

15. HTT's staff hold regular individual training sessions in the training centre and in the workplaces. Theory training in the training centre is good, with small groups of three or four learners being taught by two trainers. The trainers provide additional telephone support, followed up by training when they next visit learners at work. HTT staff take laptop computers to learners who do not have access to the appropriate computer resources for their NVQ or key skills work. For example, one learner received training in word processing at the training centre and on a laptop computer at work. Her employer was so impressed with the improvement in her computer skills that he installed the software in the office, so the learner can improve general office routines, such as mailing all of the customers on the company's database. On-the-job training is satisfactory.

16. HTT's staff are well qualified and experienced in all aspects of their work. They have appropriate vocational and teaching qualifications. One member of staff is qualified to level 4 in management and two have internal verifier qualifications. Two are qualified key skills assessors and a third is working towards this qualification. Key skills training is effective. The trainer in one session gave practical demonstrations of how to measure areas and volume. Learners used a tape measure to work out the area and volume of the office space. The training session was interesting and informative for learners. The learners produced evidence for both their key skills qualification and their NVQ.

17. Assessors encourage learners to take responsibility for their portfolios of evidence. Learners complete their own reference sheets, and assessors show them how to cross-reference one piece of evidence for as many units as possible. Assessors complete detailed and thorough records of workplace observations. One assessor usefully encouraged a learner to keep 'mistakes' as valuable evidence of examples of work that had been checked. Learners are able to take additional qualifications which are appropriate to their roles. In addition to basic health and safety and first aid, learners can take computing qualifications. Learners wishing to take book-keeping or shorthand courses receive funding to attend a local college of further education. Some learners have gained a computing qualification by using a distance learning programme on CD-ROM. This has enabled learners to work at their own pace at the training centre, at work or at home. HTT encourages learners to progress to higher level qualifications. For example, one learner is now taking a higher national certificate in business and finance.

18. HTT has a well-equipped training suite. There are two separate suites of computers, with up-to-date software, which meets industry standards. All learners have access to the Internet and to training materials, including for key skills, on HTT's computer network. Learners can also use other related equipment. There is a library of training materials for NVQs and key skills to which all learners have access. HTT's laptop computers also have key skills training materials installed.

19. Internal verification is effective and thorough. HTT has a six-month schedule of work placement visits and evidence sampling. This covers all assessors and all types of HTT's training. The internal verifier ensures that examples of all assessment methods and a proportion of decisions are checked. This includes assessment by observation, by oral questioning and by examining examples of learners' work. Verifiers also observe assessors in the workplace with learners and give written reports on each assessor's performance.

20. Achievement of the apprenticeship framework is poor. Fifteen foundation modern apprentices have started the programme in the last four years. Four are still in training. Of the remainder, only 27 per cent completed the apprenticeship framework. In the same period, 19 advanced modern apprentices have started training. Five are still in training. Of the remainder, only 29 per cent completed the apprenticeship framework. Recently, five learners have satisfactorily completed their key skills portfolio but they will not sit the key skills assessment tests until November.

21. Most individual learning plans have the same target dates recorded for each NVQ unit and for completion of key skills work. While assessors do set targets at progress reviews for learners to complete tasks by the next visit, the targets do not relate to individual units or groups of units for learners' qualifications. Learners do not remember their induction well. At induction learners are mainly given written notes, with little use made of graphics, interactive sessions or group activities. Learners know that they are on NVQ training, and understand that they are also working towards key skills awards. However they are confused as to whether they are foundation or advanced modern apprentices and do not understand the requirements of each modern apprenticeship framework. Initial assessment and basic skills support are satisfactory.

Good Practice

A key skills project was designed for one learner who is transferring from a foundation modern apprenticeship in administration to an advanced modern apprenticeship in manufacturing following promotion at work. The project was based on feedback from learners. The learner completed it at work.

Retailing, customer service & transportation**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	11	3

22. HTT offers training in customer services and warehousing. At the time of inspection there were 11 learners taking these courses. Seven of them were taking foundation modern apprenticeships in warehousing. The remaining learner was taking a level 3 NVQ in customer service. Most learners are initially found work placements by HTT and become full-time employees during their training. Others are referred directly to employers by the careers service and, once employed, come to HTT for their training. All current learners are in full-time employment. The employers vary in size and type. A number are small family-run businesses, while others are much larger organisations. The distribution centres where the warehousing learners are employed include manufacturing, storage, retailing and recycling centres all within the textile industry. Learners may start training at any time during the year. Their employers provide training on the job. Two members of HTT's staff are assessors and two act as internal verifiers. HTT's staff visit the learners every month to conduct assessments. Assessment observations and feedback are recorded and kept in the learners' portfolios. In addition HTT's staff visit learners every three months for a formal progress review.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of inspection.

Work-based learning for young people										
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started			6		8		11		0	
Still in training			0	0	3	38	7	64	0	0
FMA framework completed			3	50	1	12	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed			4	67	1	12	2	18	0	0
Left without completing the framework			3	50	4	50	4	36	0	0

Work-based learning for young people										
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started			2		1		2		0	
Still in training			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AMA framework completed			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 3 completed			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Left without completing the framework			2	100	1	100	2	100	0	0

NVQ Training										
NVQ Training										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started	17		14		1		2		0	
Still in training	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	50	0	0
Individual learning plan completed	12	71	12	86	0	0	0	0	0	0
Left without completing individual learning plan	5	29	2	14	1	100	1	50	0	0
NVQ level 1 completed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed	9	53	12	86	0	0	0	0	0	0
NVQ level 3 completed	3	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

STRENGTHS

- good work placements
- good range of additional qualifications
- good progression into employment
- good celebration of achievements

WEAKNESSES

- poor retention and achievement rates
- inadequate integration of key skills training with NVQ training
- inadequately planned on-the-job training

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more standardised assessment practices
- more effective induction
- more detailed recording of evidence for warehousing learners
- more effective use of review documents

23. HTT's learners have good work placements with good employers. The work placements are with a wide range of companies in the textile industry. Learners are employed in areas which match the training and assessment requirements of their NVQ. This gives learners good and varied opportunities to gather evidence towards their qualifications from their work. All training is on the job and is of a good quality. Employers are enthusiastic about the learners' qualifications and value the NVQ. Learners are highly motivated and enthusiastic. They can take a good range of additional qualifications. All warehousing learners are offered additional qualifications which complement their NVQ. These include basic health and safety, first aid at work and a forklift truck certificate. Employers and learners find these additional qualifications to be of great benefit in the workplace. A high proportion of learners takes these additional qualifications and a number of employers have sent other members of staff for this training as private clients.

24. A high proportion of learners progress into employment. HTT has been successful in finding full-time employment for all learners in this occupational area. HTT celebrates learners' achievements and all learners who achieve a qualification receive their certificates at an award ceremony. HTT takes photographs of the ceremony and displays them at the training centre. Learners who have recently achieved their NVQs talk with great enthusiasm about the awards ceremony.

25. Retention and achievement rates are poor. The numbers of learners are small and over the last three years there have only been five advanced modern apprentices. All five have left early with no qualifications. On the foundation modern apprenticeship over the last two years there has been a drop in the proportion achieving the framework from 50 per cent to 12 per cent. Retention and achievement rates are improving and all learners still in training are making satisfactory progress. The number of learners starting NVQ training has dropped dramatically.

26. There is inadequate integration of key skills training with the vocational training and slow progress in achieving the qualifications. Some learners have completed their NVQ but are just starting to collect evidence towards key skills. A number of learners lack motivation and question the relevance and necessity of key skills to their employment. There is insufficient planning of on-the-job training although informal discussions take place. The approach to on-the-job training depends solely on the employer and varies from company to company. Where training has been inadequately planned, learners' needs are not identified until a learner has difficulty completing an assessment. HTT

then provides additional support. In many cases progress reviews are used to record training completed, but not as an opportunity to plan future training. Assessors in both customer services and warehousing do not inform the employers in any detail about the NVQ. Some employers are unaware of the requirements of the qualifications and modern apprenticeship framework.

27. In a number of learners' portfolios there is insufficient evidence to cover all of the criteria in the health and safety unit of their NVQ. The evidence missing covers harassment in the workplace, threats from terrorism and abusive and violent behaviour. Learners confirm this has been covered verbally but there is no evidence of when this took place, or in how much detail. Most of the evidence in the portfolios is difficult to cross-reference. Witness testimonies are used, but the testimonies in each portfolio are the same, with the only differences being the headed paper and the employers' signature. These testimonies do not contain enough detail. Portfolios do not contain a broad enough range of evidence.

28. Regular assessor and verifier meetings take place but there is inadequate standardisation of practice in this occupational area. There are inconsistencies and some poor recording of progress reviews and assessment observations. Most learners receive an individual induction at work when they start their training. They are told about the appeals procedure, equal opportunities and the role of the internal verifier. This information does not have a lasting effect. Learners remember the induction as a form-filling exercise. They are not able to recall details of the appeals procedure or equal opportunities matters in any detail.

29. Qualified staff visit the learners in their workplaces on a regular basis to monitor progress and assess the learners' competence. In most cases, these visits occur every month. For the customer services learners these visits are recorded in detail using review feedback forms. The assessor keeps this record at the training centre, in the learners' personal files. The learners have a clear understanding their progress and what evidence is required to complete the next three units of their NVQ. The warehousing review feedback documents lack detail and some warehousing learners are not fully aware of their progress towards their NVQ. HTT fails to give learners copies of review documents. All records are kept at HTT's premises.

Good Practice

All learners are offered basic lift truck training as an additional qualification. This enables them to achieve a lift truck certificate. A wide variety of different types of lift truck is used by the employers. To ensure learners gain the most benefit from their training they are offered specific familiarisation training on their own lift trucks at work. This includes training in how to use any special attachments. This additional training helps to improve learners' confidence at the same time as developing additional vocational skills.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

30. Huddersfield & District Textile Training (HDTT) is a limited company with a board of directors comprising representatives from its 74 member companies. HTT is a subsidiary company of HDTT. In May 1998, Clothing Group Training, which had been formed by a group of clothing manufacturers, was incorporated into HTT. In February 2000 HTT was recognised as a Textile Centre of Excellence by the regional development agency for Yorkshire and the Humber. HTT currently has 27 staff. HTT has policies and procedures for equal opportunities and quality assurance. It is accredited with ISO 9002, an international quality assurance standard. HTT's current self-assessment report is its first. Work started on the report's preparation in 1998, and after wide consultation and several updates, it was submitted to the local LSC in May 2001.

STRENGTHS

- effective staff development system
- clear strategic planning process
- good links with external organisations and subcontractors
- effective use of data as a basis for management decisions
- good access to training centre
- good initiatives to attract under-represented groups
- effective internal audit systems
- effective use of employers' feedback

WEAKNESSES

- some poor planning of on-the-job training
- some poor equal opportunities awareness among some learners and employers
- inconsistent implementation of quality assurance system

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more comprehensive personnel policies and procedures
- better planning of staff training
- more promotion of equal opportunities
- better recording and monitoring of action points
- more effective use of learners' feedback

31. HTT has an effective staff appraisal and training system. The board appraises the chief executive, following the presentation of his annual report. Other staff have an annual appraisal. Personal development plans are produced for each member of staff, detailing their personal training needs for the coming year. Training for managers is

planned by the chief executive and managers make arrangements to meet the training needs of their staff. HTT keeps accurate records of staff training. Requests for training have always been granted. An annual report on training is produced and staff complete questionnaires after each training course they attend to evaluate the effectiveness of training. However, the overall planning of staff training is not always adequate to ensure that HTT's corporate training needs are met. The staff appraisal system works well, but there is no written procedure for the system. All staff's job descriptions were reviewed in 1998, but the chief executive's job description was last updated in 1992 and is for a different post to that which he currently holds. HTT's procedures for the recruitment and appointment of staff are incomplete.

32. HTT's strategic planning process is clear and well established. An annual business plan has been produced every year for over a decade. The plan clearly states the company and departmental strategic objectives. It identifies who is responsible for achieving the objective, as well as the targets and indicators to be used in monitoring progress. The structure of the business plan has recently been improved following a review of its effectiveness by the board. All staff are involved in producing the business plan. Departmental objectives are agreed by departmental managers and staff. These are then discussed at management meetings between the chief executive and his managers, before they agree HTT's strategic objectives. HTT summarises its progress in achieving the objectives in the business plan in a comprehensive annual report. This report is then used as a basis for the following year's planning.

33. Links with external organisations and subcontractors are good. The company works closely with a number of regional and national organisations in the textile trade. Until the formation of the LSCs, two HTT directors were on the board of Calderdale and Kirklees Training and Enterprise Council (TEC). One of these directors is now on the board of the West Yorkshire LSC. HTT maintains good formal and informal links with its main subcontractor, a further education college. A member of HTT's staff sits on two committees at this college, which is used by most of HTT's learners. This has resulted in a joint approach to the purchase of expensive resources, with equipment at HTT complementing, rather than duplicating, that at the college. The level of collaboration between the two organisations is such that in 2000-01 college staff taught the first year training of the national certificate in textiles at the HTT training centre.

34. HTT makes effective use of data in its decision-making. Managers receive regular statistical reports on levels of recruitment and other performance indicators. HTT analyses data to identify trends and areas of potential concern. Staff in departments set their own targets which are agreed with, and monitored by, their managers. However, staff are not always set sufficiently demanding targets to have a direct impact on the learners' experience. The planning of on-the-job training for many learners is not satisfactory. In these cases, on-the-job training is carried out to cover employers' production requirements, and does not necessarily meet the assessment needs of the NVQ. In many companies there is no formal planning of on-the-job training and the learners' experience varies depending on the approach taken by the employer. It is only when learners have difficulty with an assessment that HTT identifies their additional

needs.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

35. HTT's equal opportunities policy was reviewed in 2000 to take account of changes in legislation. Following the review, all staff attended an equal opportunities awareness-raising course. The policy covers recruitment, selection, complaints and grievance procedures and is issued to all learners during their induction. HTT's training centre has good facilities and easy access for people with restricted mobility. Sixty-eight per cent of learners are male, 32 per cent are female, 5 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and 6 per cent have disabilities. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups is significantly below that of the local population.

36. HTT has introduced some good measures to encourage participation by learners from under-represented groups. Staff have visited local girls' schools to encourage more women into the textile industry. They have also visited Asian community groups, in an attempt to increase the number of learners from minority ethnic groups. Press releases celebrating the successes of learners include details of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds. Health and safety information is available in different languages for learners whose first language is not English. HTT has previously run a successful foundation for work course which offered learners the opportunity to sample different types of work in the textile industry. Over a third of these learners were from minority ethnic groups. Of the 59 learners who have completed this course, 25 per cent have gone on to foundation or advanced modern apprenticeships and 13 per cent into further education. One potential learner from a minority ethnic background, who felt unable to attend the training centre, was interviewed at home. A number of HTT's learners have reached the age of 25 before completing their training programme, so were no longer eligible for funding. However, they are still in training and HTT is allowing them to complete their qualifications and training, at no cost to the learners.

37. The equal opportunities policy and the grievance procedure are referred to during learners' induction but there is insufficient promotion of equal opportunities both in the training centre and in the workplaces. Equal opportunities is mentioned during progress reviews but this is restricted to ensuring that assessment is fair and objective. There is no recorded equal opportunities training for learners after induction, and they have little understanding of equal opportunities. Many employers have their own equal opportunities policies and HTT asks about their policy on disability during the employer vetting process. However, as identified in the self-assessment report, there is insufficient further monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace. HTT's promotional materials are not available in different languages and many do not contain its equal opportunities statement. HTT collects data about participation in its training, but although this is analysed, it is not used systematically to deal with any equal opportunities concerns. Nor is there any formal equal opportunities monitoring when appointing staff.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

38. HTT has a clear quality assurance policy. It has a well-established system for internally checking the quality of work-based learning. Quality assurance guidelines are available to all staff on HTT's computer network. The quality assurance system is well established and covers marketing, recruitment and selection of learners, arrangements for work placements and company vetting, learners' induction, health and safety matters, assessment for NVQs, progress monitoring and review and arrangements for learning when learners leave or transfer to another training programme. HTT conducts internal audits regularly to ensure that procedures are being followed. All staff are trained to carry out internal audits. There is an annual schedule to ensure that all procedures are checked at different times by different members of staff. The results of internal audits are fully recorded and any non-compliance reported. ISO 9002 is an agenda item for staff meetings. Staff involvement in the quality assurance process reinforces their understanding of the procedures. The quality assurance procedures have recently been extended to include self-assessment and the action-planning process, but it is too early to judge the effectiveness of this change. Improvements to training have been made as result of internal audits. For example, an audit of the progress monitoring and review documents showed that assessors were not consistently completing all sections of the form. This was discussed at a team meeting, where assessors agreed to amend the form to make it more meaningful to learners and staff. Staff also check learners' files to ensure that all relevant documents are included, fully completed and up to date. Assessment and internal verification are satisfactory overall.

39. Although the quality assurance procedures manual fully describes the processes, it does not make clear enough the standards to be achieved. For example, one procedure states that progress monitoring and reviews should be carried out regularly, but it does not say how regularly. It does not give any guidelines about the purpose or content of the progress review.

40. There is good use of employers' feedback. The number of employers completing the feedback questionnaire has recently improved and the feedback is generally positive. Employers indicate that they are satisfied with the training programmes and the level of service provided by HTT. Their feedback has led to improvements in provision. Examples include additional technical training for learners in specialist jobs and improvements to first aid courses to bring them up to industrial standards. However, HTT has only recently started to analyse feedback from learners systematically. This weakness was identified in the self-assessment report and has now been addressed. A survey of learners' views has just been completed and HTT has analysed the responses. HTT has also evaluated the effectiveness of the survey and already has plans to make improvements.

41. HTT does not implement its quality assurance procedures uniformly across the different occupational areas. Staff hold regular meetings at which they discuss quality assurance. The assessors' steering group meetings focus on the assessment and verification processes. Staff from the occupational areas attend these meetings to exchange information, share good practice and encourage standardisation. Poor

attendance at these meetings by some staff was identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report. Minutes of the meetings are circulated to all staff but action points are not systematically recorded and monitored. Although HTT now has service level agreements with all of its subcontractors, there is insufficient monitoring of the performance of subcontractors against these standards.

42. Work on HTT's current self-assessment report started early in 1998. Production of the report involved consultation with the occupational training teams and the local TEC. Amendments were made to the draft report during 1999 and in 2000 draft action plans were developed. The report was further amended and then submitted to the LSC in May 2001. The action plan addresses both strengths and weaknesses, but does not give specific target dates. An updated action plan was produced during the inspection, showing progress. The report accurately identified some of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors, but failed to identify some significant weaknesses. Some of the strengths identified in the self-assessment report were found to be no more than normal practice. Some of the weaknesses described in the report have already been rectified.

43. All occupational areas have suitably qualified assessors and assessment practices are generally good. In retailing and customer services, however, assessment practices are not standardised, even though there are regular meetings of assessors and internal verifiers. Several staff are qualified key skills assessors and others are taking this qualification. Internal verification is satisfactory overall, and in manufacturing and business administration is good.

Good Practice

HTT took part in an initiative entitled 'Marching Ahead'. The aim was to engage disaffected young people in learning, particularly those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Of the 13 young people who started this programme with HTT, three went into jobs without completing their training, three later joined foundation or advanced modern apprenticeship programmes and seven went into further education. One of the modern apprentices was so successful that he became HTT's learner of the year.