

INSPECTION REPORT

Training Services 2000 Ltd

13 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

Training Services 2000 Ltd is a private training company based in Derby which provides training for local engineering and other companies. It currently provides work-based learning for 49 young people through its contract with South Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council. There are four advanced modern apprentices and four foundation modern apprentices in business administration with 25 advanced modern apprentices, eight foundation modern apprentices and eight national vocational qualification (NVQ) learners in engineering. Local companies in the Derby area employ 48 of the 49 learners.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is inadequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Work-based learning in both administration and engineering is satisfactory. The leadership and management of Training Services 2000 Ltd is unsatisfactory.

Work-based learning for young people

Learners in engineering benefit from good employers who take the time and provide the resources to develop learners' skills in the workplace. In the Training Services 2000 Ltd subcontracted colleges and training centres, the training and assessment arrangements for all the qualification requirements are satisfactory. However, learners' progress reviews are poorly recorded and there is insufficient assessment by direct observation in the workplace. Business administration training is satisfactory. Learners are making good progress towards completing the requirements of individual learning plans and off-the-job training is good. Learners' progress reviews are not sufficiently focused on the qualification and targets are not set for progression. Retention rates are good across all areas of learning.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of Training Services 2000 Ltd is not satisfactory. Pastoral support for learners is effective and appreciated by them. However, new procedures introduced by management are not fully established and there are no clear strategies to ensure that they become established. There is insufficient use of available feedback data to influence strategic policies, planning and target-setting and the self-assessment process. There are no structured procedures to establish learning support or key skills needs. Training Services 2000 Ltd has no effective means to monitor employers' promotion of equal opportunities issues. Its ability to identify oppressive and unfair practices is poor. Quality assurance and management

procedures have no structured framework, many procedures are new and untried or not in place.

GRADES

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

Business administration, management & professional	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	4
Quality assurance	4

KEY STRENGTHS

- good level of employers' awareness of engineering NVQ requirements
- good retention and progression rates in all areas of learning
- particularly good achievement of additional qualifications in business administration
- effective monitoring of progress and attendance

KEY WEAKNESSES

- insufficient assessment by direct observation
- weak assessment practices
- insufficient use of data to guide decision-making, action-planning and target-setting
- no clear learning support strategy
- inadequate monitoring of training
- insufficient monitoring of employers equal opportunities at work

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more involvement of employers in learners' progress reviews
- better use of the qualified engineering work-based assessors
- better planned NVQ assessments to include key skills evidence
- wider involvement by all parties in self-assessment process

THE PROVIDER AND ITS CONTEXT

1. Training Services 2000 Ltd (TS 2000) is a newly formed private training company owned by four directors. Since October 2000, TS 2000 has provided government-funded training in engineering, business training and privately funded information technology training. It has a training centre with an information technology workshop and classroom facilities in the centre of Derby. Training takes place either in the workplace, at five subcontractor colleges or in TS 2000's own training centre. It currently provides training for 49 learners, 29 advanced modern apprentices, 13 foundation modern apprentices and seven NVQ learners. Nearly all of its learners were recruited by a previous training company, subsequently replaced by TS 2000. Accurate recruitment and performance data about learners for the period prior to April 2000 was not available.

2. TS 2000 contracts with South Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). It has six full-time staff including four directors who are responsible for the management of the company and the co-ordination of learners' on- and off-the-job training and assessments. The general administration is controlled by two office co-ordinators. In its preparation for inspection TS 2000 prepared a self-assessment report and an action plan.

3. Unemployment in Derby City in June 2001 was 3.7 per cent. This is similar to that of Derbyshire as a whole, but higher than the national average of 3 per cent. Derby has a long history of engineering, mining and manufacturing. However, over the past five years these industries have declined and Derby has developed other employment opportunities in the business and service sectors. Using the 1991 census data, the proportion of the population of Derby from minority ethnic communities, is 9.7 per cent, set against a national proportion of 6.2 per cent. In 2000, the percentage of school leavers in Derby achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 41.3 per cent, compared with the national average of 49.2 per cent. Sixty-six per cent of all school leavers remain in full-time education, 14 per cent enter employment directly from school and 5 per cent enter employment through government-funded training programmes.

THE INSPECTION

4. A team of three inspectors spent a total of 12 days at TS 2000 during August 2001. They interviewed 43 per cent of TS 2000's learners. They examined assessment procedures, subcontracted training agreements, employers' agreements, learners' files and portfolios, staff's qualifications and quality assurance and management arrangements. Inspectors interviewed 12 employers, two of TS 2000's tutors and 21 learners. Fifteen work placements were visited. Eighteen learners' portfolios, including two portfolios from learners who have recently qualified were inspected and 25 progress files were inspected. One assessment and one training session were observed and two of TS 2000's assessors were interviewed. The training session was given a grade 3 by inspectors.

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	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	41	3

5. TS 2000 trains young people on engineering programmes that last for approximately four years. Twenty-five of the learners are advanced modern apprentices and nine are foundation modern apprentices. They train for NVQs in engineering production, engineering maintenance and technical services at levels 2 and 3, as well as key skills and craft qualifications. The remaining seven learners are working towards NVQs only. All but six of the learners started their training with another organisation and transferred to TS 2000 in November 2000. They are employed by engineering companies in Derby and the surrounding area. Learners are recruited either through the careers service or by direct referral to employers through TS 2000's own marketing facility. NVQ training is carried out in the workplace by the learners' supervisors. Training towards the craft qualifications is subcontracted to five colleges in the area. Key skills training is carried out by either the college or TS 2000. Two TS 2000 staff members assess the learners. One assessor is also an internal verifier. Some internal verification work has been subcontracted to another training provider temporarily.

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							10		0	0
Still in training							8	80	0	0
FMA framework completed							2	20	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed							2	20	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							29		0	0
Still in training							25	86	0	0
AMA framework completed							3	10	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed							19	66	0	0
NVQ level 3 completed							19	66	0	0
Left without completing the framework							1	3	0	0

NVQ Training										
NVQ Training										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started							12		0	0
Still in training							7	58	0	0
Individual learning plan completed							4	33	0	0
Left without completing individual learning plan							1	8	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed							11	92	0	0
NVQ level 3 completed							4	33	0	0

STRENGTHS

- wide range of good on-the-job training
- good level of employers' awareness of NVQ requirements
- particularly good workplace evidence available for assessments
- good retention and progression rates

WEAKNESSES

- insufficient assessments by direct observation
- late introduction of changes to qualification requirements
- inadequate recording of learners' progress reviews

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better use of the qualified engineering work-based assessors
- encouragement of employers to prepare written plans for work-based training
- more involvement of employers in learners' progress reviews

6. Most learners have received an induction given by the previous training provider. They were given sufficient further information when they transferred to TS 2000. The learners work in engineering companies which offer good opportunities to learn a wide range of engineering skills, a strength noted in the self-assessment report. Many of the companies are contractors to the aerospace industry and require engineering skills of a high standard. The larger companies plan the on-the-job training to give the learners a period of work in all of the key skills areas. The smaller companies offer a wide range of production or maintenance work. On-the-job training is structured, but there are few written training plans. Many of the supervisors have themselves been trained in traditional apprenticeships and ensure that learners are given the same thorough training which they received themselves. They have a good understanding of the occupational standards. Some have become qualified assessors or have worked towards the qualifications in the past, although none of them are currently assessing the learners. Learners' portfolios of evidence contain strong evidence of their competences and include engineering drawings and photographs. Most of the engineering processes require detailed administrative back-up. This means that there are good records of learners' contributions to individual jobs, authentication that the work has been carried out by the learner and a thorough check by supervisors that it is completed satisfactorily. Witness testimony is widely used and is properly controlled. The qualified assessors do not do enough assessments by direct observation, a weakness that TS 2000 has recognised. All portfolios of evidence contain some examples of observation, but they are less common than the other types of evidence. Some of the records of observed assessments are inadequate.

7. The retention rate of learners is high at 96 per cent. Nine of the learners have achieved all of their qualifications in the 10 months since they transferred to TS 2000. The other learners are making good progress and are on target to complete their training by the planned date. There is a sense of urgency on the part of staff, learners and employers to complete the training without undue delay. Some learners have recently been told that they have to achieve further units in order to meet revised framework requirements. This information is not recorded in their individual learning plans. Some learners and employers are confused by the need for further evidence or cross-referencing of existing evidence at level 2 NVQ. They have almost completed the level 3 NVQ, which they believed would complete the framework. Each learner's progress is reviewed at intervals of about six weeks. The progress review meetings, held at their workplace, help the learners to understand which evidence they still need to collect. It is not easy to monitor a learner's progress by examining the progress review records. Progress review records do not clearly identify progress made since previous reviews.

Actions to be completed by the next review are not sufficiently specific. Workplace supervisors are normally consulted at the same time as the progress review meetings, but they rarely attend the progress review meetings with the trainer and the learner. The opportunity to jointly identify actions for the next period of training is often lost.

Good Practice

One training provider prepared a whiteboard with a plan showing which area of the company each of its learners would work in over the next three months. The plan was shown to all learners and supervisors and ensured that each learner gained wide experience. The whiteboard also included a monitoring sheet showing the qualification progression of each learner. This method was approved of by learners and supervisors who saw this as a good motivator for progress.

Poor Practice

TS 2000 do not ensure that all new learners receive a full induction when they start their training. One learner started with TS 2000 in November 2000. He did not receive the health and safety component of his TS 2000 induction until June 2001, although he was given health and safety training by his employer.

Business administration, management & professional**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	8	3

8. TS 2000 offers foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships in business administration. Learners are recruited either through the careers service, by direct referral from employers, or as a result of TS 2000's marketing activities. They are employed by local companies. Of the eight learners in business administration, five are advanced and three are foundation modern apprentices. Off-the-job training is given at TS 2000's training centre one day a week. Foundation modern apprentices are expected to complete their individual learning plans in 12 months and advanced modern apprentices in 18 months. All learners study for a range of additional qualifications. Assessment and verification is completed by qualified members of staff. Learners' progress reviews take place every six to eight weeks in the workplace.

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							5		0	0
Still in training							3	60	0	0
FMA framework completed							2	40	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed							2	40	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							7		0	0
Still in training							5	71	0	0
AMA framework completed							2	29	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed							1	14	0	0
NVQ level 3 completed							1	14	0	0

NVQ Training										
NVQ Training										
	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number that started							4		0	0
Individual learning plan completed							2	50	0	0
Left without completing individual learning plan							1	25	0	0
NVQ level 2 completed							4	100	0	0
NVQ level 3 completed							1	25	0	0

STRENGTHS

- good retention and progression rates
- effective off-the-job training
- particularly good achievement of additional qualifications

WEAKNESSES

- weak assessment practices
- lack of target-setting at progress reviews

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more detailed assessment to ensure employers are able to provide a full range of NVQ level 3 work experience
- more effective key skill integration with NVQ programme
- better planned NVQ assessments to include key skills evidence

9. TS 2000 offer foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships in business administration. Learners are recruited either through the careers service or by direct referral to employers through TS 2000's own marketing facility. The learners are all employed by local companies. Of the eight learners in business administration at the time of the inspection, four are advanced and four are foundation modern apprentices. Off-the-job training is provided at TS 2000's training centre one day a week. Foundation modern apprentices are expected to complete their individual learning plans within 12 months and advanced modern apprentices in 18 months. All learners are provided with opportunities to study a range of additional qualifications, such as information technology user and customer service awards. Qualified TS 2000 staff assess the learners' work and progress reviews take place every six to eight weeks in the workplace.

10. The learners are well motivated and enthusiastic to achieve their modern apprenticeship framework. Retention rates are high. No learner has left training without achieving their qualification since TS 2000 was established. All current learners are on target to complete their planned training within agreed time scales.

11. A timetable for the completion of the NVQ is agreed with each learner at the start of training. A copy of the timetable is in every learner's portfolio. The timetable is divided into individual NVQ units and updated as each unit is completed, to show unit progression. All learners are aware of their progress. Employers provide opportunities for them to move to different departments or to take on more responsibilities. The self-assessment report recognised the good learning opportunities at work and the regular target-setting for learners.

12. All learners attend off-the-job training at the TS 2000 training centre on a day-release basis. Attendance rates at these sessions is over 90 per cent. For those learners who are unable to attend regularly during the day an evening class or workplace support is provided. The flexibility of training to meet individual needs was identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. Employers are supportive in allowing learners time away from the workplace to study. Non-attendance at off-the-job training sessions is reported promptly to employers. Off-the-job training days are split into three parts, with each learner having an individual timetable. The activities undertaken during the day include assessment planning and review of qualification progress, additional qualifications training and key skills training and assessment. Assessment planning does not include identifying evidence for the key skills awards. The review of progress is particularly effective at setting short-term NVQ progress targets on a weekly basis. Training rooms are well lit, clean, spacious and well equipped with written qualification-related information and are particularly well resourced with information technology equipment and software that reflects current commercial standards. Learners have access to the Internet and are able to use photocopying facilities. Books, manuals and handouts are of good quality and freely available. There is a staff-to-learner ratio for off-the-job training of approximately eight learners to one tutor. This helps to ensure that learners are provided with a good level of individual support and effective tuition.

13. All learners are offered the opportunity to take relevant additional qualifications. Nearly all learners take up this offer and most achieve the additional awards, at no cost to the learner or employer. There are no limits as to the number of additional qualifications that can be taken. These arrangements were accurately identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. Learners are currently working towards NVQs in customer service and information technology and the diploma in text processing and Internet technologies. Many of the additional awards are available at different levels, allowing learners to choose the most appropriate entry level according to their previous experience. Where appropriate the additional awards are used as evidence towards the NVQ or key skills award.

14. Some of the assessment practices are poor. Some learners are rarely observed in

the workplace. This was identified in the self-assessment report, but other weak areas of assessment practice were not identified. Learners' statements of competence are accurate, but the workplace supervisors and the assessor do not always ensure that the statements are signed and authenticated. Other evidence used for qualification purposes, such as letters, reports and computer outputs, are prepared by each learner, but TS 2000 does not systematically check to ensure that they have been produced by the learner. Assessors conduct assessments in a satisfactory manner, but they do not routinely sign and date learners' evidence to show that it has been assessed. There is little detailed feedback to the learner following an assessment. TS 2000 need a more detailed assessment of the range of work available for learners with each employer or work-placement provider, to ensure that the workplace can provide the full range of competences required for the qualification to level 3 NVQ.

15. Learners' progress is well maintained through the targets that are set at the weekly off-the-job training sessions, not as a result of the six to eight weekly progress reviews in the workplace. The work-based progress reviews are ineffective. There is insufficient detailed discussion of learners' work between TS 2000's staff, the employer/supervisor and the learner. At progress reviews, TS 2000's staff do not make sufficient use of the individual learning plans to identify learning opportunities for the future or to set targets for the next review. This weakness was not identified by TS 2000 in its self-assessment report.

16. The learners receive key skills training towards the end of their training programme, it is not an integral part of their NVQ training from the beginning of the programme.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

17. TS 2000 is a privately owned company. TS 2000's four directors manage the LSC training contracts, all training, assessment and verification and its private training work. Two general administrators and a small group of part-time tutors support them. TS 2000 provide business training on a day-release basis in their Derby training centre and organise the off-the-job engineering training at one of five regional colleges. Assessments, for all learners, take place in the workplace, at college or in the TS 2000 training centre. TS 2000 does not have a full range of policies and procedures covering equal opportunities monitoring, initial assessment, learner support and quality assurance. Management information systems are in place to monitor the performance of TS 2000 against LSC criteria. The company began its first draft self-assessment process in September 2000 in preparation for its first training contract with South Derbyshire LSC and produced an updated version of the report and action plan before the inspection in June 2001.

STRENGTHS

- well-managed transition from previous training provider
- effective monitoring of progress and attendance

WEAKNESSES

- insufficient use of data to guide decision-making, action-planning and target-setting
- insufficient staff appraisals
- no clear learning support strategy
- inadequate monitoring of training
- inadequate promotion of equal opportunities
- insufficient monitoring of employers' equal opportunities policies

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- wider involvement by all partners in self-assessment process

18. Forty-four of the current 49 learners at TS 2000 transferred to the organisation on 30 October 2000 after their original training provider stopped training. TS 2000 was formed and all learners, subcontractors and employers were informed of the change. TS 2000 managed this process effectively and ensured, through careful one-to-one support, that learners were not disadvantaged by the introduction of new staff and procedures. This was not identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. All learners and employers who were interviewed by inspectors commented on the smooth transition from one organisation to another. Learners' progression in training was maintained throughout the transition period.

19. TS 2000 closely monitor the progress of all learners. Individual learner progress records are kept in each learner's portfolio. The records are updated regularly on a weekly or monthly basis. This close monitoring allows TS 2000 staff to identify slow progress and ensure that learners are progressing at an appropriate rate. Subcontractors provide TS 2000 with weekly attendance records for all learners. TS 2000 impose sanctions on those learners who do not attend off-the-job training sessions regularly or if they show a pattern of lateness. Punctuality and attendance rates at college and at the TS 2000 training centre are good, with an attendance rate of over 85 per cent this year. This was not identified as a strength in the self-assessment report.

20. The use of data was recognised as a weakness in the self-assessment report. Data are only used to monitor learners' performance against the LSC's contractual targets. There is no use of statistical data to analyse the equal opportunity information from application forms, the retention and achievement rates of learners across the different areas of learning, or the destinations of learners who complete training or leave training early. TS 2000 has access to a range of data, including responses to questionnaires and statistical reports. It does not systematically use this information for self-assessment, decision-making, target-setting or action-planning purposes.

21. Staff training and development at TS 2000 is identified through reacting to changes in qualifications requirements or other external circumstances. TS 2000's existing staff, and new employees have not had their staff training and development needs identified as a result of staff appraisals. Staff can request training, but they do not have individual learning plans.

22. All new learners undertake a TS 2000-initiated numeracy and literacy test. However, TS 2000 has not assessed the learning support needs of the learners who have transferred across from the previous training provider. It has no records of the initial assessments of learning support or key skills or the learning support arrangements provided for its learners by any of its subcontractors. It does not undertake key skill initial assessments and TS 2000 has no overall strategy to ensure that each learner experiences the same initial assessment and level of support. This was not identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 4

23. TS 2000 has an equal opportunities policy. Employers and learners are confident that TS 2000 can resolve any problems raised during training and learners have a satisfactory awareness of equal opportunity issues. The promotion of equality of opportunity is poor. This was not recognised by TS 2000 in their self-assessment report. There is no reinforcement of equal opportunities issues for learners during or after induction.

24. Data on the gender, disabilities and ethnic backgrounds of learners are recorded at the beginning of training. Some analysis of these data has taken place, but this analysis has not been used for planning or target-setting purposes. TS 2000 have been involved in a local initiative to encourage more women into engineering training, but this initiative has not been successful. Only two of the 49 learners are from the minority ethnic community and the profile of learners currently on programmes conforms to gender stereotyping.

25. Most staff have received some training in equal opportunities, which was identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. This training has improved the overall awareness of equal opportunities in work-based learning at TS 2000. TS 2000 does not monitor equal opportunities within work placements or subcontractors. TS 2000 therefore, has insufficient information to enable it to monitor whether effective measures have been introduced to eliminate oppressive behaviour and harassment.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

26. Quality assurance arrangements are not sufficiently established or thorough enough to ensure that the quality of training is maintained and continuously improved. TS 2000 has recognised the need for better quality assurance and has steadily developed systems in the months since it was formed. A series of audits have been introduced. A member of staff carries out an independent check on the work of his colleagues and checks the training in colleges. The audits include interviews with learners and, in one case, the observation of a teaching session in a college. There are large gaps in the scope of the audits. They do not focus sufficiently on training, but too often on the administration that supports it. TS 2000 does not monitor the quality assurance arrangements of its subcontractors or employers. There is no established system for obtaining feedback from learners or employers. Questionnaires do not ask learners about the quality of the training or assessments. A system has been designed for analysing the questionnaires, but there are too few responses for a meaningful analysis to take place. Examples of improvements to training have been as a result of responses to complaints or problems identified by external agencies, rather than through any effective quality assurance. At present there is insufficient data to allow analysis of trends or to evaluate changes.

27. The first self-assessment report was produced before the start of the first contract in October 2000. At that time TS 2000 had no learners so the self-assessment was based heavily on the inspection report of the previous organisation from which the learners were transferring. The report was slightly amended before this inspection following discussions among the four directors. There was no involvement of learners, employers or subcontractors in the self-assessment process. Self-assessment is not a strength as identified by TS 2000. The action plan has been updated, but contains few target dates. Most actions are described as 'ongoing'. There is no indication of how the completed actions are to be evaluated. Internal verification is satisfactory. There is a schedule for sampling assessments during the training. There is a helpful relationship between the internal verifier and the assessors, the internal verifier offering useful suggestions to assessors to improve the assessment process.