

INSPECTION REPORT

emap performance limited

10 June 2002



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 Jobcentre Plus programmes. 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 **learn**direct provision
- adult and community learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of her majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

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 Jobcentre Plus programmes 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

Emap performance limited is part of emap PLC, a company that provides entertainment and communications. Emap performance limited comprises various radio stations and television channels throughout the Northwest, the Northeast, Yorkshire and London. It also works in interactive media, music magazine publishing, exhibition services, and other areas of media. The company provides training towards advanced modern apprenticeships in the occupational area of business administration, management and professional. It also provides training in media but this was not inspected because of the low number of learners involved.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Work-based learning for young people is satisfactory but the leadership and management of emap performance limited are unsatisfactory.

GRADES

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	4

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

KEY STRENGTHS

- good staff training and development
- comprehensive equal opportunities policy
- well-motivated learners receiving good one-to-one support, despite previous problems
- effective setting of short-term targets for learners

KEY WEAKNESSES

- insufficient training in equal opportunities
- inadequate quality assurance
- no integration of key skills training with occupational training
- insufficient involvement of line managers in training

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- wider involvement in self-assessment
- more opportunities for learners to take responsibility for their learning

THE INSPECTION

1. Four inspectors spent a total of 16 days at emap performance limited (emap) during June 2002. They interviewed 15 learners and visited six of emap's sites. They carried out 10 interviews with emap's staff and interviewed one member of staff from a subcontractor. They examined learners' portfolios of evidence, records of learners' progress reviews, policies and procedures, organisational reports, records of staff development and appraisal, operational agreements, promotional literature and reports from the awarding bodies. They observed and graded one learning session. Inspectors studied a self-assessment report and action plan produced in January 2002 and two revised versions produced in March and April 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

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

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. Emap performance's personnel and training department, emap 21, is based in Preston. Until recently, emap 21 provided training solely for emap's former radio division. Since July 2001, however, it has provided training for all areas of emap performance. All the learners are employees of emap. There are 15 government-funded learners in total, all working towards advanced modern apprenticeships. Of these, nine are learners in business administration, three are learners in management, and three are learners in media. Emap 21 has a human resources manager and a training co-ordinator. All the training takes place on the job. Assessments in business administration and management are carried out by the training co-ordinator, who also teaches and assesses key skills. Training and assessment in media and all internal verification are carried out by subcontractors.

3. Training towards advanced modern apprenticeships and national vocational qualifications (NVQs) is funded through a contract with the National Contracting Service. In September 2001 the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, together with the industry's national training organisation and audio-visual industries in the United Kingdom, produced a report analysing the skills required by the industry and setting out a long-term strategy for its future competitiveness. The report shows that more than 200,000 people work in the audio-visual industries and that more than half of these are freelance. The most serious short-term problems are a shortage of training opportunities for these workers and a lack of funding for freelancers who wish to enter training. Few young people in the industry follow modern apprenticeships. Those who do usually specialise in technical and craft roles. In 2001, fewer than 100 young people were working towards modern apprenticeships in the industry.

Work-based learning for young people

4. The rate of achievement of NVQs is satisfactory but few learners have achieved advanced modern apprenticeships. A high proportion of learners remain in training.

5. Learners have good opportunities to gain additional qualifications and progress in their careers. Emap sets learners appropriate short-term targets. However, long-term planning of learning and assessment is poor. Key skills training is not integrated with occupational training. Line managers are insufficiently involved in learners' training.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

6. Emap 21's training co-ordinator is responsible for staff training, including government-funded training. She reports to emap 21's managing director. The training co-ordinator teaches and assesses key skills and carries out assessments in the occupational area of business administration, management and professional. Training and assessment in media are carried out by a subcontractor. All internal verification is subcontracted. Emap has comprehensive personnel policies, which cover employment, discipline, grievances and health and safety. It has no policies or procedures for training or quality assurance. However, it does have policies to ensure equality of opportunity. Emap produced its first self-assessment report and action plan in January 2000. It has revised these twice since.

STRENGTHS

- good staff training and development
- effective internal communications
- comprehensive equal opportunities policy
- effective promotion of equal opportunities within the company

WEAKNESSES

- too few training staff
- insufficient use of management information
- insufficient training in equal opportunities
- lack of monitoring of equal opportunities
- inadequate quality assurance
- ineffective monitoring of subcontractors

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- further promotion of job opportunities to under-represented groups
- more opportunities to share good practice
- more systematic gathering of line managers' views on training
- wider involvement in self-assessment

7. Emap's self-assessment report identifies the company's good staff training and development as a strength. The company has recently introduced some useful initiatives to help staff with their personal development. These include an appraisal system where subordinates, colleagues and the staff member concerned assess the individual's performance. Emap analyses the results of the appraisals to give employees a clear understanding of where they are performing well and where they need to improve their performance. Emap also sets each member of staff short-term targets that

are clearly linked to the employee's responsibilities. Each year, emap analyses its performance to identify the needs of its staff for training and development. The company provides a wide range of training opportunities for staff. These include training for various media jobs, management training and NVQ training, both government and company funded. Some employees take additional qualifications that relate to their roles at work. A scheme allows employees within the company to swap jobs temporarily. This gives them opportunities to develop their careers.

8. Emap communicates with its workforce well. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. Managers are open and responsive to suggestions from staff. The company's slogan encourages questioning. Both emap 21 and emap as a whole produce regular newsletters to report the company's developments and successes and publicise individuals' professional and personal achievements. Emap also sends all staff and managers a newsletter focusing specifically on NVQs. This is well designed and written in a lively style. It provides information about learners' achievements and the content of the various training programmes. All staff meet emap plc's chief executive each year.

9. Emap has too few training staff. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report. Other than subcontractors' staff and line managers, who supervise learners' work towards their NVQs, there is just one full-time member of staff to manage the training. This member of staff carries out all initial assessments, carries out assessments for 31 learners based at eight different sites across the country, reviews the progress of government-funded learners, and provides training in theory for NVQs and key skills awards. In addition, she is responsible for the strategic planning of training and for managing the training contracts, as well as carrying out work relating to other training within the company. She receives a single day's administrative support each week. Learners at some locations use good resources, including books and the Internet. However, other learners lack adequate resources.

10. Emap has recently acquired a database to record information about training. The database stores information that can be used for self-assessment. Previously, all the information was stored in learners' personal files. Emap now monitors each learner's progress. However, it does not use the database to measure learners' progress overall. Emap does not use data to compare rates of retention and achievement over time or to identify ways of improving performance. The company lacks procedures for reporting information about learners' progress to senior staff. These weaknesses were identified in its self-assessment report.

Equality of opportunity**Contributory grade 3**

11. Emap's equal opportunities policy is set out in a handbook that is given to all new staff, including learners. The policy is comprehensive and clearly written. The handbook contains information about equal opportunities, procedures for dealing with grievances and harassment, and HIV and AIDS. Learners can remember receiving information about equal opportunities during their induction. However, the training co-ordinator rarely uses her regular meetings with learners to discuss equal opportunities. Inspectors interviewed all learners and no learner raised any issues relating to equal opportunities.

12. All staff understand the company's values, which emphasise the importance of equal opportunities and inclusion. There is a prominent display of messages relating to equal opportunities at the public stairwell of emap's radio station in Sheffield. A magazine advertising job vacancies with emap contains a statement by the chief executive emphasising the company's commitment to the personal development of all employees. Learners feel they are treated with fairness and respect.

13. The company's intranet promotes a wide range of courses but these do not include events to raise awareness of equal opportunities. Emap has recently started to collect information about the ethnicity and disabilities of its staff but it does not analyse these data to assess the effectiveness of its equal opportunities policy. Only 2 per cent of emap's employees are from minority ethnic groups, compared with 8.4 per cent of those who work in radio broadcasting nationally, and no employee has a disability. The managing director has raised this issue with senior managers.

14. Emap is taking part in a national initiative to provide fast-track training for young people from groups that are under-represented in media work. As part of this initiative, two young people are working towards units of an NVQ on paid work placements with emap's radio stations. However, emap has not carried out initiatives of its own to recruit staff from under-represented groups. Most of emap's premises are inaccessible to people with mobility difficulties.

Quality assurance**Contributory grade 4**

15. Emap does not assure the quality of its training adequately. Emap 21 has no system to assure quality. There are no procedures to assure the quality of initial assessment, accreditation of prior learning and progress reviews, and there are no standards against which the quality of these activities can be assessed. Emap has not issued guidelines for line managers, to ensure consistent support and guidance across its various sites. The line manager and assessor of one learner in media have a good understanding of the learner's NVQ. They have provided the learner with books and other appropriate learning materials. To help the learner meet the requirements of his NVQ, they have arranged for the learner to carry out activities that are not part of his current job. This learner has received an award from a large international company. However, emap has not made arrangements to share good practice such as this, a weakness identified in the self-assessment report.

EMAP PERFORMANCE LIMITED

16. Emap's subcontractors set standards for internal verification. The subcontractors' procedures for assessment and internal verification are satisfactory but Emap lacks procedures for monitoring the subcontractors' performance. Emap's training co-ordinator attends assessors' meetings organised by one of the subcontractors. Emap receives copies of external verifiers' reports on each subcontractor.

17. Emap carries out little monitoring of its subcontractors. Emap's agreements with its subcontractors contain a brief description of the subcontractors and Emap's obligations and a list of the services that the subcontractors are to provide. The agreements do not specify standards against which the subcontractors' performance can be monitored. Although staff meet regularly with the subcontractors, they do little to monitor the subcontractors' adherence to the agreements.

18. Emap uses surveys to gather employees' views on working for the company and on various aspects of the company's performance. It recently carried out a separate survey of learners working towards NVQs and used the results to plan improvements. However, Emap does not carry out surveys of line managers' views on NVQ training.

19. The self-assessment report was written by the training co-ordinator, after some consultation with senior managers and subcontractors. Learners and their line managers were not involved in self-assessment. Most of the judgements in the self-assessment report were accurate.

Good Practice

Emap provides good support for learners undertaking additional training. One learner who is employed as a trainee news and sports journalist is working towards a level 4 NVQ in broadcast journalism. Her line manager has arranged for her to study units of a postgraduate course in broadcast journalism at a local university.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	12	3

20. Emap provides training for advanced modern apprentices in business administration and management. There are nine advanced modern apprentices in business administration and three advanced modern apprentices in management. All the learners are recruited and employed by the company, which offers all employees under 25 the opportunity to follow modern apprenticeships. All the learners are assessed in the workplace by the training co-ordinator. Internal verification is subcontracted to another organisation. All the training takes place on the job. Learners are visited by their assessor on average once each month. Learners receive a day's induction to their training programme. The induction covers health and safety, grievance procedures and equal opportunities.

The following table shows the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2		8		4		15									
Retained*	0		6		3		2	13								
Successfully completed	0		0		0		1	6								
Still in learning	2		6		3		1	7								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

STRENGTHS

- well-motivated learners receiving good one-to-one support, despite previous problems
- effective setting of short-term targets for learners
- good opportunities to gain additional qualifications
- good opportunities for learners to develop their careers

WEAKNESSES

- poor long-term planning of assessment and learning
- no integration of key skills training with occupational training
- insufficient involvement of line managers in training

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more opportunities for learners to take responsibility for their learning
- better use of results of initial assessment
- more direct observation of assessment by internal verifier
- regular reinforcement of some aspects of induction training

21. Until 1998, a subcontractor managed modern apprenticeship programmes on behalf of emap. The work of this subcontractor proved to be unsatisfactory. Many learners became de-motivated. In 1998, emap appointed its own training co-ordinator, who has successfully reorganised the modern apprenticeship programme. As well as acting as an assessor and trainer, she co-ordinates all aspects of the training. In her role as assessor, the training co-ordinator decided to help the learners to gain some early successes and focused on helping them to complete NVQs rather than their modern apprenticeships as a whole. Of the 15 learners in business administration and management who transferred from the previous subcontractor, eight achieved level 3 NVQs and one is still in training. Learners are now well motivated and receive good individual support from the training co-ordinator. Relationships between staff and learners are very good.

22. The training co-ordinator has introduced an effective system for setting short-term targets for learners. She uses a clear and comprehensive document to set each learner tasks to complete before her next visit. This motivates learners, who refer to the document in between visits when planning their work. However, learners are not sufficiently involved in setting targets for themselves. The document also record learners' needs for any training in addition to their NVQ training. The training co-ordinator either provides this training herself or arranges for it to be provided by subcontractors. Learners' portfolios are well organised and clearly presented.

23. Emap offers all employees under 25 the opportunity to work towards a modern apprenticeship. Learners have good opportunities to gain additional qualifications. For example, some learners achieved two units of an NVQ in management while they were

working towards an advanced modern apprenticeship in business administration. These learners went on to achieve a full NVQ in management. Learners value their NVQs and gain confidence through achieving the qualifications.

24. Learners have good opportunities to develop their careers. Many learners have previously followed other government-funded training, have worked part time or have been unemployed. After a three-month probationary period, many learners enter permanent employment. Emap matches learners to suitable jobs. At appropriate stages, the company offers learners opportunities to progress to positions with more responsibility. One learner progressed from a youth training scheme through various roles to become personal assistant to four directors. Learners benefit from clear targets, set at progress reviews and appraisals, and from training that is tailored to their needs.

25. Although emap is effective in setting short-term targets for learners, there is no longer-term planning of assessment and learning. Learners do not have longer-term targets. Emap carries out an initial assessment of literacy and numeracy skills but it does not use the results to make longer-term plans for learners' training. Training to enable learners to carry out their roles at work is not sufficiently integrated with training towards their qualifications. Although internal verification is satisfactory, the internal verifier has observed the assessor only once in the past year. Learners' inductions cover key skills, equal opportunities, and emap's procedures for dealing with appeals and grievances. However, this information is not reinforced throughout learners' training.

26. Emap does not integrate training in key skills with learners' occupational training. Although key skills are mentioned at learners' inductions, many learners do not start work towards their key skills awards until they have completed their NVQs. Learners do not understand the content or the importance of their key skills awards. Learners' short-term targets do not include work towards their key skills awards. Although learners receive some training in key skills, this is not linked to their occupational training. Few learners achieve their apprenticeship frameworks. Only one learner has achieved an advanced modern apprenticeship, although others who have achieved NVQs are now working towards their key skills awards.

27. Line managers are insufficiently involved in helping learners to achieve their qualifications. Although some line managers, who have achieved NVQs themselves, can use their own experience to support learners, others offer little support. One learner did not receive any support during a long period of absence by his line manager. Some line managers have little understanding of NVQs and their role in supporting learners. All line managers receive details of learners' short-term targets but some do not use this information. Emap has not provided line managers with written guidelines on supporting learners, planning assessments and setting targets. Line managers do not work with the training co-ordinator to link their training with hers.

Good Practice

Emap recognises learners' achievements by publicising them in a newsletter sent to all employees. On achieving their NVQs, learners are presented with a gift and a framed certificate by their line manager.