

TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT
NOVEMBER 2000

ADULT LEARNING INSPECTORATE REINSPECTION
MARCH 2002

Arthur Rank Training



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

- ◆ work-based training for all people over 16
- ◆ provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- ◆ the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- ◆ adult and community learning
- ◆ learning and job preparation programmes 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.

Grading

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

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

SUMMARY

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

Arthur Rank Training provides good training in business administration and satisfactory foundation for work training. Training in agriculture, construction and engineering is now satisfactory. Learners receive good on-the-job training and work-placement providers are very supportive. Overall retention and achievement rates are low. This was particularly the case in 2000-01. However, the retention rate for construction programmes has improved significantly in the current year. Assessment practices and internal verification are now satisfactory. There is a good range of initiatives to attract disadvantaged young people into training. Learners are provided with good additional learning support and pastoral support. Training plans and learners' progress review documents have been improved, but the processes of planning and reviewing still lack substance. There are good internal communications. Management information is systematically collected and effectively used. Arrangements with subcontractors have been improved, but employers are still not fully involved in supporting learners' learning. The quality assurance system has been improved significantly, but has not yet had an impact on the achievement of qualifications and learning plans.

GRADES

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS	GRADE
Agriculture	4
Construction	4
Engineering	4
Business administration	2
Foundation for work	3

GENERIC AREAS	GRADE
Equal opportunities	2
Trainee support	3
Management of training	4
Quality assurance	4

REINSPECTION	GRADE
Agriculture	3
Construction	3
Engineering	3

REINSPECTION	GRADE
Management of training	3
Quality assurance	3

KEY STRENGTHS

- ◆ particularly supportive work-placement providers
- ◆ good range of on the job work activities
- ◆ good range of initiatives to attract disadvantaged young people
- ◆ good additional learning support and pastoral support
- ◆ good internal communications
- ◆ good use of management information

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor achievement of qualifications and learning plans
- ◆ stereotypical gender imbalance
- ◆ failure to individualise learning plans
- ◆ ineffective progress reviews
- ◆ insufficient involvement of employers in learning support

INTRODUCTION

1. Arthur Rank Training is based at the National Agriculture Centre (NAC) show ground at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire. It was established in 1981 and is an autonomous part of the Arthur Rank Centre, which was established in 1972 by the Royal Agricultural Society of England (RASE) and the Rank Foundation. The purpose of Arthur Rank Training is to provide vocational and personal development training for young people who, for various reasons, are socially or educationally disadvantaged. Personal development of the individual is fundamental to Arthur Rank Training and the organisation seeks to develop young people's personal and social skills in order to enable them to succeed in work and life. The Royal Agricultural Society of England (RASE) is redeveloping the National Agriculture Centre site. As a result of this process, Arthur Rank Training is moving to other premises but will retain access to some of the facilities at the showground. From 1 June 2002, the organisation will be an independent charity and a registered company, operating from premises on the outskirts of Kenilworth. A new board of trustees has been established to replace the executive committee. Arthur Rank Training retains the support of the Arthur Rank Foundation, and a member of the Rank family sits on the board of trustees. The training provider has included in the membership of the new board, a representative from a local Connexions service, reflecting its commitment to work with young people who are educationally and socially disadvantaged.

2. Arthur Rank Training contracts with Coventry and Warwickshire local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide work-based learning for learners with special training needs. At the time of the original inspection, there were 106 learners and at reinspection, 127 learners. The tables below show their distribution across the various occupational areas. Most learners are working towards national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at level 1 and almost all have additional learning and social needs. There are 20 members of staff, eleven of whom are full time. Off-the-job training takes place at the Arthur Rank Training's main headquarters and at other locations on the showground. Some training and assessment is subcontracted to local further education colleges. Those learners who progress to NVQs at level 2, attend further education colleges in Coventry and Warwickshire for their off-the-job training. Learners receive their on-the-job training and work experience at work placements located around Coventry and Warwickshire. Use is made of the wide variety of other organisations which share the site to provide some work placements and training projects.

3. In 1999, the proportion of 16 year olds in Coventry and Warwickshire staying on in full-time education was high, at 67.6 per cent. Of those leaving full-time education, 20.8 per cent are currently involved with work-based learning. The proportion of school leavers gaining five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C and above was 39.1 per cent in Coventry and 47.1 per cent in Warwickshire, compared with the English national average of 47.9 per

cent. In Coventry in 2001, the proportion of young people achieving five or more GCSEs at grade C or above, in Coventry and Warwickshire, was 42.6 per cent and 50.5 per cent respectively, compared with the national average of 47.9 per cent. In March 2000, people from minority ethnic groups made up 11.9 per cent of Coventry's population and 3.4 per cent of Warwickshire's population. The combined population of Coventry and Warwickshire is approximately 820,000.

4. In 2000, the unemployment rate was 3.9 per cent in Coventry and 2 per cent in Warwickshire, compared with a national average 4.2 per cent. In 2001, the unemployment rate for Coventry was 2.8 per cent, and 1.7 per cent in Warwickshire, compared with the national average of 2.9 per cent. It is forecast that employment rates in the region will remain stable and that there will be an increasing number of jobs in wholesale and retail distribution, business, education and health services. Motor vehicle and component manufacturing constitutes a declining part of the local economy, but there remains a need for training in this area as existing workers change jobs, retire or move into management positions. Coventry and parts of Warwickshire are prone to high levels of social exclusion and deprivation such as high unemployment, low educational attainment and poor housing. Coventry was fortieth in the 1998 index of local deprivation. It is now ranked sixty seventh out of 354 districts. North Warwickshire and Nuneaton which were ranked at 199 and 114 respectively, now rank 192 and 111 respectively.

Number of learners involved with each occupational area at the time of the original inspection

Occupational Area	Advanced modern apprentice	Foundation modern apprentice	Other training programmes
Agriculture			9
Construction		1	46
Engineering			29
Business administration			12
Media & design			3
Foundation for work			7
Total	0	1	106

TRAINING STANDARDS COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT: ARTHUR
 RANK TRAINING NOVEMBER 2000 ADULT LEARNING
 INSPECTORATE REINSPECTION MARCH 2002

Number of learners at the time of the reinspection

Occupational Area	Advanced modern apprentice	Foundation modern apprentice	Other training programmes
Agriculture			8
Construction			43
Engineering			23
Business administration		1	12
Health and social care		11	26
Foundation for work			15
Total	0	12	127

INSPECTION FINDINGS

5. Arthur Rank Training produced its first self-assessment report in 1998. The third self-assessment report was produced prior to the original inspection. It was based on an analysis of information gained from questionnaire responses from learners, employers and parents; group and one-to-one discussions; statistical data; and feedback from the Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise, schools and the careers service. Inspectors considered many of the aspects of provision described as strengths in the self-assessment report, as no more than normal practice. The extent of poor retention and underachievement was not fully acknowledged. Three of the occupational area grades and three of the generic area grades awarded by inspectors were lower than those given by Arthur Rank Training. Following the original inspection, the training provider produced an action plan and reviewed its progress against this in preparation for the reinspection. Inspectors awarded the same grade as those in the updated action plan.

6. At the original inspection, seven inspectors spent 28 days at Arthur Rank Training during November 2000. This was an unusually high ratio of inspectors to learners and reflects the number of occupational areas inspected. In agriculture and foundation for work, the number of learners was lower than normal at the time of inspection. Inspectors conducted 46 interviews with learners. They visited the premises of 29 work-placement providers and interviewed 26 workplace supervisors. Forty-two interviews took place with staff at Arthur Rank Training. Inspectors looked at learners' portfolios and files, the organisation's policies and procedures, and a wide range of other paperwork. Inspectors observed instruction sessions and reviews of learners' progress and awarded grades as shown in the table below. At reinspection, four inspectors spent a total of 16 days at Arthur Rank Training during March 2002. They interviewed 39 learners, observed four training and assessment sessions, had 24 meetings with staff, examined 13 individual learning plans and 23 portfolios of evidence. They also visited 17 work placements, interviewed 16 employers and spoke to two subcontractors, as well as examining a range of relevant documents.

Grades awarded to instruction sessions at the original inspection

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Agriculture		1	1			2
Construction			3			3
Engineering			1	1		2
Business administration	2	1	1			4
Foundation for work		1		1		2
Total	2	3	6	2	0	13

Grades awarded to instruction sessions at the reinspection

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	TOTAL
Agriculture			1			1
Construction			1			1
Engineering		1	1			2
Total	0	1	3	0	0	4

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS

Agriculture

Grade 3

7. There are eight learners on training programmes in agriculture. Four learners are working towards NVQs at level 1 in amenity horticulture and four are working towards NVQs at level 2 in amenity horticulture. None of the learners is employed. Work placements include landscape contractors, garden maintenance businesses, large gardens and a commercial herb grower and packer. All learners are men. Most learners are referred to Arthur Rank Training by the careers service. Most learners complete a Life Skills programme before starting their training programme.

8. The training programmes last up to two years. Off-the-job training for the level 1 NVQ is carried out at the Arthur Rank Centre. Off-the-job training for the level 2 NVQ is subcontracted to a local specialist college. Off-the-job training includes practical skills development, practical demonstrations and portfolio-building. Learners' vocational knowledge is developed using questionnaires, workbooks and plant identification sheets. Learners working towards NVQs at level 1 are assessed on the job. Internal verification is subcontracted to a local further education college. All assessment and verification for the learners working towards NVQs at level 2 is subcontracted to the specialist college. Most assessment is carried out at the college with some being done in the workplace by a visiting assessor.

9. The training centre has approval from the awarding body to provide training and assessment in amenity horticulture at level 1 NVQ. The trainer/assessor holds assessors' qualifications. The training resources include plots for project work, hand tools, small machinery and a dedicated classroom. The centre also has access to the estate. This provides a variety of training opportunities in landscape contracting and gives learners commercial experience. All learners undertake a two-week induction at the training centre with a follow-up in their workplace.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ poor retention and achievement rates
- ◆ inadequate assessment and internal verification practices

10. Although some actions have been put in place to rectify the first weakness,

these have not yet had a significant impact. Assessment and internal verification practices have been improved and are now satisfactory. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given in the updated action plan.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ very supportive work-placement providers
- ◆ good range of on-the-job work activities
- ◆ comprehensive portfolios of evidence

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor retention and achievement rates

11. Workplace supervisors are enthusiastic and keen to help learners. Learners are made to feel part of the company and value their work experience, which includes a wide range of practical activities. Assessment is carried out in the workplace. Learners and their employers contact the assessors to arrange assessments when necessary. Assessment is carried out effectively in the workplace. A good range of off-the-job practical activities is offered at the NAC. These activities are carried out in a realistic commercial landscaping environment.

12. Work placements provide a good range of on the job activities. These activities effectively cover the range of experiences required for the qualifications being taken. The training provider ensures that any gaps in the training carried out in the workplace are covered during the off-the-job training.

13. Learners produce comprehensive portfolios of evidence. Tutors provide effective support to help learners compile their portfolios, which contain a good range of evidence, including work-based assessments, witness testimony, photographs and job cards.

14. Achievement and retention rates have been poor for the past three years. In 1997-98, 81 per cent of learners left the training programme without achieving all the targets in their individual learning plans. The figure was 58 per cent in 1998-99 and 82 per cent in 1999-2000. In 2000-01, 67 per cent of learners left the training programme without achieving all the targets in their individual learning plans. Those learners who have left the training programme in the current year did so due to personal issues. The proportion of learners completing their individual learning plans has been poor. In 1998-99, 41 per cent completed their individual learning plans. This figure fell to 18 per cent in 1999-2000 and to 17 per cent in 2000-01. Some learners have, however, achieved some qualifications. In 1999-2000 and 2000-01, 25 per cent and 27 per cent of the learners achieved qualifications in Wordpower and Numberpower, respectively, compared with 59 per cent in 1998-99 and 75 per cent in 1997-98. These awards are not available in 2001-02. The proportion of learners gaining their NVQs at level 1 was 41 per cent in 1998-99 and 18 per cent in 1999-2000. In 2000-01, 42 per cent of learners have achieved their NVQ at level 1, with three learners still to complete their training

programme. The proportion of learners who leave the training programme early and gain jobs or progress into further education was 37 per cent in 1997-98, 55 per cent in 1999-2000, and 53 per cent in 2000-01.

15. The original inspection acknowledged the weakness of inadequate assessment and internal verification. This weakness has now been rectified. Assessment and internal verification of learners at NVQ level 1 is now carried out in-house by the training provider. Effective assessment is now carried out on the job. A new internal verification procedure has been introduced, which includes more frequent observations and internal verification. The sub-contracted assessment and internal verification of the NVQ level 2 training programme has also been improved.

Construction

Grade 3

16. There are 42 learners on work-based learning programmes in construction. All learners are working towards NVQs at levels 1 or 2 in building craft, wood occupations, bricklaying and plumbing. Off-the-job training and assessment for learners working towards NVQs at level 1 are carried out at the Arthur Rank Training centre. Off-the-job training, assessment and verification for learners working towards NVQs at level 2 are subcontracted to three local colleges of further education.

17. Potential learners are referred by the careers service. During the two-week induction, new learners get a general introduction to the construction industry, make a start on developing their tool skills and are prepared for work placements. There is a strong emphasis on team building, working with others and health and safety. Learners start work experience after the induction period and attend the centre for one day each week for off-the-job training. Level 2 learners attend college on a day-release basis.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ missed opportunities for collecting work-based evidence
- ◆ inadequate off-the-job training resources
- ◆ poor retention and achievement rates

18. Although achievement rates are still poor, retention rates have improved significantly. New recording documents have been introduced to collect work-based evidence. Off-the-job training resources have improved, with the purchase of additional training resources and the restructuring of existing training facilities. Learners now have access to learning materials for use outside of normal training times.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ particularly supportive work-placement providers

- ◆ good range of on the job work activities
- ◆ significant, recent improvement in retention rate

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ poor monitoring of health and safety in work placements
- ◆ ineffective action-planning
- ◆ poor achievement

19. Work-placement providers provide particularly good learner support. Every attempt is made to meet the training needs of the learner in the workplace. Workplace supervisors allocate appropriate tasks to learners providing good on-the-job training as part of learners' everyday work. Learners develop their job skills in real work situations. Some employers use the review process to improve learners' achievement rates by concentrating on work activities which form an essential part of the work-based element of the NVQs. Workplace supervisors provide witness testimonies of learners' work and achievement. They encourage learners to complete work books and record sheets. Employers also provide appropriate support for learners with additional learning and social needs.

20. Most work-placement providers provide a good range of on-the-job work activities, over and above the requirements of the qualification being undertaken. Some learners carry out the same work activities as more experienced work colleagues. This is not always acknowledged in progress reviews, or used to inform assessment decisions. For example, one learner working towards an NVQ at level 1 in building crafts, carried out a wide variety of work tasks unaccompanied, including brick and block laying, concreting, floor-laying, fence erecting, fitting bathroom suites, painting and plastering. This experience was not acknowledged adequately in his progress reviews and action plan. Action-planning is generally weak and most learners do not fully understand how they will make the necessary progress between progress reviews. In some cases, individual learning plans are not complete and have not been updated.

21. Retention rates have improved, following the appointment of new staff responsible for training and assessment. The retention rate in 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01, was 19 per cent, 26 per cent and 28 per cent respectively. In the current year, the retention rate has improved significantly, to 56 per cent, with most learners being on training programmes since August or September 2001. Learners are well-motivated and enjoy the training programme. They fully understand their on- and off-the-job training activities.

22. There is poor monitoring of health and safety in the workplace. In some cases, learners are using machines in the workplace which are specifically prohibited in the health and safety control documents completed before learners are placed with employers. One learner was using a range of fixed wood-working machines in the workplace, and two other learners were required to use brick saws and disc cutters in the workplace, sometimes without supervision. Even though the employer may

have provided training in the use of the equipment, there is no record of this, and no indication of how the learner's competence was measured. The training provider has not carried out off-the-job training to supplement the training carried out by the employer. It is the policy of Arthur Rank Training to ensure that learners are visited in the workplace within the first two weeks of being placed, to ensure that learners have received adequate site induction and are working in a safe environment. Two learners have been on work placement for five to six weeks and have not yet been visited in the workplace.

23. Although retention rates have improved, achievement rates are still poor. In 1997-98, 32 learners started on training programmes, but only three achieved the targets in their individual learning plans. Three gained an NVQ at level 1, one progressed into further education and 13 gained jobs. In 1998-99, 42 learners started on training programmes. Only six achieved the targets in their individual learning plans. Six gained an NVQ at level 1 and one an NVQ at level 2. Six of the learners progressed into further education, and twelve gained jobs. Of the 47 learners who started training programmes in 1999-2000, five learners completed their individual learning plans, 11 gained an NVQ at level 1 and 20 gained jobs. In 2000-01, only two of the 61 learners who started on construction programmes completed their individual learning plans. Two learners achieved an NVQ at level 1, six went into further education and nine gained jobs. The proportion of learners who achieved jobs or moved into further education has averaged at 39 per cent over this three year period. This does not include learners who are still in training. The introduction of new qualifications in three of the construction programme areas by the awarding body has slowed the progress of some learners. Training and assessment materials and practices have been improved. Portfolios of evidence, progress monitoring documents and external verification reports all show that learners are achieving units and making good progress towards achieving their qualifications.

Engineering

Grade 3

24. There are 22 learners working towards NVQs at levels 1 and 2 in engineering. There are 17 learners working towards a fast fit technician NVQ at level 1 and four at NVQ level 2. One learner is working towards a specialist tyre fitting NVQ at level 2. Most learners attend the Arthur Rank centre one day each week or each fortnight. The remaining time is spent gaining work experience. Learners are placed either at general purpose motor vehicle workshops or at tyre and exhaust fitting centres. There are two full-time and one part-time motor vehicle trainers who are also assessors. All staff are occupationally competent and hold assessor qualifications. Two assessors also hold internal verifiers' qualifications.

25. Most assessment is carried out in the workplace by one of Arthur Rank's own assessors. Until recently, all learners attended a two-week induction programme prior to transferring directly onto their chosen motor vehicle NVQ. Learners who are not ready for work undertake a Life Skills and work preparation programme

after their induction, where they sample different occupational disciplines before transferring to their preferred NVQ. During the induction programme, all learners carry out an initial assessment to identify whether they have additional learning or support needs. Most of the current learners were identified as requiring additional support. Learners' progress is formally reviewed every 12 weeks.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ poor retention and achievement rates
- ◆ inadequate assessment and internal verification practices

26. Assessment and internal verification practices are now satisfactory. Actions to rectify the poor retention and achievement rates have been only partially successful. Retention rates have improved but achievement rates are still poor. Inspectors awarded the same grade as that given in the revised action plan.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ frequent and effective workplace assessment
- ◆ good support for individual learners
- ◆ good progression into jobs or further education

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ inadequate understanding of the NVQ requirements by workplace supervisors
- ◆ poor achievement rates

27. There is frequent effective workplace assessment. Most learners are visited every two weeks and some are visited weekly. Assessors record a wide range of NVQ evidence. Accurate records are kept of assessments and learners' progress is updated. Learners complete a job card, which is placed in their portfolio of evidence along with the observation record. Learners monitor their progress towards achieving their NVQ using tracking sheets, which they keep in their portfolios and at the workplace. Assessor observations also reinforce the workplace supervisors' witness testimony of the learners' competence. There are good working relationships between trainers, learners and work-placement providers. Any issues are dealt with quickly. If a work placement cannot provide the required range of work experience, then attempts are made to place the learner in alternative work placements for a short time.

28. Individual learner support is good. Many of the current learners have a range of social and learning needs. Trainer/assessors work effectively to provide additional support for learners. Trainers often make arrangements with individual learners to collect evidence or provide transport. Learners are able to effectively discuss any personal issues with trainers and assessors. Learners often receive individual tuition during off-the-job training sessions. This includes help with portfolio-building, background knowledge and basic skills. Practical workshop activities are also provided in the Arthur Rank training centre, but these do not

always form part of the day-release activities. The training centre's motor vehicle workshop, which is located some distance from the main training centre's headquarters, is adequately equipped to provide training for the vehicle fitting NVQ.

29. In 1999-2000 and 2000-01, 47 per cent and 39 per cent of learners left the training programme to start new jobs or transfer to further education programmes respectively. For the current year, 44 per cent of learners have left the training programme to start new jobs or transfer to further education programmes.

30. Many workplace supervisors have an inadequate understanding of the NVQ requirements or the qualification structure. Work-placement providers generally rely on visiting trainers and assessors to provide learners with guidance about their qualification. There is insufficient involvement of workplace supervisors in planning and monitoring the required workplace activities.

31. Retention rates in 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01 were 32 per cent, 48 per cent and 19 per cent respectively. The retention rate for the current year is 47 per cent. A change in recruitment practice accounted for the poor performance in 2000-01.

32. Few learners achieve all the targets in their individual learning plan. In 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01, 15 per cent, 12 per cent and four per cent of the learners achieved their individual learning plans, respectively. The achievement of NVQs at level 1 in 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01 was 37 per cent, 47 per cent and 13 per cent, respectively. No learner has achieved their NVQ at level 1 or their individual learning plan in the current year. Wordpower and Numberpower qualifications are no longer available and do not form part of the achievement data for 2001-02.

Business administration

Grade 2

33. Arthur Rank Training provides administration and information technology training for 12 trainees. Four trainees are working towards NVQs at level 1 and one towards an NVQ at level 2 in information technology. Five trainees are working towards the administration NVQ at level 1 and two towards level 2. Arthur Rank Training uses a subcontractor to provide some assessment and training in this occupational area. One assessor carries out centre-based assessment and reviews, and provides practical and theoretical training. Another assesses level 2 administration and information technology in the workplace. Staff employed by the subcontractor carry out internal verification. All staff have relevant assessment and occupational qualifications and experience. Most trainees are men, which reflects the referrals from the careers service. Initial training is carried out at the Arthur Rank Centre. Once on work placements, trainees continue to attend the training centre for one day each week. They either spend the whole day working in

the vocational area, or half a day on vocational skills and half a day on basic skills.

34. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report but considered that some strengths were more appropriate to the generic areas and that some of the weaknesses had been overstated. They awarded a higher grade than that given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good assessment practice
- ◆ wide variety of good work placements
- ◆ effective progress reviews
- ◆ good achievement and progression rates

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ insufficient off-the-job training resources

35. Most trainees join the training programme in September. They are given clear instruction booklets to help them learn basic computer techniques. Group training sessions take place to cover an explanation of the NVQ process, and core skills such as telephone work. One-to-one coaching is provided to fill any gaps in learning.

36. Assessment practice is good. Assessment begins in the training centre as trainees carry out work for members of staff. This helps to set standards and introduce the idea of deadlines. Workplace visits by the assessor take place every two weeks for administration trainees and once a month for information technology trainees. Assessment plans specify what will be observed and assessed in the workplace. During observations, trainees are questioned to test their background knowledge. This verbal questioning ensures that trainees with poor writing skills are not unduly disadvantaged. Clear feedback is given to trainees at the end of an assessment. They are told whether they have achieved the required standard and if not they are given guidance on how to improve. Trainees are set clear targets which are recorded in a simple 'to do' system in their folders. Recording of evidence in logbooks is completed by the assessor for trainees at level 1. All trainees have a good idea of how many units they have to complete. Trainees at level 2 are encouraged to complete their own logbooks.

37. There is a wide variety of good work placements. Each provides appropriate learning opportunities. Some of the trainees are employed. Those who are on work placements are treated as employees, and are involved in company meetings and personal development schemes. One has his name on the staff membership board at the entrance to the building. Many of the placements have been used for several years and the employers understand the NVQ requirements and the assessment process. Some of the newer employers were not so clear about their role. All employers value the NVQ training and qualification. Most workplace supervisors are actively involved in the training. Not all are aware of the exact targets set for

the trainees, as they are not given a copy of the relevant document.

38. The assessor carries out effective three-monthly progress reviews. In preparation for these progress reviews, trainees judge their progress in work-related skills on a scale from one to five. Workplace supervisors carry out the same exercise and the assessor discusses the two profiles during progress reviews. Action plans are devised to address areas of weakness. Achievable targets are set at the end of these progress reviews.

39. Achievement rates are good for those trainees who remain on the programme. In 1999-2000, 18 out of 24 trainees on the programme gained at least one NVQ, including four who gained awards in both information technology and administration. Nineteen of the qualifications were at level 2. Progression from the course is satisfactory. In 1998-99, 64 per cent of the trainees went into employment; in 1999-2000, 24 per cent went into employment and 25 per cent went on to further training in colleges. The retention rate over the past four years has varied between 50 per cent and 70 per cent. Twenty-four trainees started in 1999-2000 and the retention rate for this group was only 50 per cent. Many trainees had the wrong idea of what the information technology course involved and were unaware that they would also be doing administration. This was largely as a result of inadequate careers advice.

40. Off-the-job training resources are inadequate. The subcontractor is at the training centre for two days each week and visits workplaces two days each week. Trainees who are not on work placements spend all their time at the training centre but are not given structured programmes of work for the times when the staff are away. Some administrative tasks are given to the trainees by other training staff. There is no model office and all training activities are carried out in the training room. Furniture in this room is in a poor state and it does not provide a professional environment. When the subcontractor is on holiday, trainees who would normally come into the training centre for one day each week remain in their work placements, or are given work to do at home.

Foundation for work

Grade 3

41. Arthur Rank Training currently has seven foundation for work trainees. This number is unusually low and a further four people were due to start during the week of the inspection. During the period since April 2000, 27 trainees have started the programme. All the trainees are attending life skills training, a programme funded by the CCTE as part of the Learning Gateway. The programme is designed to help young people who find it difficult to obtain places on other training programmes. Many have no GCSEs or low grades; some lack basic skills; some have been excluded from school; some come from homes which do not encourage learning. A minority of trainees have a history of offending or drug or alcohol misuse. Life skills training aims to provide an entry route to training by helping trainees to identify and begin to overcome barriers to training and make a

realistic choice of career.

42. The careers service refers trainees onto the programme after a period of assessment. After an induction and some further assessment, trainees begin a programme which lasts up to 16 weeks. The training includes project work at Arthur Rank Training, work tasters within various occupational areas, work placements with employers, and training in literacy, numeracy, information technology and communication. The programme also includes talks by visiting speakers such as the local police, prison service and drugs team, visits to local employers and a personal development programme. The main outcomes of the programme are progression to further training, education or employment.

43. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report but judged them to be part of more significant strengths and weaknesses. They agreed with the grade given in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ some good training techniques
- ◆ good progression rates

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ failure to meet needs of all trainees
- ◆ inadequate training resources
- ◆ inadequate initial assessment

44. Staff use some good training techniques to develop trainees' enthusiasm and maintain their interest. During teaching sessions, staff adopt a firm but friendly manner and teaching style, use frequent questioning, maintain eye contact and challenge trainees' attitudes and assumptions. They make good use of the resources available to them to provide variety and interest. For example, they have developed on-site community projects such as building an assault course. They also invite guest speakers and arrange visits and social events. All staff are sensitive to the needs of trainees and work hard to balance the need to set and maintain standards of behaviour against the risk of alienating trainees by unrealistic expectations. Trainees confirm that they find staff easy to approach and helpful. They appreciate being treated as adults.

45. Trainees have the opportunity to try practical work in different occupational areas, both at the training centre and in work placements. The work tasters with employers are particularly helpful and some trainees have a variety of tasters before making a choice. The practical work tasters are complemented by off-the-job guidance, training and support.

46. During 2000-01, 27 trainees started training and, of the 20 who moved on, five trainees started occupational training with Arthur Rank Training, six found employment and one progressed to further education. This represents a progression

rate of 60 per cent. During 1999-2000, of 13 leavers, six started further training and one found employment, a progression rate of 54 per cent.

47. The structure and design of the programme is not sufficiently flexible to meet the very diverse needs of all the trainees for whom it is intended. The careers service provides some information about the previous experience and aspirations of each trainee. During induction at Arthur Rank Training, staff find out more about trainees and conduct a basic skills assessment. There is no in-depth assessment for each individual to find out what they want to do, what they might be capable of achieving and what barriers they need to overcome. The range of options available is narrow. It includes project work at Arthur Rank Training and work tasters with employers or within occupational training. These practical activities take place over four days a week. On the remaining day, trainees undertake training in information technology, communication skills, practical work skills, literacy, numeracy, and job search. There are also some invited speakers and visits to employers. The range of options helps some trainees to find out about occupational areas and make informed choices. It does not enable trainees with more complex barriers to learning to identify and overcome obstacles. Some of the more able trainees find the options boring.

GENERIC AREAS

Equal opportunities

Grade 2

48. Arthur Rank Training sees the promotion of equality of opportunity as central to all its activities. Its equal opportunities policy and procedures reflect current practice and are reviewed annually. Trainees are adequately protected from harassment and bullying. There are systems for the collection and analysis of data relating to equal opportunities. Fewer than 3 per cent of trainees are women; 8 per cent are from minority ethnic groups; 13 per cent have a disability. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report. They identified additional strengths and weaknesses and awarded the same grade as that in the self-assessment report.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good range of initiatives to attract disadvantaged young people
- ◆ good analysis of equal opportunities data
- ◆ well-recorded equal opportunities policies and procedures
- ◆ effective treatment of equal opportunities issues during induction

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ stereotypical gender imbalance
- ◆ insufficient monitoring of equal opportunities during trainees' progress reviews
- ◆ missed opportunities to promote equal opportunities in marketing materials

49. Within the Arthur Rank Training strategic plan there is a specific objective to work with a range of partners to increase participation in existing and new programmes. This is closely linked to the organisation's objective of seeking to provide opportunities for occupational training and personal development for young people who, for reasons of social or educational disadvantage, may not have benefited from their school education. There is a long-established programme which targets disaffected school pupils from years 10 and 11. The programme includes a multi-skill workshop and a job-search project. Practical activities are used to motivate the young people and attendance is good. Many pupils achieve national skills profile qualifications in communication and numeracy. Whilst some pupils who undertake the programme opt to sit GCSE examinations, approximately 50 per cent join work-based training. Other initiatives include close links with local youth organisations and special schools. A marketing event takes place at a local young offenders' prison. The purpose of this is to give the young offenders an insight into the training opportunities available upon their release. Open days are arranged for the careers service to demonstrate how Arthur Rank Training can help disadvantaged young people. As a result of these activities, many young people who might have avoided training after the age of 16 are realising their potential and becoming employed.

50. Arthur Rank Training monitors applications in terms of gender and ethnicity and gives the results in an annual report. In the year ending July 2000, 16 per cent of applications were from women and 13 per cent were from people from minority ethnic groups. The data about applicants are used in action-planning. For example, an additional minibus has been purchased to bring trainees from remote rural areas and advertising has been aimed at under-represented groups. Analysis of the data over time has shown that there is a decline in the number of women trainees. A trainees' forum has been organised to discuss possible reasons for this decline and some actions have been agreed to overcome the difficulty. Data are collected about trainees' work placements. This alerts Arthur Rank Training to any high level of turnover at a particular placement so that they can check that it is not the result of the employer's attitude.

51. The equal opportunities policy statement and associated procedures are presented in a format which is easy to follow. They cover issues such as recruitment, selection and disability. Detailed information is produced on grievance procedures and on how equal opportunities is promoted during training. Trainees receive a detailed agreement which describes what they are entitled to, acceptable behaviour and what to do if they experience harassment or bullying. The review of these documents is the responsibility of one person and the review cycle is such that the most recent legislation relating to equal opportunities has not yet been taken into account.

52. Equal opportunities is dealt with effectively during the trainees' induction programme. All trainees have a good recollection of this and are able to speak confidently about equal opportunities issues and what constitutes unacceptable behaviour. All trainees know what to do if they experience any harassment or

bullying. The induction uses very effective and interactive training methods to cover equal opportunities. A video is linked to activities which challenge trainees' views on topics such as harassment, racism, learning disabilities, inappropriate jokes and sexism. Where possible, the induction includes an element of team building, which seeks to build a mutually supportive attitude through outdoor exercises such as raft building and an assault course.

53. The proportion of men and women on most programmes conforms to gender stereotyping and little has been done to overcome this. The exception is business administration, where most trainees are men. Over 80 per cent of those who apply to Arthur Rank Training are men, and there is a tendency for the careers service to refer mainly men. Arthur Rank Training is aware of this issue. It has identified that its rural location, combined with the male atmosphere, is a real barrier to women trainees. In an attempt to attract more women, a training programme in care has been introduced. Of the two trainees following this programme, one is a man.

54. Trainees' progress reviews do not formally tackle equal opportunities issues although there is a good level of informal monitoring. Opportunities to develop trainees' understanding of equal opportunities issues throughout their training programmes are missed. Employers' policies and procedures on equal opportunities are not monitored.

55. Arthur Rank Training uses display boards for marketing its programmes. These show images of trainees undertaking real jobs which to a limited extent challenge stereotypical views. There is a small amount of written marketing material but it is not written in a style which would make it easy to read by a trainee with additional support needs. There are no large print versions for trainees who are visually impaired or any versions in languages other than English.

Trainee support

Grade 3

56. Most trainees are referred to Arthur Rank Training by the careers service. A few trainees are referred by other agencies or contact the organisation directly in response to marketing activities. Applications are made on a detailed application form and candidates are invited for interview. This interview usually lasts for half a day and includes a brief tour of the training centre. The interviewer establishes the needs and aspirations of the applicant and the process is recorded. The applicant is informed of the outcome of the interview by letter.

57. Successful applicants usually attend a two-week induction programme during which they are informed of their rights and responsibilities and introduced to their vocational training programme. Health and safety features heavily in this induction programme. The two-week programme also introduces school leavers to the world of work and includes personal effectiveness training. Older trainees who have not joined the programme straight from school are given a shorter induction with less emphasis on personal development. Trainees' basic skills are assessed during the

induction period and additional ones prepared by the trainers. The outcome of the basic skills diagnostic tests determines the level of additional learning support offered to the trainee.

58. Trainees are placed with a variety of employers at the end of their induction programme. They receive a further induction specific to the workplace at the start of their work placement. A trainer/assessor visits trainees quarterly to monitor the trainee's progress in the workplace, undertake assessments and provide pastoral support.

59. All but one of the 106 trainees were identified by the careers service as requiring additional learning support. Eighty-nine trainees were assessed as having no realistic prospect of achieving a level 2 NVQ. Fifty-eight trainees were assessed as requiring foundation level literacy training and 18 trainees were assessed as requiring foundation level numeracy training.

60. Inspectors found strengths and weaknesses additional to those identified in the self-assessment report and awarded a lower grade.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good links with external support agencies
- ◆ good pastoral support
- ◆ very effective induction process
- ◆ very good celebration of trainees' successes

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ failure to individualise training plans
- ◆ ineffective progress reviews

61. Arthur Rank Training has good working relationships with a variety of support agencies. These include the local careers service, the probation service and other specialist organisations. Specialist training organisations are used to provide good personal effectiveness training. Examples include a survival-training course on the island of Mull and the London sailing project. Arthur Rank Training usually sends two trainees each year on each of these two projects. Bursaries from a charitable trust support trainees experiencing financial difficulties. Specialist support agencies and other organisations such as the police service are used during the induction programme to contribute to the life skills aspect of the programme.

62. Trainees receive good pastoral support during their training programmes. A member of Arthur Rank Training staff contacts the home of any trainee who fails to attend a training session. Staff deal with trainees' personal problems in a supportive and sympathetic manner. A trainee experiencing problems with housing following the birth of his child was given constructive help in dealing with the relevant agencies.

63. Personal effectiveness is an integral part of all Arthur Rank Training's activities. The induction covers many life skills such as teamwork and managing finances. Trainees are made aware of their responsibilities as well as their rights. Those who do not honour their responsibilities receive timely warnings and, if necessary, sanctions.

64. All trainees undertake a comprehensive two-week induction programme at the start of their training. This is well structured and provides an effective introduction to the vocational training programmes with a strong emphasis on health and safety. Trainees are able to remember what they have been taught and to show that they have understood important topics such as equal opportunities. The induction programme has a strong emphasis on personal development and includes practical exercises in team building and problem-solving. Staff evaluate trainees' abilities and aptitudes during the induction period and this information is used to match trainees to a suitable placement. The quality of the induction programme is monitored by a questionnaire which is completed by trainees at the end of induction. The responses are summarised by managers and this process has led to several improvements. Examples include increasing the amount of practical work undertaken during the induction period and providing better recreational facilities.

65. Arthur Rank Training has several ways of celebrating trainees' successes and this has a motivating effect on trainees. Trainees are able to achieve certification of achievements at an early stage in their training. For example, some obtain a qualification in handling fire extinguishers; others obtain a more general health and safety qualification. Trainees' successes are celebrated in a high-profile awards ceremony at the Royal Agricultural Show in July. Several prominent celebrities have participated in the awards ceremony and this has helped to increase the sense of achievement of successful trainees. Successful trainees also receive bonus payments on achievement of a qualification. One payment is made for achievement of an NVQ; other payments are made for other qualifications such as wordpower and numberpower.

66. Training plans are not individualised. Some do not take account of trainees' prior knowledge and experience. Development plans do not specify short-term targets and milestones. As a result, the monitoring of trainees' progress is not as effective as it might be.

67. In all occupational areas except business administration, trainees' progress reviews are ineffective. A member of the training staff normally carries these out in the workplace. A grading system is used to assess trainees' performance in the workplace. The work-placement provider or employer usually makes this assessment. Trainees are graded on a variety of criteria such as timekeeping and attitude to work. Good grades do not attract comments and poor grades are not accompanied by advice on how to improve performance. This lack of constructive feedback reduces the value of the progress-review process. Trainers do not provide trainees with short-term goals and targets. Action plans tend to focus on personal

effectiveness and do not relate to vocational skills or competencies.

Management of training

Grade 3

68. A board of trustees has been appointed to help manage the transition of the organisation to full independent charitable status. The organisation previously operated under the direction of an executive committee, as an autonomous unit within the Arthur Rank Centre. The executive committee met four times a year to discuss progress in the context of the business plan, contracts, training programmes and developments. The strategic planning and day-to-day running of the centre was the responsibility of the director of training. The postholder is now the chief executive of the new charity. There are 20 members of staff, of whom 11 work full time and nine are part time. Tutors and support officers report to the training manager while all the other staff report to the chief executive, who was formerly the director of training. Some training is subcontracted to a training organisation and three further education colleges, but most is given using the facilities at the NAC. The organisation achieved the Investors in People award in 1998 and was successfully re-assessed in 2000. Arthur Rank Training has written procedures for staff recruitment, selection and appraisal. Members of staff have an annual appraisal at which their performance is reviewed. This is followed by a six-monthly check to ensure that agreed actions have been carried out. A training and development plan is agreed with each member of staff. Following the original inspection, the training provider has introduced NVQ training in health and social care and revised the operation of its Life Skills programme to accommodate more learners.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ inadequate management of subcontractors
- ◆ ineffective co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- ◆ insufficient staff development in training techniques

69. The training provider has rectified these weaknesses and inspectors awarded the same grade as that given in the revised action plan.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ good internal communications
- ◆ good use of management information

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ inadequate preparation for intake of learners in 2000-01
- ◆ failure to recognise fully the potential for learning in the workplace

70. Following the decision that Arthur Rank Training should move from the

National Agricultural Centre site, a significant amount of management time has gone into the search for new premises and preparations for the move to independent charitable status. The training provider has operated in accordance with a business plan for the period ending July 2002. Some steps have been taken since the original inspection to tackle poor recruitment and retention rates. This includes the appointment of new tutors and assessors to the construction training programme, the appointment of an additional member of staff to provide basic skills support and the introduction of provision in health and social care to widen the appeal of the training programmes for women. Retention has improved significantly on the construction training programmes. There is good basic skills support. The introduction of health and social care training has increased the proportion of young women on training programmes to 29 per cent overall. The number of learners on the agriculture training programmes is still low and there is no strategy to tackle this effectively. Although women have been recruited to the health and social care training programmes, no progress has been made in recruiting young women to other occupational areas. Due to a change in government policies, no school leavers were recruited at Easter. To achieve its contract targets, Arthur Rank Training took on twice as many learners as usual during the summer months, but was unable to find the necessary number of work placements for these learners. Following their induction, many young people left the training programme. Action has been taken to rectify this situation.

71. Internal communications are good. All staff are kept up to date with developments through monthly meetings and are able to discuss ideas and good practice. For example, staff suggested expanding the Life Skills training programme to accommodate more young people who could benefit from vocational tasters rather than being placed directly on to an occupational programme. This strategy was agreed and has been implemented. At monthly meetings NVQ performance, budget updates and developments are also discussed. The chief executive meets with the training and contracts managers monthly to discuss progress against targets and issues raised at the staff meetings. These meetings usually have a set agenda. They are minuted and action points are now recorded. There are formal bimonthly staff meetings. Daily lunchtime tutors' meetings focus on operational issues and any emerging problems relating to training and learners. The contracts manager or training manager attends these meetings.

72. The chief executive also carries out reviews of the training programmes with tutors and assessors every six months. Retention and achievement rates and internal verification procedures are discussed. Outcomes of these meetings are sometimes unclear. Some line management responsibilities are unclear. For example, the training manager manages tutor and assessors, but generally the chief executive conducts the appraisals and performance reviews with these staff. No individual member of staff is given clear responsibility for individual learning plans and progress reviews. The quality assurance manager carries out audits or progress reviews, but often only identifies administrative issues. The chief executive is aware of the confusion over roles and responsibilities, and discussions

are taking place to rectify the situation. Staff appraisals are effective. Each member of staff has a personal action plan which includes job-related performance measures.

73. To support meetings and aid decision-making, a range of reports is produced using the management-information system. The information officer has developed a range of reports which build on the standard reports provided by the software package. The management-information system is a powerful management tool which provides a range of forecasts and a detailed analysis of historical data. Quarterly forecasts are made using data based on achievements compared with plans and contracts. Reports analysing leavers, time on programme, achievements and reasons for leaving are produced. There is also an extensive range of reports produced on a monthly basis. Reports compare enrolments, achievements and retention against the plan and the previous year's figures for each occupational area and overall. Learners' leaver reports identify the reasons why learners leave programmes. Monthly planning reports are used to help tutors plan their work-placement visits. Data on applications and starts are analysed. These reports are discussed at the managers and staff's meetings to identify areas for action.

74. There are a large number of links with external organisations which help the organisation to achieve its goals. There are close working relationships with the careers service, which is kept informed of opportunities for learners to start on the various programmes. The Royal Agricultural Society of England provides rent-free buildings at the National Agricultural Centre. Learners can also apply to a bursary fund for additional support for the purchase of tools or to take additional training.

75. Subcontracts with the colleges specify the frequency of attendance records and progress reports required. They also cover health and safety and equal opportunities and provide for Arthur Rank Training's staff to visit the colleges for liaison purposes. They now specify that colleges should provide Arthur Rank Training with schemes of work, copies of external verifiers' reports or internal quality control reports, and that Arthur Rank Training's staff should be able to monitor the quality of the off-the-job training and assessment. Contracts with work-placement providers and employers have been amended since the original inspection to include the request that employers will be involved in workplace assessment. There is still no reference to employers' role in providing the on-the-job training and in enabling learners to produce work-based evidence.

76. The training provider has drawn up an assessment plan, showing which parts of the NVQ can be assessed in the workplace and through off-the-job training. In some cases, however, some learners were benefiting from a wide range of practical experience, but the training provider had not acknowledged the learners' progress. In other cases, employers with an inadequate understanding of the NVQ requirements had not been given good additional relevant information. Although some off-the-job training is not systematically planned, learners receive good individual support to help them complete relevant assignments in their portfolios of evidence. The training provider has developed action plans for some learners

who have completed a work placement.

77. Since the original inspection, three new staff have been appointed, who are all suitably qualified and experienced. One existing member of staff has gained an assessor's award and another has gained a qualification in teaching basic skills. Additionally, staff have undertaken bespoke training in teaching methods and attended workshops in dealing with young people with challenging behaviour.

Quality assurance

Grade 3

78. Arthur Rank Training has a quality assurance policy, associated procedures and an internal audit system. The chief executive has overall responsibility for quality assurance, the quality manager has day-to-day responsibility and designated staff auditors check for non-compliance with the operational procedures. Quality assurance is subject to discussion at the quarterly executive, monthly staff and weekly team meetings. The senior management team also meets every two or three weeks to review performance against the contract with the local LSC. The training provider has been collecting feedback from learners and work-placement providers through an established system of evaluation questionnaires. Arthur Rank Training has produced three self-assessment reports and associated action plans since 1998. Following the original inspection, an action plan was produced, which has formed the basis of the quality improvement system.

At the original inspection, the main weaknesses identified were:

- ◆ inadequate internal verification
- ◆ insufficiently rigorous self-assessment
- ◆ ineffective monitoring of subcontractors

79. All three of these weaknesses have been remedied and these areas are now judged to be satisfactory. The grade awarded by inspectors is the same as that given by the provider in its post-inspection action plan.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ many improvements made following inspection

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ actions have not yet impacted on achievement of learning plans

80. Following the original inspection, an action plan was produced and implemented. As a result of this, many improvements have been made. For example, the facilities for the provision of the construction NVQ at level 1 at the training provider's premises have been improved. The availability of tools and equipment in all areas for learners' use has been increased. New internal verification arrangements have been developed and assessment practices have been

improved. Co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training has improved. Staff record when assessment will take place in the workplace to ensure that any gaps are covered during the off-the-job training sessions. All learners who are not ready to take a job now undertake a Life Skills course before entering a work-based learning programme in an effort to improve retention. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this initiative. Designated staff continue to carry out internal audits of various aspects of the training provider's operations and ensure that any non-compliance is rectified.

81. Although all of the above actions have been implemented, the achievement of learning plans is still low. In 2000-01, the rate for horticulture learners achieving their individual learning plans was 13 per cent, 6 per cent for motor vehicle and for construction was 3.3 per cent. These rates are all lower than for the previous year.

82. A designated member of staff co-ordinates internal verification across the five occupational areas and senior managers conduct observations of the tutors' training sessions. A new internal verification system has been introduced and is now used throughout the organisation. Internal verification takes place regularly and assessments are observed. External verifier reports now indicate that internal verification is good.

83. The original inspection identified insufficiently thorough self-assessment as a weakness. A new self-assessment report has not been produced, because the training provider and the local LSC agreed that the training provider should produce and work from a post-inspection action plan. A number of staff meetings have been held to produce information for the next self-assessment. Information from learners and feedback from employers has been included. Inspectors awarded the same grades as those given in the post inspection action plan.

84. Monitoring of subcontractors was judged to be ineffective at the original inspection. The training officer is now responsible for increasing the level of monitoring, particularly with the subcontracted colleges. This has resulted in the production of monthly attendance reports and termly progress reports. The training officer also visits the colleges on a regular basis and has frequent discussions with college staff about the progress of learners. One college supplies Arthur Rank Training with its external verification report, and a recent agreement has been reached with the other colleges for the training officer to see the external verifier reports at the colleges.