

INSPECTION REPORT

Carillion Craft Training

27 May 2002



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Arlygliaeth Ei Mawrhydi Dros Addysg
A Hylloddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate
For Education and Training in Wales

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
- **learndirect** 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.

Overall judgement

In those cases where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

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

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

SUMMARY

The provider

Carillion Craft Training offers foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships for the construction industry. It has 14 branches in England and Wales providing training in construction crafts. All learners are employed by Carillion Construction Limited for the duration of their training. Learners attend their local training centre on block release for off-the-job training and assessment.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Practical training is good and well supported by comprehensive learning materials for background knowledge and assessment. Leadership and management are good, with strong support from the parent company. Equal opportunities issues are dealt with satisfactorily. Quality assurance arrangements are thorough and ensure good provision throughout the 14 training centres.

GRADES

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

Construction	2
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

KEY STRENGTHS

- comprehensive learning and assessment packs
- effective promotion of health and safety practices
- good retention, progression and achievement rates
- well-managed self-assessment process
- high self-esteem among learners
- effective internal verification processes
- effective strategic management
- good integration of key skills with the NVQ

KEY WEAKNESSES

- poor monitoring of equal opportunities issues
- incomplete quality assurance manual
- weak progress reviews and target-setting
- insufficient diverse workplace evidence

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better recording of meeting outcomes
- closer monitoring of the training process
- greater number of qualified trainers
- better awareness of framework requirements by work-placement supervisors
- more effective use of site diaries

THE INSPECTION

1. Thirteen inspectors spent a total of 58 days at 12 Carillion Craft Training (CCT) centres in England in May 2002. Forty-nine work-placement providers were visited and inspectors carried out interviews with 41 employers' representatives. Inspectors interviewed 196 learners and 73 of CCT's staff, including instructors, work-placement monitoring officers, management and administrative staff. Representatives from four further education colleges were also interviewed. Inspectors examined 90 individual learning plans and 61 learners' portfolios of evidence. They also examined policy documents, minutes of meetings, learners' files, assessment records, management files and the quality assurance manual. Inspectors observed and graded 29 learning sessions. The most recent self-assessment report was produced in May 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Construction	1	2	12	11	2	0	1	29
Total	1	2	12	11	2	0	1	29

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. CCT provides training in brickwork, carpentry and joinery, painting and decorating and general construction operations. There are 910 work-based learners in training. Of these, 682 are on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes and 228 are on advanced modern apprenticeship programmes.

3. CCT operates a national network of 14 construction craft training centres offering foundation and advanced modern apprenticeship programmes in bricklaying, carpentry and joinery, painting and decorating and general construction operations at levels 1 to 3. The training centres were set up 35 years ago, training approximately 1,000 learners each year. CCT is an operating unit of Carillion Construction Limited. A small head office team in West London manages the operation. Four area managers each have responsibility for several training centres in Tyneside, Sunderland, Gateshead, and Middlesbrough in the Northeast region. Training centres in the Northwest are in Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham and Hull. Other training centres are in Birmingham, Gosport, Southampton and Maidstone. The training centres in Cardiff and in Bristol were not included in this inspection. CCT has 120 staff across the government-funded training, but not all work solely on this project. CCT has contracts with 10 local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) and its largest contract is with Tees Valley LSC.

4. The training centres have responded to changes in employment and training in the construction industry and developed schemes to meet changing funding criteria and skills shortages. Major contractors no longer train many learners because of the growth in self-employment and subcontracting in the industry. There is little training in the self-employed sector. CCT operates on behalf of the industry and most learners gain sustained employment with local contractors on satisfactory completion of training.

5. CCT recruits, trains and acts as sponsoring employer for learners while they are on new-entrant training programmes. A network of work-placement officers and monitoring officers at each training centre find learners local on-the-job site experience. CCT is the largest industry-based training provider of its kind in construction and is one of three organisations approved by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) to train learners on behalf of the industry. Training centres are accredited to provide new-entrant youth programmes on behalf of the industry. Most training centres have extensive facilities for practical training, with classrooms set aside for background knowledge training. CCT has developed its own learning activity and assessment packs to assist in training and assessment of NVQs at levels 1 to 3. CCT works in partnership with local further education colleges to provide NVQs at level 1, and key skills at level 1, as a 14-week preparatory programme and extended initial assessment. Successful learners register for foundation modern apprenticeships and some of those learners progress to advanced modern apprenticeships.

Work-based learning for young people

6. Retention and framework achievement rates for advanced modern apprentices are very good and improve year on year. The equivalent rates for foundation modern apprentices, although not as good as for advanced modern apprenticeships, are still high and improve each year. All new starters on the foundation modern apprenticeship programme have previously completed a national vocational qualification (NVQ) at level 1 in their craft area. All advanced modern apprentices transfer from foundation modern apprenticeship programmes, which motivates the learners and increases their self-esteem.

7. Learners attend training centres on block release to gain work-related knowledge, and learners have key skills training. CCT has produced good learning and assessment packs to help learners gain background knowledge. Training centres provide safe environments for training, and health and safety is emphasised from the beginning of training.

8. On-the-job training is provided in many good work placements. Evidence for learners' portfolios is collected in weekly site diaries. This is currently the only source of workplace evidence. Insufficient diverse evidence is collected in the workplace. Work-placement and monitoring officers carry out regular progress reviews but the reviews are not thorough and do not focus on learners' progress towards their vocational qualification. Health and safety issues are well covered during progress reviews.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

9. CCT is part of Carillion Construction Limited. CCT works in partnership with the CITB and employer representative bodies to ensure that training programmes reflect the industry's needs. The general manager of CCT reports to the managing director of Carillion Infrastructure Services. He has overall management responsibility and is in charge of the day-to-day running of the organisation. A manager is responsible for all accounts and administration and four area managers share responsibility for the 14 regional craft training centres. The organisation has a quality assurance co-ordinator and a development co-ordinator who is also responsible for internal verification procedures across the organisation. Four of the training centres have co-ordinators who are responsible for the day-to-day running of the training centres and report to an area manager while the remaining training centres are managed by an area manager. Each training centre has a team of specialist instructors, assessors, work placement and monitoring officers and administrative staff. Learners are trained and assessed at these training centres. They gain work experience with Carillion Construction Limited, its subcontractors or an established network of partner construction companies. CCT has an appropriate equal opportunities policy and quality assurance policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. The organisation holds the Investors in People award in the Northeast and the Northwest regions. This is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people. The Training Standards Council inspected CCT as Tarmac Craft Training in November 1998 and Estyn (Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales) reported on the Cardiff centre in September 2000. Self-assessment takes place annually and the most recent report was produced in May 2002.

STRENGTHS

- effective strategic management
- good business planning
- comprehensive staff appraisal and development procedures
- good internal communications
- positive promotion of under-represented groups in marketing material
- good promotion of equal opportunities in the organisation
- well-managed self-assessment process
- effective use of management data as a basis for decision-making
- good internal verification processes
- high self-esteem among learners

WEAKNESSES

- poor monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace
- inadequate evaluation and review of equal opportunities procedures
- incomplete quality assurance manual

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- greater number of qualified trainers
- better recording of meeting outcomes
- closer monitoring of the training process
- more frequent reinforcement of equal opportunities issues to learners and staff

10. CCT is well led and managed by the management team. Staff have the benefits of belonging to a large national construction services organisation. The aims of the parent company complement CCT's strategic business plan. Managers are well informed about conditions and changes in the construction industry and staff understand the implications for training. The organisation has developed effective links with external industry and training partners to promote work-based learning to the industry. CCT's comprehensive business plan sets out its objectives clearly and identifies strengths and areas for improvement. Retention and achievement rates are a key part of the business plan. Staff know about the business plan and clearly understand the organisation's aims and the importance of learners completing the targets on their training programmes. CCT has a staff bonus scheme that is linked to key performance indicators such as learners' retention and achievement rates. It has close links with Connexions and the local community. CCT also has effective partnerships with other training providers, awarding bodies and lead bodies.

11. Management are committed to staff development through the appraisal system, succession planning and training. The annual staff appraisal scheme is comprehensive and well documented. Self-assessment is used as a basis for constructive discussion at appraisals. Training needs are agreed and development plans are drawn up. Staff value the appraisal system. Some staff do not have teaching or training qualifications. Events are held to update staff's competences to carry out their jobs.

12. Staff are positive about CCT. They share its values and want the best for learners. There are regular meetings throughout the organisation. The development team meets regularly and sets up project groups to review and make recommendations to improve training programmes. In addition, there is much informal communication. Some meetings that take place regularly are not always minuted and this makes monitoring progress and follow up difficult. The management team has frequently visited training centres and is readily available for discussions with staff. Staff are encouraged to give feedback on changes to working practices. They are kept well informed through updates and newsletters. All staff meet and share ideas at an annual two-day staff conference. There is much sharing of good practice and development work.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

13. CCT's recruitment and promotional literature makes good use of contemporary images of men and women of all ages and from different ethnic backgrounds. The material is produced in conjunction with the industry's lead body and is displayed in appropriate places to attract potential learners. All applicants take an initial communication and numeracy test. Individual tuition is offered at training centres to help learners to progress to NVQs at level 2. Learners who are working towards foundation modern apprenticeships can take advanced modern apprenticeships when they achieve their NVQ at level 2. Learners are also encouraged to obtain a construction skills certification scheme card to help them gain employment on construction sites when they complete their modern apprenticeship.

14. CCT has an equal opportunities policy that outlines the legal requirements and recommends procedures in line with the company's values. It aims to promote good practice across all training centres and in work placements and the policy is reviewed and updated annually. It is clearly displayed at all training centres and learners are given a copy of it at induction. The policy is reinforced in learners' induction assignments. CCT offers training on equal opportunities issues such as counselling skills and improving the effectiveness of selection, recruitment and induction, at its two-day annual conference. Staff appreciate training sessions on motivating learners and promoting and sharing good equal opportunities practice.

15. Work-placement providers are given a summary of the information in the equal opportunities policy before they sign an agreement with CCT but they rarely see the complete document, although they sign to say they will comply with it. There is inadequate monitoring of subcontractors. There is no clear policy to check that learners, staff or subcontractors understand the policies. Evaluation and reviews of equal opportunities procedures and practice are inadequate.

16. Gender and ethnicity data are now collected on application forms, but no targets are set and there are no strategies to increase the proportion of women learners or learners from minority ethnic backgrounds. There are currently 13 women out of 910 learners and 14 from minority ethnic backgrounds. Nine women and 14 learners from minority ethnic groups joined the foundation modern apprenticeships this year, which is a small increase. Women's achievements are celebrated at award ceremonies and in the press.

Quality assurance**Contributory grade 2**

17. The quality assurance process is well managed and CCT works towards continuous improvement. There are good links between quality assurance and self-assessment procedures. Constructive discussions at the staff conference emphasise sharing good practice. Annual audits effectively identify if improvements are needed. Auditors systematically follow up corrective action requests. Outstanding actions are transferred to local development plans for follow up. The management team identifies trends from the audits and effectively plans where action is required to ensure consistency across the organisation. Issues and trends are further discussed at management meetings and form part of the development team's future agenda.

18. The management team and training centre co-ordinators were consulted on the self-assessment report. Staff were told about the outcomes of the self-assessment process at the staff conference. The self-assessment report has been effective in promoting continuous improvement. The report identifies most of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors and most of the occupational and contributory grades matched those given by inspectors. Inspectors gave a higher grade for leadership and management than that in the self-assessment report. The findings of the Estyn (Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales) report in September 2000, on the Cardiff centre, were similar to those of the Adult Learning Inspectorate, although Estyn works to a different framework. CCT's national development plan is easy to follow and specifies actions to be taken for the next two years. Questionnaires are sent out to learners and work placement providers regularly. The feedback from these questionnaires is analysed and is a standard agenda item at team meetings so that issues are monitored. As a result of learners' feedback the canteen at training centres was upgraded. Feedback is not regularly analysed to be used as a basis for future national policy.

19. CCT works closely with the joint awarding body to establish strong internal verification systems. An internal verification handbook, produced in partnership with the awarding body, clearly outlines CCT's expectations from its assessors. Verification is planned effectively. Assessors are appropriately qualified. Internal verifiers have an in-depth knowledge of assessment and verification requirements. Verification is consistent across all training centres. Internal verifiers from other areas are brought in to small training centres to ensure impartiality. National and regional internal verifiers' meetings are used effectively to share good practice and to pass on information.

20. Clear performance targets are set at senior levels in CCT. Quarterly reviews ensure that performance is in line with strategy. Each month, data are produced to measure financial and contractual performance of training centres. Performance data are discussed with training centre staff at team meetings and are reviewed against the team's targets. Bi-monthly profit and loss accounts are produced for training centres and are discussed at regular senior management meetings. There is a system to identify which areas are on target and which are falling behind. Senior management meetings use this information to identify trends at six-monthly meetings.

21. Quality assurance is effective. However, the quality assurance manual is bulky and contains too much irrelevant information. An internal audit identified that manuals in some training centres are in poor condition, are not used by staff, and are not regularly updated. Some procedures are out of date. Some new procedures have been added, but some key processes, such as that for internal verification, are not included. There is no monitoring of training through observation. Many procedures emphasise process rather than learners. CCT is reviewing the system.

Good Practice

Quality improvement teams are set up to solve problems. The teams are made up of staff from all areas of CCT. Drafts of new procedures are sent to all training centres for comment before they are taken on. This is an effective way to involve people throughout CCT in quality assurance.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	910	2

22. Learners are recruited by recommendation or are referred by local careers services or Jobcentre Plus. Numeracy and literacy tests are part of the selection process and all applicants also take a test to see if they have a head for heights. Successful applicants have an initial registration period of 14 weeks during which they work towards an NVQ at level 1 and key skills at level 1 with local further education colleges. CCT identifies learners who need additional support at this stage. Successful learners work on construction sites for between two and four months to gain work experience before going to the training centres to work towards their NVQs at level 2. Learners can gain more work experience on site through block release while they are at the training centre. If learners progress to an NVQ at level 3 they work on site for about 12 months, then go back to the training centre for seven to 10 weeks of off-the-job training and NVQ assessment. CCT carries out all the training, assessment and internal verification of NVQs. Work-placement providers train learners in the workplace. This training is recorded in learners' site diaries as well as on their weekly timesheets. NVQ assessment is based on evidence collected in the workplace and in the training centres. CCT subcontracts key skills training to further education colleges, which hold weekly training sessions in the training centres. Most subcontracted colleges have used training packages and assignments for key skills this year which were developed by CCT.

23. There are 910 learners, of whom 228 are advanced modern apprentices, and 682 are foundation modern apprentices. In trowel occupations, there are 236 learners, of whom 49 are advanced modern apprentices and 187 are foundation modern apprentices. In wood occupations, there are 142 advanced modern apprentices and 377 foundation modern apprentices, and in painting and decorating, there are 37 advanced modern apprentices and 99 foundation modern apprentices. In general construction operations, there are 19 learners, all of whom are foundation modern apprentices. In addition, there are 31 New Deal clients who are on a variety of options. Advanced modern apprentices work towards key skills qualifications at level 2 and NVQs at level 3. Foundation modern apprentices work towards key skills qualifications at level 1 and NVQs at level 1 and 2. Most advanced modern apprentices take three years to complete their framework.

24. Many work-placement providers contribute to the scheme, ranging from national organisations to sole traders. Learners are moved to different organisations if they need to gain additional experience to cover the range of the qualification. The work placement and monitoring officers' role is to find work placements, carry out health and safety checks and support learners and workplace supervisors throughout on-the-job

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training. Informal reviews are carried out frequently, and formal reviews are carried out every eight to 12 weeks. CCT has developed its own range of teaching and learning packs. Trainers adapt generic schemes of work to suit learners' individual needs and to maximise the use of particular training centres' resources. Trainers are experienced and occupationally qualified as assessors.

The following tables show 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		1997-98								
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	188		298		210		141		108							
Retained*	0		243	82	175	83	130	92	103	95							
Successfully completed	0		199	67	175	83	130	92	103	95							
Still in learning	184		44	15	0	0	0	0	0	0							

*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

Work-based learning for young people																	
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98								
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	672		589		633		620		532							
Retained*	0		402	68	432	68	356	57	298	56							
Successfully completed	0		318	54	432	68	356	57	298	56							
Still in learning	598		84	14	0	0	0	0	0	0							

*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

- good retention, progression and achievement rates
- good integration of key skills with vocational training
- many good-quality work placements
- effective preparation of learners for work
- useful learning and assessment packs
- effective promotion of health and safety practices

WEAKNESSES

- insufficient diverse workplace evidence
- weak progress reviews and target-setting

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- further development of key skills learning materials
- more effective use of site diaries
- increased awareness of framework requirements by workplace supervisors

25. Retention and achievement rates are good for all work-based learners. Many learners successfully complete the apprenticeship framework within the planned duration. Over the past five years, the average retention rate for advanced modern apprentices is 88 per cent, and 68 per cent for foundation modern apprentices. The average achievement rate available for the past four years for advanced modern apprentices is 80 per cent, and 59 per cent for foundation modern apprentices, which is good for the sector. More than half of the foundation modern apprentice learners who leave early, achieve an NVQ at level 2 in their chosen craft. These rates are high for the occupational area and have shown continuous improvement. A good proportion of learners move into regular employment after completing their modern apprenticeship framework.

26. Attendance and punctuality for on- and off-the-job training are good. Learners are well motivated and are keen to discuss their work and the industry. During their first 14 weeks on the training programme, learners progress well towards achieving NVQs at level 1 as well as the relevant key skills qualifications. Many learners who complete their foundation modern apprenticeship progress to the advanced modern apprenticeship.

27. CCT uses many varied organisations to provide work placements for learners. CCT evaluates work-placement providers' health and safety, equal opportunities procedures and the range of work available before they sign an agreement. Many work-placement providers routinely send learners to different sites to broaden their experience. Some learners progress to work without direct supervision. Few work-placement providers have enough information about NVQs. Where learners do not have enough opportunity to cover the full range of activities required by their NVQs, work-placement officers move them to alternative sites to complete their training.

28. Health and safety is promoted and practised at all levels in CCT. Staff attend regular health and safety training to update their knowledge and learners receive comprehensive training throughout their training programmes. CCT has developed good, up-to-date learning packs which sometimes go beyond the requirements of the qualification. For example, the scaffolding unit of the NVQ does not include the use of mechanical powered access machines (cherry pickers) but CCT offers learners training

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to use them safely as they are often used on building sites. All learners are given protective equipment when they start training and trainers ensure that learners wear it. Work-placement officers monitor health and safety at work placements. CCT offers expert advice to ensure that practices meet current regulations. Some work-placement providers are trained to carry out effective risk assessments. Health and safety is covered at learners' progress reviews in the training centres and on site visits, and any problems are dealt with promptly and effectively.

29. CCT's trainers have developed a comprehensive range of good-quality learning and assessment packs to ensure consistency across all training centres. The resources are used for background knowledge and practical sessions and give learners information about the elements and units of their NVQs. Learners' understanding is checked carefully as they finish each pack. Completed packs are used as evidence in learners' portfolios of evidence. Learners also collect witness statements in the workplace. Most observed training sessions were satisfactory or better. Some training sessions are individual and are done at learners' workstations.

30. CCT has developed good assignments which link key skills requirements with the modern apprenticeship frameworks. Staff are committed to making training in key skills an integral part of training in the industry. CCT has developed effective working relationships with many further education colleges. If college staff responsible for key skills training are not occupationally experienced, CCT works with them to help them to understand the industry. CCT and one of the colleges have developed construction learning and activity packs for key skills at level 1. The packs have assignments specifically designed for each occupational area to help learners relate key skills to their occupation and to produce cross-referenced evidence from the NVQ. Learners find the application of number packs particularly useful and relevant. All learners produce individual portfolios of evidence based on common construction site situations. Although good progress has been made on key skills at level 1, there are no learning packs at level 2 for advanced modern apprentices. Evaluation of feedback on the level 1 packs is being used to improve them. CCT has been too reliant on local colleges, which are sometimes less knowledgeable about current requirements or are unwilling to use CCT's packs. Some colleges do not arrange for learners to take key skills tests. CCT has identified this weakness and intends to remedy the problem to ensure that learners are not disadvantaged.

31. Many learners' progress reviews emphasise pastoral issues more than learners' progress. Some progress reviews are carried out poorly, with insufficient time to cover learners' experiences comprehensively. Most progress reviews emphasise health and safety issues, but there is insufficient reviewing of other parts of the training programme. Feedback to learners is too general. Learners' progress towards their qualifications and their frameworks is not reviewed effectively and training and development targets are inadequate. Site supervisors are not effectively involved in learners' progress reviews. On- and off-the-job activities are not adequately linked. Some learners do not know what their programme requirements are and how they are progressing towards achieving their qualifications. The good-quality work placements provide learners with a

wide range of learning opportunities. There is too much emphasis on weekly site diaries to collect evidence on the job. Some learners and some site supervisors are not clear how to fill in their site diaries.

Good Practice

At some training centres, key skills trainers increase their knowledge and understanding of the industry by taking construction training. This helps them to understand construction vocabulary and to relate key skills to construction examples more effectively. At one training centre, a key skills trainer observed a session where learners were carrying out a project on scheduling and ordering materials for the NVQ at level 3.

Poor Practice

In some colleges, key skills portfolios were collected for internal verification and there was a delay of several months before the external moderator visited. In other colleges, learners produced their portfolios and were told that they had met the key skills requirements, only to be told that later they need to do additional work.