

INSPECTION REPORT

Haydon Training Services

24 June 2002



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

- work-based training for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **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.

Inadequate provision

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

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

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

SUMMARY

The provider

Haydon Training Services is a private training organisation operating from premises in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. Established in 1992, it provides work-based learning for young people funded by the Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Learning and Skills Council. There are 257 learners following modern apprenticeships, national vocational qualifications (NVQs), and foundation programmes. Of those, there are 92 learners in early years care, 48 in business administration, 60 in retailing and 49 in Life Skills. Programmes in IT and care of the elderly were not inspected as there were too few learners.

Overall judgement

The quality of provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training in business administration is good. Training in early years care is satisfactory, as is that in Life Skills. Training in retailing is unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of the company are satisfactory. Arrangements for equal opportunities and quality assurance are also satisfactory.

GRADES

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

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

Retailing, customer service & transportation	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Health, social care & public services	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

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Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Life Skills	3

KEY STRENGTHS

- very effective pastoral support
- good work placements
- good use of data to plan management decisions
- successful action to recruit learners from under-represented groups

KEY WEAKNESSES

- slow progress towards foundation modern apprenticeships in retailing and early years care
- insufficient planning of individual learning
- slow development of key skills provision

THE INSPECTION

1. A team of eight inspectors spent a total of 32 days at Haydon Training Services (HTS). They interviewed 88 learners, visited 46 workplaces, and interviewed 45 employers and workplace supervisors. They carried out 51 interviews with HTS staff and observed and graded 17 off-the-job training sessions. Inspectors examined a range of documents including 44 learners' portfolios of evidence, 70 individual learning plans, learners' records, the company's plans, policies and procedures, promotional literature and awarding bodies' reports. They also inspected the organisation's most recent self-assessment report, which was revised in April 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Health, social care & public services	1	2	4	3	0	0	0	10
Foundation programmes	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	5
Total	1	2	7	6	1	0	0	17

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. HTS was established in 1992. Its premises in Aylesbury are used both for administration and training. HTS provides work-based learning for young people funded by the Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). HTS originally concentrated on training for young people with learning difficulties, but now offers training up to level 4 NVQ. There are 258 learners. Of these, 151 are employed. There are 93 learners following programmes in early years care, 48 in business administration, 60 in retail and 49 in Life Skills. There are 15 full-time and 20 part-time staff. HTS provides off-the-job training for learners at its own premises, and in the workplace.

3. HTS recruits learners from Aylesbury, High Wycombe, Oxford, and the surrounding areas. The unemployment rate in the Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire LSC area in April 2002 was 1.3 per cent while nationally it was 3.1 per cent. The service sector provides over 80 per cent of employment in the area, with 16.7 per cent in manufacturing and 2.4 per cent in construction. The 1991 census showed the proportion of the population from minority ethnic groups as 4.4 per cent compared with 6.2 per cent nationally. The proportion of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above in 2001 was 54 per cent in the Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire area and 47.9 per cent nationally.

Work-based learning for young people

4. Learners on the accounting programme make good progress towards achieving their modern apprenticeship framework. Few of these learners leave their programmes early. There is good progression to higher level programmes for learners undertaking level 1 NVQs in retail and childcare. There is slow achievement of foundation modern apprenticeships in retailing and early years care. Key skills training is introduced late to these programmes. Overall achievement rates on most retail programmes are poor.

5. On-the-job training on most programmes is satisfactory or better. In early years care it is good. HTS provides training in care at its own training centre, and in the workplace. Work placements are good, and offer rich learning environments. HTS carefully matches learners to work placements to ensure they will suit the individual's needs. Learners receive good pastoral support from their tutors, and are often given good support with their learning. HTS staff do not pay sufficient attention to planning where the needs of individual learners differ in many programmes. The outcomes of reviews of learners' progress are not always adequately recorded.

Life Skills

6. Life Skills learners make satisfactory progress towards developing their personal and social skills. Their confidence and motivation increases as a result of the enrichment activities they participate in. The proportion of Life Skills learners continuing in training, gaining a job, or completing their planned learning programmes is satisfactory. HTS runs a successful pilot programme for pregnant young women.

7. HTS provides good coaching for Life Skills learners, which helps them develop their skills and encourages them to try work tasters. Staff carefully match learners with workplaces that suit their aspirations and abilities. The programmes are not adequately planned to cater for the differing needs of individual learners. HTS does not monitor the progress of learners sufficiently.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

8. Haydon Training Services (HTS) offers foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships, Life Skills and NVQ training for young people funded through the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). There are 258 learners, of whom 72 per cent are young women, 22 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and 23 per cent are learners with additional learning and/or social needs. The organisation has recently become involved in a pilot project for 14-16 year olds excluded from school, called the Junior Life Skills programme. HTS employs 15 full-time and 20 part-time staff. It has an equal opportunities policy, and policies and procedures for the quality assurance of training. HTS gained the Investors in People award, a national standard for improving a company's performance through its people, in 2000, and again in September 2001. The management team comprises the managing director, the contracts' manager, the director with responsibility for quality assurance and the programmes' manager. HTS's strategic direction is the responsibility of the managing director, assisted by the other members of the management team. Self-assessment has taken place annually. The third and most recent annual self-assessment report was produced in April 2002 and updated just before inspection. An action plan was included as part of the report.

STRENGTHS

- strong emphasis on the development of quality assurance
- good communications
- productive partnerships with key organisations
- effective management leading to good on-the-job training
- good use of data to plan management decisions
- effective action to recruit learners from under-represented groups

WEAKNESSES

- insufficient action to deal with slow progress towards foundation modern apprenticeships
- poorly recorded progress reviews
- insufficient planning of individual learning
- unsystematic application of some quality assurance procedures

9. HTS has good internal and external communications. There are regular team meetings and a monthly management meeting. Minutes are taken and circulated to all staff. A meeting for all staff takes place every three months, to discuss organisational development, human resource and general issues. There is good informal contact between staff. Managers encourage all staff to discuss issues and concerns with them. Staff value this approach. There are monthly meetings for assessors to discuss assessment practice. Minutes of these meetings are circulated to ensure that any

assessors who are unable to attend are kept informed. HTS is part of the local lifelong learning partnership, and HTS representatives attend the local training providers network. A member of staff sits on the Learning Gateway steering committee which is chaired by Connexions. Assessors maintain frequent, regular contact with employers when they visit learners at work. Managers and key members of the Life Skills team have good relationships with relevant external agencies. This often helps them to deal with learners' problems.

10. HTS has developed productive partnerships with other organisations. The local county council youth training co-ordinator meets HTS managers every two months to discuss the progress and experience of learners placed with the council. She promotes HTS and youth training to departments across the council and encourages participation by supervisors. This has resulted in good support for learners. Eighty-six per cent of learners placed at the council have gained permanent employment there. A local accounting training organisation works closely with HTS. It refers learners to HTS for a specific accounting course. It timetables their examination revision courses to avoid HTS's examination dates. This enables learners to gain additional support with their revision. There are useful contacts with large companies which use HTS to train their staff. This is particularly the case in early years training, where nurseries have well-established relationships with HTS, and continue to refer new staff to them for training.

11. HTS effectively manages on-the-job training across most areas of learning. HTS gives careful attention to matching learners to work placements, in order to meet the needs of the employer and the learners' aspirations. HTS chooses employers which can offer a good learning environment. The nurseries used for early years training are well-established and demonstrate good childcare practice. The information technology (IT) work placements are in organisations that have good resources, are well staffed and well managed. Learners have access to up-to-date equipment, and acquire skills associated with the latest technology. Workplace supervisors provide learners with good support. Many go to great lengths to plan work tasks which will meet the learners' NVO training requirements. Learners develop their skills well and gain appropriate knowledge from good work roles and activities. Their work teams value their contributions.

12. HTS collects and makes good use of a range of data to inform management decisions. A computerised management information system is used to present information on learners' gender, ethnicity and any disabilities they may have. It is used to produce data on achievement and retention rates. HTS presents data in an easily comprehensible form to help managers in their analysis and interpretation. Managers use this information to establish accurately the company's position in relation to their targets for recruitment, retention and achievement. They make recommendations on these at management and staff meetings.

13. HTS does not take sufficient action to remedy the slow progress in some areas towards achievement of foundation modern apprenticeship frameworks. In programmes in the care and retail areas particularly, learners have remained in learning significantly longer than originally planned, without completing their modern

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apprenticeship frameworks. Key skills training has been introduced towards the end of these programmes and is not well developed.

14. HTS do not effectively plan individual learning. Some individual learning plans do not have details of the learner's starting point, the outcome of their initial assessment, or their prior learning and achievements. The design of the plans allows sufficient space to identify and detail any support needs, but staff record only general comments.

Equality of opportunity**Contributory grade 3**

15. HTS takes successful action to recruit learners from under-represented groups. Many of the young people on its Life Skills programmes face significant barriers to participation in learning. Around 30 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. HTS puts considerable effort into making recruitment visits to a number of schools in the locality which cater specifically for young people with learning difficulties. It recruits up to half its learners for level 1 NVQ programmes in care and retail directly from these schools. A significant number of learners on these programmes are also from minority ethnic groups. HTS has helped to ensure a wider understanding of its programmes by translating promotional material into Urdu. It also operates a successful pilot foundation programme for pregnant 16-18 year olds. HTS has well-developed plans to maintain contact with the young women during the period between leaving to have their babies and being able to resume training.

16. HTS routinely collects and analyses data on learners' ethnicity and gender. These data are regularly discussed at management and staff meetings, at which equal opportunities is always an agenda item. Recent data has shown a fall in the percentage of learners recruited from minority ethnic groups. Managers have identified reasons for this, and set targets to increase recruitment of learners from these groups. The actions they have proposed to achieve this are weak, and over-generalised. They do not fit well with the company's overall recruitment strategy. The use of data to influence decision-making was identified as a strength in the self-assessment report.

17. Learners' understanding of some equal opportunities issues is superficial. HTS have a simple, clearly written equal opportunities policy which all learners receive at induction. However, there is insufficient follow-up or re-emphasis in subsequent progress reviews. Learners also receive a copy of HTS's complaints procedures at induction. Where learners complain about unfair treatment in the workplace, they receive good support from their tutors. HTS rigorously follows and logs the progress and outcome of their complaints. Staff receive satisfactory coverage of equal opportunities issues at their induction, and in subsequent training.

18. There is some poor promotion of equal opportunities. There are few displays or other images in HTS premises or publicity which reflect or celebrate the diversity of its learners. There is no systematic monitoring of equal opportunities in the learners' workplaces. HTS stresses the importance it gives to equal opportunities in its employer pack, and emphasises the need for employers to comply with equal opportunities legislation. However, it does not require all employers to have equal opportunities policies themselves, or routinely check whether these are in place or what they contain. The monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace largely relies on learners raising issues at progress reviews.

19. HTS recruitment literature states it is an equal opportunities employer. Although it has policies and procedures in place to ensure openness and competition in its staff appointments, HTS has not always been able to follow these when recruiting or

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promoting staff.

20. There is very poor access to HTS' main premises for people with mobility problems. HTS identified this as a weakness in its self-assessment report. Offices and training rooms are on the first and second floor and can only be reached by a staircase. For the very few learners with mobility difficulties, HTS has made alternative arrangements for their training.

Quality assurance**Contributory grade 3**

21. HTS has a strong emphasis on quality assurance. It has a set of procedures to assure the quality of its training, which cover the whole of a learner's experience from recruitment to completing and leaving a programme. One of the directors is responsible for improving and monitoring the quality assurance system. There is a regular cycle for reviewing activities throughout the year. For example, HTS sample learners' progress review records every three months and check the content to assess compliance with standard procedures. A member of the administrative staff has responsibility for monitoring compliance and produces reports and data for the directors. Managers analyse the information at their meetings and discuss issues of concern. They make recommendations to remedy problems and if appropriate, identify staff training needs. HTS has recently produced a new employers' pack which clearly explains how HTS views the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in the training programme. HTS ensure that staff are aware of the company's policies and procedures. Staff meet regularly to receive updates and share good practice.

22. A thorough internal verification system and associated assessment policies and procedures enable the continued monitoring of assessment practice. HTS has recently reviewed and updated this. There is a monthly schedule of internal verifier and assessor meetings where standardisation of assessment takes place. HTS routinely plans observation of assessors' performance and internal verification of assessment decisions.

23. The self-assessment process is an evaluative and self-critical exercise. Self-assessment is the central feature of the organisation's quality assurance arrangements. All management and staff members are involved in promoting continuous improvement. For the most recent self-assessment report, area of learning staff teams identified strengths and weaknesses using the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Their findings were then passed to directors for additional moderation. HTS consulted with all staff members over the final draft of the report. The development plan it contains is designed to build on strengths and rectify weaknesses. It has objectives, related actions, target dates and responsibilities and has resulted in improving areas of practice. For example, by analysing data from its management information system, HTS have identified that learners are making slow progress towards the achievement of qualifications, and that retention rates are low. As a result, HTS plans to follow up the destinations of early leavers and identify how they can help them to stay on programme. This initiative has yet to result in raising achievement levels.

24. Some of HTS's quality assurance procedures are not applied systematically. For example, some learners have an initial assessment when joining HTS, sitting standardised tests with clear criteria for measurement and scoring. Others are not initially assessed in this way and are placed directly into the programme. The quality assurance manual details methods for learners and employers to evaluate training, but insufficient action has followed evaluation. The new employers' handbook includes a questionnaire for employers to give their views of HTS and the learners' experience. This has only recently been introduced. HTS has collected some completed questionnaires, but it has not yet

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made an analysis of the information. HTS has not systematically sought learners' views of training, or given them a formal opportunity to evaluate their experiences. HTS relies heavily for its information on remarks made by learners in progress reviews, or through other informal contacts with employers and learners.

25. Learners' progress reviews are poorly recorded. They do not have clear measurable targets. They do not always include information about practical support arrangements. Learners and their tutors discuss changes in the learner's circumstances, but the tutor's notes of the meeting do not reflect the content of the discussion. The quality assurance arrangements to sample the review records do highlight areas where tutors do not follow established procedures, but do not examine the content of the reviews. Learners and employers are included in the process, but the review form is not designed for detailed or substantial feedback.

Good Practice

HTS owns an apartment in Spain. This is made available to staff for teambuilding and training activities. The management team use the facility as a residential setting to work on the company's operational strategy and business planning. Staff appreciate the opportunity to work together in a pleasant environment.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	48	2

26. HTS provides foundation and advanced modern apprenticeship and NVQ training in business administration and accounting for 48 learners. In accounting, there are eight advanced modern apprentices on level 4 NVQ programmes and six advanced modern apprentices on the NVQ at level 3. There are 16 foundation modern apprentices. In business administration, there are seven advanced modern apprentices, 10 foundation modern apprentices and one learner on a level 1 NVQ programme. Fourteen per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups. Thirty-eight learners are employed and 10 are on work placements. Learners can start training at any time of the year. HTS recruits learners by referrals from careers advisers and direct inquiries from employers and learners. HTS staff and prospective employers interview all applicants. HTS provides support for learners with additional learning needs. All learners receive an induction into the training programme, either at HTS or in the workplace. Learners following accounting technician programmes attend off-the-job training one half-day per week and there is some assessment in the workplace. Administration learners receive monthly visits in the workplace for training and assessment. Assessors visit learners in the workplace every 12 weeks to review progress. There are two trainer assessors for accounting and one part-time internal verifier. For business administration, there is one assessor and one internal verifier. All staff have occupational qualifications and experience.

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													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	15		12													
Retained*	0		1													
Successfully completed	0		0													
Still in learning	14		7													

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	21		13													
Retained*	0		1													
Successfully completed	0		0													
Still in learning	20		6													

*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																
NVQ Training																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			15		7		8									
Retained*			4	27	2	29	2	25								
Successfully completed			4	27	2	29	2	25								
Still in learning			1	7	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 progression towards achieving modern apprenticeship frameworks by accounting technician learners
- good additional learning and pastoral support for learners
- good on- and off-the-job training
- good assessment practice

WEAKNESSES

- poor use of individual learning plans
- poor awareness of progress by learners

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better development of key skills training provision for accounting technician learners
- better initial assessments
- more standardised inductions

27. Learners following accounting technician training make good progress towards achieving their modern apprenticeship frameworks. Of the 48 learners currently in training, 30 are accounting technician learners and 18 are following business administration programmes. The dropout rate on modern apprenticeship programmes over the past two years is about 20 per cent. Only one learner has left the accounting technician training programme before the end of the course since it started in October 2000. Eleven of the 12 advanced modern apprentices starting in accounting technician and business administration programmes during 2000-01 achieved an NVQ which contributes towards modern apprenticeship framework achievement. All eight learners starting accounting technician training in 2000-01 have achieved the NVQ at level 2 and seven are still in training. Accounting technician learners have also achieved excellent results in central assessment tests at levels 2, 3 and 4. These results are above the national average. For example, in one test at level 3, achievement is 100 per cent. Learners following accounting technician programmes have not yet reached the end of their planned apprenticeship learning programmes. The improving picture in this area reflects a decision HTS has made to concentrate on offering accountant technician training, select learners for business administration programmes more thoroughly, and cease to offer NVQ training at lower levels.

28. There is good additional learning and pastoral support for learners. This encourages them to develop their occupational and personal skills. Staff are well qualified and experienced. HTS staff provide additional off-the-job training sessions for learners wishing to complete extra option units in accounting technician training. Assessors have a good knowledge of learners' difficulties and provide substantial individual coaching, both in the training centre and at work. For example, individual coaching helped one learner, who had missed training through sickness, to achieve a pass in an accounting examination. Staff are highly responsive and supportive and establish good relationships with learners. Learners have confidence in their assessors and feel able to approach them about any difficulties they have. Staff provide increased support and more frequent monitoring for learners with personal issues or for those having problems in their work role. HTS helped one learner to find a more suitable post in another company when their first employer was unwilling to allow them to attend training sessions. Two learners, identified as having additional learning needs, currently attend basic numeracy sessions in the training centre every week. Some learners attend additional communications and IT key skills training to meet their particular needs.

29. There are good resources to help learners' studies, including useful tutorial books and workbooks, and computer facilities with appropriate software at the training centre.

HTS identified additional and pastoral support as strengths in the self-assessment report.

30. On- and off-the-job training is good. Accounting technicians receive training sessions once a week at HTS's premises. Sessions are well-structured and follow a logical progression. Learners value their training and are able to approach examinations with confidence. Many employers arrange complementary short courses for learners through another training provider. There is close liaison between this training provider and HTS. Key skills provision for accounting technician learners is satisfactory. However, some learners are confused about whether they need to work for key skills qualifications, or are exempt because of the qualifications they already hold. HTS has introduced key skills towards the end of some training programmes, which makes it more difficult for learners to complete the key skills qualifications. The self-assessment report prepared by HTS identified key skills training as an area in need of improvement. Off-the-job training for business administration is mainly delivered in the workplace. It provides tuition aimed at the specific needs of the learner. Inspectors agree with the self-assessment report findings that both learners and employers find this beneficial. Training programmes match the job roles and career aspirations of most learners. Employers provide good on- and off-the-job training which is linked into the training programme, although it is not always clearly recorded. Many employers are willing to vary learners' job roles when learners need to widen their experience and gain evidence for assessments.

31. Assessment practice is good. Assessments are well-planned. There are frequent observed assessments in the workplace for business administration learners and some for accounting technician learners. Assessors keep detailed records of the assessments they make, clearly identifying the areas of the NVQ and key skills in which the learners have demonstrated competence. There are well-structured and documented internal verification procedures and practices. Internal verifiers provide a good induction for assessors new to the organisation. Assessors receive continuous support and supervision. There are detailed records of internal verifiers observing assessors. HTS effectively identifies and meets the training needs of assessors. Regular internal verifier and assessors' meetings include standardisation of assessment practices and the sharing of good practice.

32. HTS does not match individual learning plans sufficiently to the needs and circumstances of the learners. Staff draw up learning plans at the start of the training programme. Every plan specifies that the learner will only complete all aspects of their training at the end of the learning programme. The plans do not contain intermediate targets for achievement. There is insufficient information in the plans to allow learners to measure their own progress during their programme. There is not enough information on how and when training will be delivered. Although staff record the results of initial assessments and arrangements for any additional support the learners may require on the individual learning plan, these notes are not detailed enough to be useful. Staff and learners do not refer back to the learning plans in progress reviews.

33. Learners' awareness of their progress is poor. HTS keeps all monitoring documents

on its premises. This makes it difficult for learners monitor their own progress. Two learners have created and maintain their own spreadsheets for this purpose. Learners do not take responsibility for claiming their competences. However, staff give accounting technician learners a scheme of work which is useful in ensuring that they are aware of their progress in units where they have to take examinations. Most learners have had workplace assessments for non-accounting units, but they are not fully aware of their progress in these areas. The review process is satisfactory, but deals chiefly with learners' short-term progress, not progress overall.

34. Although initial assessments are satisfactory, HTS staff do not always make good use of individual learner's results when planning the learning programmes. The induction process is also satisfactory, but there is some variation in standards, within and across programmes.

Good Practice

A learner in business administration has produced two leaflets about the work of his organisation for distribution to employers and parents. Both are of a professional standard and have been approved and adopted by the organisation. They are currently in public circulation.

Retailing, customer service & transportation**Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	60	4

35. HTS has 60 learners on programmes in retailing, customer service, warehousing and distribution. There are seven advanced modern apprentices all working towards retailing qualifications at level 3 NVQ. There are 14 foundation modern apprentices working towards level 2 NVQ, of whom 11 are following programmes in retailing, two in warehousing and one in customer services. There are 39 learners on NVQ programmes, 21 of whom are working towards distribution operations at level 1 NVQ, 10 towards retailing at level 2 NVQ, one towards customer service at level 2 NVQ, four towards the retailing NVQ at level 3 and three working towards warehousing NVQs at level 2. Thirty-nine learners are employed and the remaining 21 are on work placements. HTS currently uses 30 different employers' work placements. These range from major national retailers to small independent retailers distribution centres and service providers. HTS recruits learners through the careers service or by individual arrangement. An induction takes place at HTS's premises. All learners have an initial assessment, which tests their basic skills abilities. HTS has identified almost half of its learners as having additional learning or social needs. Level 1 NVQ learners have fortnightly off-the-job training sessions. Level 2 and 3 NVQ learners receive all their training in the workplace. HTS staff visit the learners in their workplace every two to four weeks to assess and review progress. Six members of staff carry out assessments. Four are qualified and two are working towards the relevant assessor qualifications. There are three qualified internal verifiers.

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													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2		23													
Retained*	0		0													
Successfully completed	0		0													
Still in learning	2		5													

*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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	11		21		25											
Retained*	0		0	0	6	24										
Successfully completed	0		0	0	0	0										
Still in learning	10		4	19	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																
NVQ Training																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	37		52		85											
Retained*	1		11	21	30	35										
Successfully completed	0		11	21	30	35										
Still in learning	18		17	33	4	5										

*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 progression for level 1 NVQ learners
- very effective pastoral support

WEAKNESSES

- poor achievement rates
- poorly developed key skills training provision
- insufficient management of on-the-job training

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more training for level 3 assessors
- better recording of basic skills support
- better awareness from learners of progress

36. Level 1 NVQ learners make good progress. All of these learners have either learning difficulties or social problems. Most learners have gained in confidence and personal skills which help to develop their potential. HTS encourages these learners to attend twice-weekly off-the-job training sessions. HTS provides additional basic skills support where required, though details are not always recorded fully. HTS has a good range of work placements which are available for learners. Over 20 different organisations or companies are currently in use as work placements and a database of others is available. This allows HTS to find an appropriate type of workplace to match learners' needs. Where learners decide that the work placement is not suitable, HTS makes arrangements to transfer the learners to other placements. This ensures that learners gain most benefit from their training. Many past and present learners have achieved part- or full-time employment within their work placements. Others have progressed from the NVQ at level 1 to higher levels of qualifications.

37. HTS staff offer very effective pastoral support to learners. There are good supportive relationships between assessors and learners. Where assessors identify issues or concerns, they can refer learners to a trained counsellor for professional support and guidance. HTS employs this qualified counsellor two days per week. Learners make regular use of this very effective service. Where learners have been reluctant to seek professional help, the assessors have continued to provide good pastoral care. HTS arrange transport to and from home allowing learners to attend job interviews and actively encourage level 1 NVQ learners to attend off-the-job training. In addition, HTS provides funds to help learners to buy essential items of clothing required by employers' dress codes. HTS has offered other helpful support, including accompanying learners to court. The strength relating to this support was identified in HTS' self-assessment report.

38. Achievement rates for the modern apprenticeship frameworks and most NVQs are poor. Twenty-three advanced modern apprentices started programmes in the year 2000-01, of whom over 75 per cent left without achieving the full apprenticeship framework. Only six of these leavers completed their NVQs. In the same year, of 21 foundation modern apprentices who started programmes, 80 per cent left without achieving the framework and only two learners achieved the NVQ. Nearly 70 per cent of the 35 learners who started level 1 NVQ training programmes in the year 2000-01, left without completing their qualification. However, 66 per cent of those who started level 2 NVQ programmes in that year achieved their qualification, and the remainder are still in training. HTS' self-assessment report did not identify poor achievement rates as a weakness.

39. Key skills training provision is poorly developed. There are 21 learners on modern

apprenticeship programmes. Many of them have a poor understanding of key skills. The assessment team for this area have only recently been appointed. Previously, key skills training was poorly managed and key skills were introduced towards the end of learners' programmes. The self-assessment report identified a weakness in the approach to the delivery of key skills.

40. Training and introduction of the level 3 retail occupational standards has been informal and unsystematic. No records detail what has taken place or to what standard. There has been insufficient sharing of good practice and standardisation for this level of the award.

41. Learners at all levels of the programme receive on-the-job training. There is insufficient planning and monitoring of this training. It varies in standards and quantity between the different employers. Many employers provide in-house training, but HTS does not liaise sufficiently with them when learners start programmes to identify how this can help learners achieve their NVQs. Not enough portfolio evidence is gathered from the workplace. HTS does not monitor the quality of on-the-job training learners receive, for example, HTS does not observe any on-the-job training.

42. Some learners are not fully aware of their progression in training. Although HTS staff carry out regular progress reviews with learners, they do not always set or define clear, short-term targets with them. Assessors often assemble learners' portfolios and learners are not always involved or aware of the process.

Good Practice

HTS owns and manages a shop at the local shopping centre that sells crockery and kitchenware. The shop provides work placements for the learners on retail programmes who are not yet confident to work in an external commercial outlet. HTS are able to offer support and guidance to learners in a real work environment, while they are overseen by experienced managers and retailing staff. Learners can gain confidence in talking to the general public and learn about the retail trade before the formal start of their training programme.

Poor Practice

One learner, who has been on programme for almost 12 months, has just discovered that his assessor and employer think he may have a learning difficulty and be dyslexic. A document has been completed to record this possibility. However, it does not confirm the difficulty, or indicate what action will be taken.

Health, social care & public services**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	92	3

43. HTS provides advanced and foundation modern apprenticeship programmes, NVQ training in early years care and education, and an early years care foundation course at level 1 NVQ. There are 31 learners on advanced, and 26 learners on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes, 18 on NVQ programmes and 17 on the early years care foundation programme. HTS works with nurseries, playgroups, crèches and schools to provide work placements for learners. Of a total of 93 learners, 71 are employed. Employers refer most learners wishing to work towards modern apprenticeships directly to HTS. HTS staff carry out an induction and agree an individual learning plan with the learners at their workplace. For learners on the foundation course, an initial assessment and induction takes place at HTS's premises. Learners also receive an induction from their employer. HTS carries out a health and safety audit of all employers at the start of training. Four full-time HTS assessors carry out all assessments in the workplace. These assessors also provide the off-the-job training for learners. Some training takes place at HTS' premises one evening each month. However most off-the-job training takes place in the workplace, either in an individual or a small group basis. Learners receive a text book and copies of a published assignment pack. Some learners have access to additional training provided by a local branch of a national network, through their nursery placement. HTS provides key skills training at evening sessions three times a week over an number of weeks. Assessors meet with learners to review their progress every three months.

44. All learners on the early years care foundation programme are non-employed. Each week they receive one-and-a-half days' training at HTS and spend three days on work placement, where assessors visit them monthly. There are facilities at HTS for additional learning support.

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													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	21		23													
Retained*	0		4													
Successfully completed	0		0													
Still in learning	20		11													

*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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	18		20													
Retained*	0		0													
Successfully completed	0		0													
Still in learning	14		12													

*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																
NVQ Training																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	14		15		2		1									
Retained*	0		4		0	0	0	0								
Successfully completed	0		3		2	100	1	100								
Still in learning	12		6		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 workplace assessments
- very responsive off-the-job training
- strong links with employers
- good practical support for learners

WEAKNESSES

- some slow progress towards foundation modern apprenticeships
- insufficient monitoring of off-the-job training

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more liaison with employers about additional qualifications
- better long-term target-setting
- more responsibility from learners for portfolio development
- better recording of missed appointments and additional contacts

45. Workplace assessments are good. Assessors visit learners at least once a month to plan and carry out assessment, and often stay for up to half a day. The assessor and learner plan the assessments together, so that the learner is clear about what evidence to collect. The written assessment plans are detailed. Assessors make thorough and careful records of their observations, and give useful feedback to the learner. All learners' portfolios are internally verified three times, at the beginning, halfway through the programme and on completion of the course. Internal verifiers give helpful written feedback to the assessor and to the learner.

46. HTS arrange all off-the-job training at level 2 and 3 NVQ to suit the requirements of the learners and of the work-placement providers. Most training takes place in the workplace either individually or in small groups. HTS staff encourage less confident learners by giving them individual coaching. All training for NVQs at level 1, and some for level 2 and 3 takes place at the training centre. The timing of training sessions is flexible. Sometimes assessors see learners when the nursery is closed. Staff organise additional sessions for those learners wishing to make faster progress. The self-assessment report identified the flexibility of off-the-job training as a strength.

47. HTS has strong links with employers. Learners have work placements in a wide range of good early years settings. Many learners are already employed, and their

employer refers them to HTS. Where learners are not yet in employment, assessors match them carefully to a work placement which will best suit their needs. A substantial number of learners gain employment during their training. Employers speak well of HTS staff. Assessors make good use of their time during assessment and training visits to discuss the learners' progress with the employer. Employers contribute constructively to the learner reviews and receive a copy of the review documentation. Where there are issues, assessors deal with them promptly, in full consultation with employers. Learners have access through their workplace to additional courses arranged by local networks and by social services, and many take these courses. HTS identified links with employers as a strength in its self-assessment report.

48. HTS gives good practical support to learners. It organises taxis for level 1 NVQ learners who have difficulties in getting to the training centre. Staff monitor and follow up any non-attendance efficiently. HTS make arrangements for learners who are taking maternity leave to submit coursework at a pace that suits them. Assessors give learners their mobile phone numbers and respond swiftly to any problems or queries. Assessors work hard with the learners to help them to overcome the social difficulties which many experience. Some learners have had time off to have a baby. Assessors remain in contact with them during that time and encourage them to return to training. One learner had been abroad for a long time and missed most of her secondary schooling. HTS gave her strong support to complete a course in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) alongside her NVQ. Support for learners was identified as an area of strength in HTS' self-assessment report.

49. There is some slow progress towards the early years foundation modern apprenticeship framework. No learners have successfully achieved it. Some learners who started the foundation and advanced modern apprenticeship programmes in 2000-01 have already left. Of the learners who started in 2001-2 most are still in training. There is some good achievement on early years foundation programmes. Twenty-three learners on these programmes have achieved a level 1 practical caring skills qualification and are now working towards NVQs. There is also some slow progress towards achievement on foundation programmes. Some learners who started foundation programmes two years ago have still not completed the course. However, 27 per cent of these learners have additional learning and/or social needs.

50. HTS has been slow to introduce key skills training into modern apprenticeship programmes. They have now started to deliver key skills training through three sessions spread over several weeks. They repeat the sessions several times during the year. This is helpful for learners, since they have more than one opportunity to attend. The learners work on assignments as evidence for their portfolio between sessions. Training in key skills is not an integral part of training leading to the NVQ. As a result, learners are not able to make good use of their work practice to gather evidence which would help them achieve the key skills qualification.

51. Off-the-job training is not monitored sufficiently. HTS staff do not usually prepare written schemes of work and session plans for level 2 and 3 NVQ training sessions.

HAYDON TRAINING SERVICES

Some assessors do not complete off-the-job training records. HTS does not observe staff to monitor the effectiveness of off-the-job training. The self-assessment report recognised the organisation of off-the-job training as a weakness.

52. Although short-term planning is good, longer-term planning on individual learning plans and progress reviews is not focused enough. All nurseries have access to a range of courses organised by a local network and social services. Some, but not all employers encourage learners to attend these. Some learners do not have sufficient opportunity to gain additional qualifications, such those in first aid or basic food hygiene. There is insufficient liaison between assessors and employers about the availability and achievement of additional qualifications. HTS uses assessment logging documentation to monitor assessment visits to learners. These show the planned monthly visits, but they do not indicate where learners miss appointments. This makes it difficult to identify missed appointments without looking at the learner's file which is stored at HTS. Assessors cross-reference level 2 and level 3 NVQ learners' work to the national standards in the learners' portfolios. They do not delegate enough of this activity to learners.

Good Practice

One learner employed as a nanny for a child with cerebral palsy liaises with many other professionals to meet the child's needs. Developmental targets set by professionals such as pre-school playworkers and physiotherapists are incorporated into the creative activities she provides for the child.

Foundation programmes

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Life Skills	49	3

53. Haydon Training Services has 49 learners attending Life Skills training. Twenty-nine per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups. Part of the provision is a pilot programme for young pregnant women. Learners come from the Aylesbury and High Wycombe areas. HTS provides transport for those attending from High Wycombe. The objectives of the Life Skills training at HTS are to help learners to progress into employment, preferably with training, to work-based learning, or further education. The Life Skills programme includes personal development skills such as regular attendance, improved motivation and attitudes to work. It covers the key skills of literacy and numeracy and practical skills such as jobsearch and sports activities. Learners undertake a work placement to develop job skills. Learning programmes last for 26 weeks, but can be extended. Learners attend for 16 hours a week. There is a monthly review of individual learner's progress. Two full-time and five part-time tutors teach and support learners on programmes.

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Life Skills																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	71		55		78											
Retained*	0		22	40	39	50										
Successfully completed	0		22	40	39	50										
Still in learning	44		5	9	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 coaching in self-confidence and personal development
- good use of supportive work placements
- good extended parental development activities

WEAKNESSES

- poor use of initial assessment in planning training
- weak individual target-setting
- poor monitoring of progress

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better use of national standards when planning for learner needs
- better access to learning resources

54. Life Skills tutors offer learners good coaching. This is effective in developing learners' personal skills, such as taking responsibility for their own behaviour, seeking a job, working with others and using appropriate language in different situations. Tutors lead sessions which are successful in raising learners' aspirations and interest in getting a job. Learners are encouraged to attempt new tasks and try work tasters. Tutors provide useful help to learners which enables them to talk with insight about their achievements and successes at work and in their Life Skills sessions.

55. HTS makes good use of work placements where the learner can undertake a work taster in a specific occupation. These include work in leisure centres, small and large retail outlets, restaurants and a car maintenance workshop. Work placements are carefully matched to learners' support needs. Some work placements offer a high level of support, while others are more demanding of the learners' personal and social skills. In the more challenging work placements, for example, learners have to do jobs without constant supervision, and take responsibility for finishing tasks within a set time. Learners have good opportunities say what type of work they would like to undertake. HTS works hard to match learners' requirements to a specific type of work placement. There is strong emphasis in the work placements on good timekeeping, attendance, reliability, increased confidence and motivation to seek employment. The Life Skills co-ordinator finds appropriate work placements and maintains regular contact with the employer. The Life Skills co-ordinator closely monitors the learner's job behaviour and the work that the learner is doing. Many learners have their time on the Life Skills programme extended to ensure good support for their personal and social development. Success rates of Life Skills learners measured by their progression to further training, gaining a job or completing their planned learning, are satisfactory. In 1999-2000 and 2000-01, around half the learners successfully achieved at least one of these outcomes, or remain on programme. In 2001-02, nearly 66 per cent of learners of learners are still following their programmes, and a few have already completed the programme successfully.

56. Learners have good, regular opportunities to improve and extend their personal development through sport and leisure activities. For example, visits to a bowling alley

encourage learners to improve poor behaviour and motivate them to remain on the programme. Learners attending the Life Skills programme for young pregnant women are helped successfully to keep fit by attending water aerobics sessions at the local swimming pool, organised by a midwife. HTS strongly encourages its Life Skills learners to attend a five-day residential outward bound course. HTS pays the learners' fees for these activities. Learners who take part demonstrate significantly increased confidence and motivation. Some of the activities also provide very relevant experience in using key skills, for example, the use of numeracy skills on an orienteering exercise.

57. Tutors make poor use of the information they obtain from initial assessments. They carry out assessments with learners, but make insufficient use of the results when planning learning programmes. Most learners undertake the same activities within the classroom at the same pace. The assessments help to identify clearly, individual differences in literacy and numeracy needs, but tutors do not plan training to reflect these differences. Tutors do not pay sufficient attention to individual's prior learning achievements or learning preferences when planning. There are few attempts to use the national standards in literacy and numeracy to plan and deliver learning activities at the relevant levels to meet individual needs.

58. Tutors do not identify targets for the achievement of specific Life Skills with each learner on their individual development plan. Tutors do not break down important learning goals such as punctuality or regular attendance at the work placement, into short-term, achievable targets.

59. HTS's monitoring of learners' progress is poor. Tutors carry out progress reviews monthly. They assess learners' performance weekly. They express their judgements by giving learners individual grades for aspects of their Life Skills programme such as attendance, attitudes to work and basic skills. However, the written comments by tutors in the review documents fail to identify what learning has taken place, or note any obstacles which the learners have faced which have hindered their progress. The comments from the learners' progress reviews do not take account of notes made in the individual development plan.

60. Learning resources for Life Skills are satisfactory. The accommodation for learners on the Life Skills programme for pregnant women is attractive and comfortable. Learners have some access to computers in one of the Life Skills training rooms. The training rooms are well suited to both individual and small group learning. Staff and learners have only restricted access to learning resources, which limits the variety and choice available to them.

Good Practice

The Life Skills programme for young pregnant women has very good links with other organisations. The programme draws extensively on the expertise of a wide range of health and welfare professionals, as well as staff from the Connexions service. This ensures that the learners receive good advice and guidance on matters connected to pregnancy and parenting and also that they have individual action plans for their future training.