

INSPECTION REPORT

UK Training & Development Limited

20 May 2002



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

- work-based training for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- the University for Industry's **learnirect** 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

UK Training & Development Limited is a private training provider. It is based on one main site in the town centre of Hemel Hempstead, in Hertfordshire, and offers modern apprenticeships and other work-based learning programmes for young people, across five Learning and Skills Council areas, in hairdressing, retailing and customer service, and business administration and management. There are 339 learners.

Overall judgement

The quality of training is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, the quality of work-based learning is unsatisfactory in business administration and management, retailing and customer service, and hairdressing. The leadership and management are also unsatisfactory.

GRADES

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

Business administration, management & professional	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

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

Hairdressing & beauty therapy	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

KEY STRENGTHS

- good support for learners
- some good workplace opportunities
- well-planned staff training

KEY WEAKNESSES

- some weak target-setting and poor action-planning
- poor specialist support for some learners with additional needs
- some low retention and achievement rates
- some weak assessment practices
- incomplete review of quality of training
- poor management of implementation of key skills
- poor monitoring of implementation of procedures
- weak monitoring of employers

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better referencing of documents

THE INSPECTION

1. A team of eight inspectors spent a total of 31 days at UK Training & Development Limited (UKTD) during May 2002. All areas of learning were inspected but sport and leisure was not graded due to low numbers at the time of the inspection. Inspectors carried out 27 interviews with managers and staff including the managing director. They interviewed 48 learners in their workplace and observed progress reviews and assessments, and graded one learning session in a hairdressing salon. Inspectors visited one subcontractor, 33 work placements and interviewed 25 work-based supervisors. A range of evidence was examined including 45 individual learning plans, 35 portfolios of evidence, records of assessment, internal verification documents, monitoring documents, reports from awarding bodies, promotional materials, and UKTD's policies and procedures. Inspectors also studied the company's business plans, the development plan and the self-assessment report which was produced in March 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. UKTD is a private training company based in Hemel Hempstead. It was formed in May 1998 following the liquidation of Hairdressing Training Associates (HTA) and assumed responsibility for the training and enterprise council (TEC) contracts originally awarded to HTA. UKTD contracts with five local learning and skills councils (LSCs), Hertfordshire, London West, Surrey, Berkshire and Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, for work-based learning for young people. The occupational areas include business administration and management, retailing and customer service, and hairdressing. It also has a subcontract arrangement with a leisure centre in Berkshire for sport and leisure training programmes. UKTD currently has 339 learners, all of whom are employed. Of these, 256 are foundation modern apprentices, 78 are advanced modern apprentices and five are working towards a level 2 and 3 in hairdressing. Of the 339 learners, 176 are in Hertfordshire, 44 in Berkshire, 43 in Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, 39 in London West and 37 in Surrey. All UKTD's learners are based in the workplace and most assessment and training is work-based. The exception to this is hairdressing where in some locations learners and salons have requested a training day which takes place once a fortnight in Hemel Hempstead. Additional accommodation is hired in Reading and Harrow as necessary. There are 27 staff, including the managing director. Sixteen staff are involved in the learning process, 15 of whom are involved in hairdressing. All are based in the suite of offices in Hemel Hempstead. There are 10 training consultants who work directly with learners in the workplace. UKTD has at least one training consultant who lives in the area of each of the LSCs with which it contracts. All training consultants use the Hemel Hempstead office as their base.

3. Although based in Hertfordshire, UKTD recruits learners from across the five LSC areas. In October 2001, the unemployment rate in Hertfordshire was 1.2 per cent, compared with the national average of 2.9 per cent. Across the five LSC areas, the unemployment rate in October 2001 ranged from 3.1 per cent in London West to less than 1 per cent in Surrey. The 1991 census shows that in Hertfordshire, 4 per cent of the population is from minority ethnic groups, compared with 27 per cent in London West, 2.8 per cent in Surrey and 6.2 per cent nationally. In October 2001, the proportion of school leavers in Hertfordshire achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 56 per cent, compared with 58 per cent in Surrey, 48 per cent in London West and 47.9 per cent nationally.

Work-based learning for young people

4. The quality of work-based learning is unsatisfactory in all areas. Learners in business administration and management have good workplace opportunities for on-the-job training and they produce an effective range of evidence in their portfolios. There is insufficient involvement of employers in the formal progress reviews on business administration and management and retailing and customer service programmes. Achievement rates on business administration and management programmes are poor. While the training consultant gives good support for learners on business administration and management, and retailing and customer service, there is a lack of challenging targets, and action-planning and record-keeping are poor. Retention and achievement rates are poor for retailing and customer service. In hairdressing, there is effective salon training which develops learners' practical skills. There is also flexible support from training consultants and good progression opportunities in salons. However, planning and monitoring of training is inadequate in hairdressing and there is little co-ordination of the training consultants' work with the salon training. There are some poor assessment practices and little evidence of co-ordination of salon-based assessment. While retention rates are improving in hairdressing, achievement rates are low.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

5. The senior management team at UKTD is made up of the managing director, two field managers and one office manager. All are responsible for the management of operational areas within their own expertise. The office-based manager is the company secretary and manages the administrative staff with specific responsibility for management information and finance management. One field manager manages the two senior consultants and 10 training consultants. The other field manager is the training centre co-ordinator and has responsibility for internal verification and health and safety. Two experienced part-time consultants have responsibility for special projects, one of which is the self-assessment process. In addition, there is a business development manager who manages the marketing officer and telesales support. The learndirect manager has responsibility for this new area of work. The senior training consultants were appointed early in 2002 and their role is to monitor the work of the training consultants, monitor completion of documents and achievements of learners against LSC contracts. The training consultants work directly with learners. Learners are allocated to a specific training consultant when they join UKTD. The training consultant is responsible for managing all of the learners' training including initial assessment, progress reviews, monitoring visits, key skills, assessment and off-the-job training. There is a range of company policies and procedures, including quality assurance and equal opportunities. The training co-ordinators have a handbook of policies, procedures and guidelines to support them in their role. UKTD was accredited with the Investors in People standard in March 2002. This is a national standard for improving a company's performance through its people. The managing director has overall responsibility for equal opportunities and there is also an equal opportunities co-ordinator. UKTD has an equal opportunities policy which was revised in 2000 and supplemented with a range of new policies, procedures and guidelines. All staff have equal opportunities training as part of their induction, as well as additional training. The most recent self-assessment report was produced in March 2002.

STRENGTHS

- good internal structures
- well-planned staff training

WEAKNESSES

- poor management of the subcontractor for leisure and recreation
- weak monitoring of employers
- poor monitoring of implementation of procedures
- little formal analysis and use of data
- incomplete review of quality of training
- poor management of implementation of key skills

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better referencing of documents

6. There are good internal structures. The training consultant has a clearly defined role with a comprehensive handbook of procedures which has specific policies, procedures and guidelines. UKTD has a well-defined structure of meetings, which encourages effective internal communication. Senior consultants were appointed early in 2002 to monitor the work of the training consultants. They hold regular individual meetings with the training consultants each month to monitor performance against LSC contracts, establish targets in relation to this performance and to monitor their work.

7. The staff training is well planned. There is a detailed staff training procedure in place which includes induction, training days, and specific training needs which support the business plan. There are also clear links between the training and staff appraisal. Training consultants have a well-planned, comprehensive four-week induction programme, which includes shadowing of experienced consultants. In addition, staff undertake nationally recognised health and safety and information technology (IT) qualifications, and a learndirect qualification in equal opportunities. There is an annual training plan of in-house events which support the training consultant's role. Planned events include assessment, key skills, product knowledge, marketing, health and safety and equal opportunities.

8. There is poor management of the subcontractor for sport and recreation. UKTD was asked by a TEC to take over a contract for a group of leisure centres in the Berkshire area, to offer sport and leisure modern apprenticeships, an arrangement which they have continued with the LSC. All of the documents required by the LSC are completed by the leisure centre and submitted through UKTD. In November 2001, the external verifier visited after a period of three years and identified significant poor assessment practices. UKTD has not monitored any of the work undertaken by the subcontractor and was unaware that the awarding body had not made frequent verification visits. The poor practice by the subcontractor includes no observations, poor evidence in portfolios, evidence based mainly on candidate statements, poor use of accreditation of prior learning, no use of initial assessment, few progress reviews, no internal verification and a lack of knowledge of the modern apprenticeship frameworks. Although this is mentioned in UKTD's self-assessment report there are no strengths or weaknesses, and the report indicates that this area of learning is not UKTD's responsibility. There has been no monitoring up to the time of the awarding body's visit to establish an action plan, which must be completed by July 2002. The plan had not been implemented by the verifier's second visit early in 2002. Two meetings have since taken place in March and April to give advice and guidance to the subcontractor. UKTD did not identify this weakness in their self-assessment report.

9. There is weak monitoring of employers. UKTD has contracts with employers and the monitoring takes place through the senior consultant or field manager visits. During visits, forms are completed to indicate whether there is a current contract and whether

there is any non-compliance with the contract. Completion of these forms is inconsistent and in some instances poor. Several forms did not answer the questions and some forms indicated non-compliance, but listed no actions to be taken. Other forms queried areas of health and safety, but had not been followed up. There is a system for monitoring the completion of these visit forms but it is ineffective. There is no systematic review by senior managers to ensure that employers comply with their contract, particularly in matters of health and safety.

10. There is poor monitoring of the implementation of procedures. UKTD has a well-written, comprehensive handbook of policies, procedures and guidelines, but there is no review to ensure that they are implemented. Inspectors identified some poor initial assessment and several instances where results had not been communicated to learners. Some records indicate that health and safety checks do not meet UKTD's own health and safety procedure of annual checks. Inspectors identified some inadequate progress reviews, some ineffective action-planning, incomplete individual learning plans, and incomplete internal verification records. Procedures are inconsistently implemented. While there are some checks on completion of documents, they are ineffective.

11. There is poor management of the implementation of key skills. There is no development plan for key skills and staff and learners have a poor understanding of key skills. UKTD has cross-referenced the key skills into the hairdressing workbooks but it has not improved the achievement of key skills as yet. There is insufficient assessment of key skills across all areas of learning. The staff training plan includes three key skills sessions during 2002 but only one has taken place to date.

12. UKTD has a comprehensive range of policies, procedures and guidelines and most of them have been revised. However, very few documents are dated or indicate whether they are a revised version.

Equality of opportunity**Contributory grade 4**

13. UKTD has an equal opportunities statement which includes a comprehensive range of procedures, policies and guidelines. It includes a complaints procedure and comprehensive information on the criteria for selection and recruitment of staff and learners. There is also guidance on induction and monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace. A detailed appeals procedure is included in the learners' log book, but the latest version does not include guidance on harassment and discrimination. There are clear guidelines with workplace examples to enable learners to identify harassment and discrimination and how to deal with it. There are also contact telephone numbers for immediate support. There are specific guidelines for employers outlining their responsibilities for recruitment, selection and general employment of learners. The policies and procedures have been implemented but are not fully used at present.

14. All staff are trained in equal opportunities during their induction and take a learndirect course and examination. Existing staff have also taken this course. UKTD is working closely with its LSCs to gain additional funding to increase the staff's awareness of equal opportunities. A new CD-ROM has been reviewed and will be introduced into the training programme for staff and learners.

15. Equal opportunities is included in the learners' induction which takes place in the workplace. It is brief and learners do not all recall the content. There is poor reinforcement of equal opportunities during progress reviews and some of the training consultants do not cover it. Equal opportunities is included in the contract with employers but it is only mentioned briefly. There is no record of whether employers are using their own policy or are signing up to the UKTD policy. In addition, there are no records of ongoing monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace.

16. The sales and marketing team has produced new marketing material but the images are stereotypical and focus on young, white women. There are few examples of male learners and only one example of an individual from a minority ethnic group. Research has taken place to target under-represented groups, but the marketing programme has not started as yet. There is no formal analysis or use of equal opportunities data to identify trends, comparisons between different groups, areas for improvement or good practice.

17. The self-assessment report does not identify any weaknesses in equal opportunities. It does, however, identify the need to review and update equal opportunities policies and procedures. There is no reference to equal opportunities in the 2002-03 development plan except as part of the need to increase the take-up of the optional unit on Afro-Caribbean hair within hairdressing.

Quality assurance**Contributory grade 4**

18. UKTD has clearly defined policies, procedures and guidelines within the training consultant's handbook which cover a wide range of training and monitoring activities. Senior consultants and field managers have responsibility for monitoring the

implementation of procedures but this monitoring is inconsistent. There are no clearly defined quality assurance arrangements to cover the procedures and forms. The senior management team is responsible for quality assurance, but there is little evidence of evaluation of learners' needs in the minutes from management meetings. There are weak assessment practices in hairdressing which have been identified through internal verification, but UKTD has not resolved them. The organisation has planned a training day for work-based assessors early in June. The self-assessment report identified internal verification as a strength.

19. There is little formal analysis and use of management information. UKTD identified the management information system as a weakness in their self-assessment report. UKTD is currently operating three management information systems as they transfer to a new one which is planned to be operational within the next two months. Currently data are used to monitor performance against LSC contracts. Evidence from the management information system was not found to be reliable during the inspection. Data are not collated regularly and analysed to identify trends, to review the quality of the training as a basis for management decisions, or to action plan for improvement. There are no improvement targets for retention and achievement rates throughout the organisation.

20. Review of the quality of training is incomplete and UKTD identified this as a weakness in their self-assessment report. The views of employers and learners are sought by questionnaires but the response rate is low. However, strategies to improve the response rate are being implemented. A summary of these responses has been collated recently but no formal evaluation has taken place or actions identified for improvement. Senior consultants hold monthly meetings with each training consultant but the focus is on performance against the LSC contract and the quality of training is not considered. There is little formal review of the quality of training in management meetings. There is no systematic process for reviewing the quality of the learning experience and identifying areas for improvement.

21. The current self-assessment report was produced in March 2002 and is the fourth report that UKTD has produced. The report was written by one member of staff and the arrangements for involving staff and managers are unclear. Some staff are unaware of the self-assessment report. There is no evidence that the views of learners and employers have been taken into account in the production of the report. The report is a detailed document which follows the structure of the 'Common Inspection Framework'. The action plan for the self-assessment report is well laid out and clearly identifies weaknesses, actions, responsibilities, target dates and monitoring arrangements. Most of the judgements are not clearly supported by evidence. Some judgements are minor and some of the strengths are no more than normal practice. The report is insufficiently evaluative.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	7	4

22. There is one foundation modern apprentice and three advanced modern apprentices in administration and three advanced modern apprentices in management. All learners are employed and work at a variety of private sector employers including retail outlets, a national road haulier and a leisure centre chain. They have been recruited through the careers service or through direct marketing. Staff from UKTD visit learners in the workplace to carry out an initial assessment to identify the appropriate qualification and level and any additional support needs. A training consultant carries out the induction in the workplace which includes health and safety, equality of opportunity and an introduction to the national vocational qualification (NVQ) programme. Learners are given a handbook and details of their qualification. Currently, there is one training consultant for administration and management who also assesses retailing and customer service qualifications. The team manager is the internal verifier. The training consultant visits learners every two to four weeks to assess work-based evidence, carry out observations and plan progress. This is recorded on an action plan and a copy is left with the learner. Learners are trained on the job by their employer. The training consultant carries out some individual coaching in the workplace when needed. Progress reviews take place every three months.

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									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts			5		4		6								
Retained*			0	0	0	0	4	67								
Successfully completed			0	0	0	0	3	50								
Still in learning			4	80	2	50	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										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts					1		5									
Retained*					0	0	3	60									
Successfully completed					0	0	2	40									
Still in learning					1	100	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 opportunities
- good support for learners by the assessor
- good range of evidence in portfolios

WEAKNESSES

- poor achievement rates
- poor action-planning and record-keeping
- little employer involvement
- insufficient learning materials

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better observation records

23. Most learners are working in jobs which offer good on-the-job training. All have jobs which are well suited to their qualification aim, in administration and management. Two out of three management and three administration learners have undertaken a structured training programme with their company. Examples include management training, health and safety, first aid, specific software and company systems and procedures training. All learners are able to generate appropriate evidence for all units of their qualification. Two administration learners have taken on special projects within their department to update their team's understanding of health and safety. One learner

in management is responsible for branch human resources and provided evidence of resolution of an incident of cultural difficulties between two employees. Most learners are allowed some time at work for development of their NVQ evidence.

24. There is a good range of evidence in portfolios. Learners take care to write clear explanations of evidence and to reflect on decisions taken and improvements made. Workplace evidence is endorsed by appropriate witness testimony and photographs give additional visual evidence. Useful verbal questions are recorded in assessment reports by the training consultant. The training consultant carries out workplace observations and there are written records of professional discussion with the learners as key supplementary evidence. However, observation reports are not consistent and the referencing to NVQ elements and key skills is inadequate.

25. There is good support for learners by the training consultant who visits the learners every two or three weeks. The visits can be made each week if required. Visits are flexible and are arranged to fit in with shift patterns. Sometimes learners telephone the training consultant for advice and guidance and learners confirm that messages are responded to quickly.

26. Achievement rates are poor. Recruitment has been poor on the administration and management programmes. Since 1998-99, only 21 learners have started on the programmes. Of those, seven are still in learning and five have achieved the full framework. In 2000-01, there were five advanced modern apprentices and four are still in learning. There have been no new learners in 2001-02.

27. Action-planning and record-keeping throughout the NVQ process are poor. There is little target-setting in individual learning plans which are incomplete and inaccurate. Most do not list the full framework. Some of the start and end dates do not match in the paperwork. Individual learning plans do not record progress. Target achievement dates are mostly not entered, but when they are, the end of funding date is used uniformly. At formal progress reviews, targets are not usually specific enough to drive achievement of units forward. Progress reviews do not give a detailed, clear reference for the learner. Review and assessment records are not up to date in most of the learners' files. No actual achievement dates have been entered and most of the progress review dates are not recorded.

28. There is little evidence of any direct employer involvement with the NVQ, even though there are good opportunities to accredit work-based evidence. Employers are not involved in formal progress reviews and are not informed of learners' progress and achievements. There is no direct link between the on-the-job training and the NVQ. The organisation does not actively seek the employers' involvement.

29. There are insufficient learning materials for administration and management learners. There are no textbooks or videos and no reading list is given. The learner's handbook is not specific to the apprenticeship programme, but is more relevant to hairdressing learners for health and safety. There is no employer's handbook. Some

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learners have recently been encouraged to use a learndirect package on equality of opportunity. The questionnaire used for management learners to match their job role to the NVQ units is designed for administration programmes, not management.

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	11	4

30. UKTD offers advanced and foundation modern apprenticeships in retailing and customer service leading to NVQs at levels 2 and 3. There are four foundation modern apprentices and seven advanced modern apprentices. Of the advanced modern apprentices, one is in retailing and six are in customer service. Of the foundation modern apprentices, one is in retailing and three are in customer service. All the learners are employed in a range of independent and national companies. UKTD has one designated training consultant for this area who is occupationally competent, and is a qualified assessor. The training consultant visits learners in the workplace every two to four weeks to carry out assessments and to review their progress. Induction is carried out in the workplace on an individual basis. As part of the induction process, learners undertake an initial assessment of key skills using a self-assessment form. In addition, an assessment of occupational competence is carried out by the training consultant to establish the correct entry level to the programme. All training is undertaken in the workplace.

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										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	8		15		23		28									
Retained*	0		4		0		15										
Successfully completed	0		4		8		15										
Still in learning	3		2		1		1										

*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	3		1		1											
Retained*	0		0		0												
Successfully completed	0		0		0												
Still in learning	3		1		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 support for learners

WEAKNESSES

- poor retention and achievement rates
- weak target-setting
- poor involvement by employers

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better referencing of portfolios

31. Learners are given good support by the training consultant. They are visited at least each month, and on occasions more frequently. Learners have a good working relationship with the training consultant and value the support and frequency of visits. The training consultant is knowledgeable about the qualifications and the learners' job roles, and is able to identify work-based evidence for assessment.

32. Retention and achievement rates are poor for both programmes. On the advanced modern apprenticeship programme, retention rates are falling. In 1998-99, 43 per cent of learners left the programme early, compared with 63 per cent in 2001-02. On the foundation modern apprenticeship, all of the learners who started in the current year are still in training but as the numbers are very small, it is not possible to make a judgement

about retention rates. There have been no achievements for foundation modern apprentices since 1998-99. The achievement rates on the advanced modern apprenticeship have declined from 54 per cent in 1998-99 to 27 per cent in 2000-01, although this is to be expected due to the length of time on the programme.

33. Target-setting is weak for short- and long-term targets. All learners have an individual learning plan which is completed at the start of their programme. The learners do not have a copy of this document and the training consultant does not refer to the plan when reviewing learners' progress. Target achievement dates are entered on the learning plan but they only reflect the end of funding. Learners have no understanding of when they should complete units of their NVQ. Many learners fail to complete within the funding time and while UKTD continues to support them, the individual learning plans are not updated with revised target dates. During the regular visits, the training consultant completes an action plan showing details of work to be carried out before the next visit. However, the work is not usually specific enough to drive achievement forward and is rarely related to a unit or element of the NVQ. Learners are often confused about what is required of them. One learner has been working on the same project for over a year. UKTD has an assessment plan form but the training consultant does not use this form. The action plans are used instead but they are insufficient and are frequently not completed even when assessments are taking place at the next visit. One learner has only achieved one unit of the level 2 in customer service in a year. Another learner has completed one unit and two elements of the level 3 qualification in two years.

34. Employers are not involved in the three-monthly progress reviews and they are not given a copy of the progress review paperwork. Many of the progress reviews are not signed by the employer and those that have signed, state that they were not aware of the contents. Employers are not given a copy of the monthly action plans and the training consultant does not involve them in the process. Consequently employers do not have the information to help learners' progress.

35. Learners begin to collect evidence from the start of their training programme, but the evidence is frequently not indexed or referenced to specific units of the NVQ. Learners therefore collect more evidence than is needed. The training consultant observes learners and produces an observation report, but the report is not referenced to the NVQ although the details are usually entered directly onto the NVQ cumulative assessment form. The internal verifier has to search through the reports to confirm that all aspects have been covered.

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	311	4

36. UKTD offers foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships in hairdressing leading to NVQs at levels 2 and 3. There are 311 learners, of whom 242 are foundation and 64 are advanced modern apprentices. The remaining five learners are working towards NVQs at levels 2 and 3. Learners can also work towards an NVQ in customer service when the hairdressing NVQ is achieved. All learners are employed in one of the 125 salons which are spread across a large geographical area. Most learners are recruited directly by the employers. Learners apply through the careers service, or employers advertise in the local press or in the salon window. All training and assessment takes place in the salons. A training consultant, who is an occupational specialist, is assigned to each learner and is responsible for all aspects of the learner's training programme. UKTD currently employs nine consultants for hairdressing. Six others, including senior consultants and managers have a small caseload of learners. The consultant visits the learners every two to four weeks. At the start of the training programme, the consultant carries out an induction with the learner in the salon. In some areas, learners can attend for off-the-job training every four weeks. Approximately 30 per cent of the salons have a work-based assessor who carries out the practical training and assessment. In salons where there is no work-based assessor, the consultant carries out the assessments. Initial assessment is carried out through a basic literacy and numeracy test. Formal reviews of progress are carried out every 13 weeks in the workplace.

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										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	45		40		52		82										
Retained*	0		0		22		67										
Successfully completed	0		8		22		47										
Still in learning	40		17		4		3										

*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									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	106		132		114		168								
Retained*	0		48		44		48									
Successfully completed	0		48		44		75									
Still in learning	90		79		68		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																
NVQ Training	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	2		3		2		2		51						
Retained*	0		0		0	0	0		0	0						
Successfully completed	0		0		2	100	1		29	57						
Still in learning	2		2		0	0	1		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

- effective salon training for practical skills
- good progression opportunities in salons
- effective relationships between learners and training consultants

WEAKNESSES

- inadequate planning and monitoring of training
- weak assessment practices
- lack of support for work-based assessors
- lack of specialised support for some learners with additional needs

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better occupational skills updating through staff development

37. There is good training in the salons and high standards of hairdressing skills. Learners are able to observe modern fashion work. Equipment in the salons is up to date and salons carry an extensive range of quality products. Learners have a modern learning environment and enjoy their working experience. Most salons have weekly training sessions and recognise the importance of dedicated training time. Salons offer reduced rates to clients on these days and there is a plentiful supply of models to cover the range for the NVQ. Most salons have a nominated member of staff for the training of learners. A high proportion of salons have a dedicated assessor who is qualified. UKTD has encouraged salons to take on this role so that learners do not miss assessment opportunities.

38. There are good progression routes in salons. Salons have difficulty recruiting staff and are keen to invest time and resources to develop learners so that they become productive members of the team. There is effective recruitment through weekend staff who progress into permanent employment. Many salons offer good opportunities for additional training in the salons and some organise external courses. Learners can also participate in manufacturers' training which helps to expand their product knowledge and develop commercial practice.

39. Training consultants are enthusiastic and communication is effective. Visits are flexible and are arranged to fit in with the needs of learners. This includes evening visits when clients and models are available. The consultants visit learners on a two, three or four-weekly basis depending on identified needs.

40. There is inadequate planning and monitoring of training. Activities carried out in the salons are not co-ordinated with the training undertaken during the consultants' visits. Salons offer good training but there is no monitoring or recording of the work. Progress reviews make little reference to salon-based practical skills development in areas such as client care, communication and teamwork. Salons are not given guidance on training schedules or accommodating individual learners needs. There is a strong reliance on the use of work packs for background knowledge.

41. There are some poor assessment practices. Background knowledge is given through a work pack and learners complete a series of questions. There is little feedback on learners' written work to help progress. In many cases, it is unclear whether work has been assessed. Awarding body guidance is not consistently followed for written assessments as some assessors replace them with oral questions. Answer guides are not used consistently resulting in some incorrect marking of the written tests. There is some evidence that oral questions are asked in place of the learner proving

competence by practical work. Assessment plans are ineffective and target-setting is not specific enough to progress learners' achievement of units. Learners have little knowledge of the requirements of the NVQ and key skills and rely strongly on the consultant to direct them. Supporting evidence in learners' portfolios is insufficient. They are not encouraged to reference record cards and consultation sheets into the portfolio. Some actions from external verification visits have yet to be dealt with. In March 2001, the external verifier highlighted the need for standardisation of assessment practice, but this has yet to be acted upon.

42. There is a high proportion of work-based assessors in salons, but they are not given adequate support. Internal verification is carried out, but is not used effectively to improve assessment practice. There is insufficient sampling and little standardisation or evidence of co-ordination of salon-based assessment. There is now a strategy which will be implemented in June, to induct, support and monitor new and existing assessors. Planning and recording of continued professional development is insufficient and fails to meet awarding body requirements.

43. There is a lack of specialised support for some learners with additional needs. Some learners have been identified as having complex additional learning needs before joining UKTD, but they are not given the appropriate specialist support. Training consultants visit those with additional needs more frequently, but there is a lack of specialist resources to assist learners with written work. Staff have had no training to help them support these learners. Hertfordshire LSC offer a specialist assessment service but UKTD are not aware of this service from the other LSCs with whom they contract.