

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Poultec Training Limited**

**05 August 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

Poultec Training Limited is a private limited company, which provides training for the food/poultry industry. It provides work-based learning for young people in land-based provision, and engineering, technology and manufacturing. There are currently 52 foundation modern apprentices and three advanced modern apprentices. Poultec Training Limited also provides short job-focused training for unemployed adults. This area was not inspected.

### Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, land-based provision and engineering, technology and manufacturing are satisfactory. Leadership and management, equality of opportunity and quality assurance are also satisfactory.

### GRADES

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

Land-based provision	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Engineering, technology & manufacturing	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

### KEY STRENGTHS

- good on-the-job training
- particularly good working relationships between staff, learners and employers
- good management information systems
- particularly effective strategic planning
- effective arrangements to identify continuous improvements

**KEY WEAKNESSES**

- slow learner progress
- weak planning of individual training
- inconsistent use of some management and quality procedures
- weak initial assessment arrangements

## THE INSPECTION

1. A team of four inspectors spent a total of 16 days at Poultec Training Limited (PTL) in August 2002. They visited 11 employers' sites and interviewed 12 workplace supervisors, conducted 23 interviews with learners and 19 interviews with staff. Inspectors examined a range of documents, including learners' portfolios of evidence, training records, company plans, policies and procedures, promotional literature and awarding body reports. They also studied the company's self-assessment report, which was produced in May 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Land-based provision	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>

## THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

### Context

2. PTL was established in 1999 and provides training for the food/poultry industry. It provides work-based learning for advanced and foundation modern apprentices in land-based provision and for foundation modern apprentices in engineering, technology and manufacturing. It also provides short specialist courses, including basic food hygiene and poultry health and biology. There are currently three advanced modern apprentices, and 52 foundation modern apprentices. PTL also provides both long- and short-term occupational training for unemployed adults. Only one adult was in training at the time of inspection. Learners are employed by nine employers, who provide on-the-job training and assessment with PTL. There are 12 work-based assessors. Internal verification is conducted by three of the management team.

3. Training is conducted in Norfolk and Suffolk and is funded by the Norfolk Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The unemployment rates in Norfolk and Suffolk are 2.5 per cent and 2.3 per cent respectively, compared with the national average of 3 per cent. The proportions of the local population from minority ethnic groups in Norfolk and Suffolk are 0.9 per cent and 2.2 per cent respectively, compared with the national average of 6.2 per cent. In 2001, the proportions of young people achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above in Norfolk and Suffolk were 50 per cent and 54 per cent respectively, compared with the national average of 47.9 per cent.

### Work-based learning for young people

4. Although retention rates are satisfactory, learner progress is slow in land-based provision. No learner has achieved a national vocational qualification (NVQ) unit, a complete NVQ or the full framework. Retention and achievement rates are high in engineering, technology and manufacturing.

5. There is good participation by learners in a wide range of additional qualifications in land-based provision. On-the-job training is good. Key skills training and assessment have only recently been introduced and progress reviews are poor. In engineering, technology and manufacturing, there are particularly good working relationships between staff, learners and employers. Learners' progress is monitored effectively and there is effective use of key skills projects. There is weak planning of individual training and target-setting is inadequate. There is insufficient use of diverse evidence in learners' portfolios.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

6. The managing director has overall responsibility for the company. There is a training director responsible for the two areas of learning and six members of staff responsible for co-ordinating the training, assessment and support on a day-to-day basis. A further team of six staff is responsible for administration, quality assurance, finance and marketing. All staff are based at the Norwich training centre. There is an equal opportunities policy and policies and procedures for quality assurance. The organisation began self-assessment in 2000. It produced its first self-assessment report and action plan in May 2002. PTL achieved the Investors in People award in January 2002, a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.

### STRENGTHS

- particularly effective internal and external and communications
- good management information systems
- particularly good strategic planning
- effective arrangements to identify continuous improvements
- good promotion of equal opportunities
- a wide range of initiatives to widen participation

### WEAKNESSES

- inconsistent use of some management and quality assurance procedures
- weak initial assessment arrangements
- weak monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better use of key stakeholders in self-assessment process
- better development of inexperienced and new assessors

7. Internal and external communications are particularly effective. The management structure is good and there are good networking arrangements between a wide range of manufacturing and land-based industry employers, funding organisations, district county councils and other public sector food industry organisations. External links with employers and funding agencies has encouraged new employers to start work-based learning, some for the first time. PTL has developed bespoke training programmes for different employers. PTL has good access to learners in the workplace for assessment and progress reviews. Many employers are developing work-based assessors and good training and assessment arrangements in the workplace. PTL carries out monthly meetings with employers, funding bodies and other relevant parties in the food industry. It also holds monthly meetings with the training and assessment teams in each

company, as well as the PTL weekly management team meetings.

8. The management information system is good. PTL assesses its own performance against that of other training providers and identifies areas for improvement. Managers routinely prepare reports to assist the action-planning and decision-making process for the area of learning co-ordinators. Reports are prepared on recruitment trends, achievement rates in each vocational area, equal opportunities, retention rates and attendance. All data are well produced and easy to understand. Managers and co-ordinators formally discuss current management information as an agenda item at their weekly meetings.

9. Strategic planning is particularly good. All staff and partners understand the business and development plan. The values and policies of PTL are promoted effectively through the staff handbook, quality assurance procedures, verification arrangements and business plan. There is a clearly defined set of strategic aims and objectives. These include a business growth plan, which accounts for the recruitment of new staff, staff training and development, as well as setting challenging performance targets for retention and achievement rates. There is also good financial management, action-planning, and a detailed marketing strategy underpin the strategic planning.

10. There is a good range of management and quality assurance procedures, which cover all aspects of training and assessment. There is, however, inconsistent use of these procedures. For example, good targets are not set during progress reviews. Some progress reviews are not carried out within 12 weeks. Initial basic skills assessments are not always marked. If they are, not all the results are recorded on learners' individual learning plan. NVQ unit accreditation is available for learners who leave their training programmes early. However, it is not a routine procedure for learners to have NVQ units accredited when each unit is completed.

11. There is a procedure to record a target completion date of each NVQ unit for each learner. In manufacturing, these dates are different for each unit and broadly reflect learners' progress. In land-based provision, all NVQ end dates are the same for each learner. The end dates do not reflect individual circumstances and are not used to set targets. Monitoring of NVQ and key skill progress for learners on manufacturing training programmes is clearly recorded on a spreadsheet, copies of which are displayed at each employer's premises. A different system is used in manufacturing and learner progress, and the work learners are still required to complete is difficult to establish. PTL visits all employers to carry out health and safety risk assessments. Employers are then recorded as low, medium or high risk, and the ongoing frequency of monitoring visits is determined by the risk attributed to an employer. PTL carries out these monitoring activities on schedule. However, at one employer, the employer's liability insurance had expired. An outdated insurance certificate was on display at the employer's premises and a copy was in the learner files. The monitoring of health and safety had not acknowledged this.

12. Most learners complete an initial assessment of basic skills. However, many

learners are not receiving an appropriate level of training. There are no clear plans or arrangements in place to deal with individual learning needs. Initial assessment of learners on land-based provision programmes does not account for the prior learning or achievements of learners. Some learners are completing work for which they already hold qualifications.

## Equality of opportunity

## Contributory grade 3

13. There is good promotion of equal opportunities through good working relationships with the employers. Employers attend equal opportunities awareness training events organised by PTL. Employers are provided with help to develop their own company equal opportunities policies and procedures. Learners are provided with equal opportunities advice and guidance. Learners have recently been issued with good equal opportunities leaflets. Staff understand equal opportunities legislation and other relevant issues. Staff work well with learners to monitor equal opportunities in the workplace. There is good monitoring of equal opportunities data. PTL ensures that the diversity of learners matches that of the geographical area in which it operates.

14. PTL has worked well to identify areas for training in the local area. A wide range of training programmes relevant to the local workforce is provided including short industry specific courses and long development programmes.

15. PTL has an equal opportunities policy, which was revised in 2001. The policy covers training, promotion and evaluation of equality of opportunity. The policy does not identify who is responsible or who should be contacted if there are relevant problems. The policy is not signed or dated. The monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace is weak. Some employers have neither the equal opportunities policy nor the alternative requirement to be contracted to the equal opportunities policy of PTL. There are no clear procedures for carrying out progress reviews. Learner feedback is collected during progress reviews, but is not recorded well. Employers' records are not reviewed systematically to ensure compliance with the equal opportunities policy.

16. Key senior staff have recently received equal opportunities training. The rest of the staff have not received formal equal opportunities training, but this is now planned to be carried out in 2002. Access to PTL's premises is good, but some of the employers' premises are not suited for those with restricted mobility.

**Quality assurance****Contributory grade 3**

17. There is a management team and a nominated quality assurance co-ordinator responsible for the quality assurance policies and procedures. Comprehensive monitoring of the organisation's procedures and business targets is carried out each week by the management team. The results then form a weekly action plan of improvements and actions needed for priority attention, which is given to all staff. These actions are then monitored against agreed target dates.

18. Extensive formal feedback is collected from learners throughout the training programme. Learner questionnaires are systematically analysed and the results are carefully examined and communicated to all staff. Employer feedback is collected at monthly meetings between managers, workplace supervisors and PTL's staff. The minutes of these meetings are well recorded with recorded actions and responsibilities noted. This employer meeting system has enabled PTL to implement improvements in workplace assessment and monitor the retention rates. Many new processes and procedures have been introduced as a result of continuous improvement, including methods to provide key skills training and assessment. Key skills training and assessment are considerably different in the two areas of learning. PTL has devised appropriate delivery methods for each area. New staff have been employed to implement these changes to the key skills provision. Some of these changes have been implemented slowly. Good staff development has taken place to ensure the improved provision of basic skills training.

19. The arrangements for internal verification are satisfactory in engineering, technology and manufacturing, and good in land-based provision. Each area of learning has a comprehensive recording system for recording learners' visits. There is a good internal verification sampling system for land-based provision. The training centre has some new assessors, but many do not know who the internal verifier is. Some assessors do not fully understand that the role of the experienced assessor is to countersign assessment decisions while the new assessor is working towards the assessor qualification.

20. PTL produced its first self-assessment report in May 2002. All staff were involved in the process, but feedback from employers and learners was not used effectively. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment grades for the areas of learning and equality of opportunity, but awarded a lower grade for leadership and management and quality assurance.

Good Practice
<p><i>PTL's employers have a number of Portuguese workers who are required to carry out mandatory hygiene training shortly after joining the employer. PTL worked in conjunction with a Portuguese workplace supervisor and the awarding body to make learning materials and examinations available in the learners' first language.</i></p>

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Land-based provision

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	8	3

21. There are eight learners on work-based learning programmes in land-based provision. There are five foundation modern apprentices and three advanced modern apprentices working towards NVQs at levels 2 and 3 in poultry production. All learners are recruited from their employers. All learners are employed by a group of poultry farmers, who produce broiler chickens or breeding stock birds. A team of four trainers, of whom three are qualified assessors and one is working towards the relevant qualifications, carry out all training and assessment in the workplace, including key skills. Off-the-job industry-specific training courses are also provided in the training centre.

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	1		2													
Retained*	1		2													
Successfully completed	0		0													
Still in learning	1		2													

\*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													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2		7													
Retained*	1		4													
Successfully completed	0		0													
Still in learning	1		4													

\*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 participation by learners in a wide range of additional qualifications
- good on-the-job training

## WEAKNESSES

- slow learner progress
- recent introduction of key skills training and assessment
- weak progress reviews

22. There is good participation by learners in a wide range of additional qualifications. Courses are run in new, well-lit classrooms at the training centre. Staff and external tutors use very well prepared information and course literature. Learner feedback for these courses is good. Additional training includes courses on issues including health and safety, as well as more industry-specific training in poultry welfare and rodent and pest control. Many of the additional qualifications have been requested by employers and all learners work towards at least two additional awards.

23. On-the-job training is good and is based upon industry practice and the needs of the poultry industry. All learners are employed on specialist poultry farms, which provide a comprehensive range of job tasks. Evidence of everyday tasks in the workplace is collected by learners for their portfolios. All learners demonstrate high levels of vocational and technical skills consistent with the NVQ and qualification level they are working towards. Learners have a good understanding of the work they carry out. One advanced modern apprentice is responsible for the welfare, health status, feeding, watering and ventilation of over 100,000 chickens in a computer-controlled site. Many of the written processes and procedures required to operate this type of intensive poultry unit have been jointly developed by PTL and the specialist poultry producers. These procedures are then used as part of the learning process. There are good working relationships with PTL and the employers.

24. No learner has achieved an NVQ unit, a complete NVQ or the full framework. The advanced modern apprentices are still working within the programme completion time and most are due to complete successfully. Most foundation modern apprentices have completed the required length of stay on the training programme, which has recently been extended by the awarding body for this area of learning. The learners are due shortly to complete within this new completion time. Retention rates are satisfactory. The assessment process does not allow the assessor or individual learners to adequately determine their progress. All learners are unclear about their own progress. PTL has changed the design of the portfolios of evidence. Evidence records, assessments and task cards are used to ensure all performance criteria and range statements are met for the award. These are then cross-referenced when the learner is close to completion. It is not until this final cross-referencing of evidence that the staff and learners know if the requirements are met or if additional evidence is required.

25. Key skills training and assessment have only recently been introduced. A new member of staff has been appointed to manage key skills training and assessment. It is too early to judge the impact of this appointment. For most learners, key skills training and assessment were introduced to them six weeks before inspection. For some learners this is between 12 and 14 months into their training programme. PTL provides no systematic initial key skills assessment. Although all learners are interviewed and their previous qualifications and achievements are recorded, these data are not used effectively. Some learners have to repeat work they have previously carried out. PTL has developed a generic cross-referencing system for the key skills against units of the NVQ, but this is not recorded in learners' portfolios. Although learners are now making satisfactory progress in key skills, no learner has achieved the key skills award.

26. Progress reviews are weak. Although some learners are visited once a month, other learners are not visited for up to six months. The review paperwork has changed a number of times and the comments within the reviews are often pastoral rather than about training. Good targets are not set. Progress reviews do not provide learners with sufficient information with which they can plan their training and assessment. There is insufficient review of previous achievement. Learners are unaware of their progress. Health and safety is not monitored during the progress review. Workplace supervisors and employers do not systematically take part in the progress review. Employers and work-place supervisors are unaware of their learners' progress. Individual learning plans do not include good targets and are not updated during progress reviews. Although new progress review paperwork and a service procedure has been developed, it is too early to judge their effectiveness.

#### Good Practice

*Some learners do not have access in the workplace to the required information technology for the NVQ. PTL provides relevant mobile equipment to the workplace to enable all learners to achieve the same training and skills in using this equipment.*



**Engineering, technology & manufacturing****Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	47	3

27. There are 47 learners in work-based learning programmes in engineering, technology and manufacturing. All learners are working towards foundation modern apprenticeships in meat and poultry processing. There is also one unemployed adult on a short job-focused training programme. PTL also provides longer occupational training for unemployed adults, however, no adults were on this training programme at the time of the inspection. All learners are recruited from employers. All modern apprentices are employed in poultry processing factories in Norfolk and Suffolk. All learners have completed between eight or 12 weeks' initial on-the-job training with their employers and some have been employed for several years. PTL provides an induction to the training programme. Most training and assessment are carried out on the job. There is some off-the-job training, which includes basic food hygiene and other appropriate short courses. Key skills training and assessment are carried out in the workplace. Assessments are carried out by a PTL assessor or work-based assessors. There are 12 work-based assessors, six are qualified and six are working towards the assessor qualification. Learners are visited in the workplace at least once a month. They receive feedback after every visit and their progress is reviewed every three months.

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

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	32		30		5											
Retained*	26		22		5	100										
Successfully completed	0		0		3	60										
Still in learning	26		21		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**

- particularly good working relationships between staff, learners and employers
- effective monitoring of learners' progress
- high retention and achievement rates
- effective use of key skills projects

## WEAKNESSES

- weak planning of individual training
- inadequate target-setting
- insufficient use of diverse evidence in learners' portfolios

28. There are particularly good working relationships between staff, employers and learners. Staff visit most employers each week at times to suit the employers. This includes staff who work with the night shift at one employer. The frequent visits provide learners with good regular support. Many learners also receive support from the work-based assessors and trainers. PTL has considerable experience of working in the poultry processing environment and works very closely with the production supervisors and managers to minimise disruption during visits. Assessors and trainers provide good support for learners with poor literacy and numeracy skills. They explain carefully the question sheets during reviews. Trainers plan extra time to work with learners who have additional learning needs. One employer has training materials that have been translated into other languages. Some learners with very poor literacy and numeracy skills are provided with individual training by a qualified basic skills trainer.

29. There is effective monitoring of learners' progress. Each employer has a colour-coded chart, which lists the learners and the type of activity that is planned for each month. This chart is updated each week and is used effectively by employers and PTL to manage the visits and activities. A plan of the units learners are working towards, and the date they are to be completed by, is displayed in the training office of each employer. However, no target dates are displayed on the plan. There is a progress sheet in each portfolio, which lists the assignments and related units with the actual achievement dates. Learners are also given a card at each progress review, which outlines their achievements to date.

30. Retention and achievement rates are high. Of those learners who started foundation modern apprenticeships between 1999 and 2001, over 60 per cent achieved the full framework. Over 80 per cent of those learners who started their training programmes in 2001 are still in training and progress is satisfactory.

31. Key skills training and assessment were introduced when an appropriately qualified member of staff was recruited in 2002. PTL has worked well with employers to develop key skills projects and make suitable arrangements for learners to have time away from the production area for key skills training and assessment. The projects are relevant to the tasks learners carry out in the workplace. Learners take part in effective group discussions on various topics and issues relating to health and safety and hygiene. They then complete an assignment relating to different issues in their department or in the company as a whole. This assignment is completed on laptops supplied by PTL. The key skills trainer provides good, clear support and guidance to learners during the key skills sessions. One group of learners completed the key skills training early in the programme and successfully achieved the health and safety unit of their NVQ.

32. There is weak planning of individual training. All learners complete a basic skills test at the start of the training programme, but this is not used to identify individual learning needs. Some learners have poor basic skills and there are no arrangements on their individual learning plans to tackle this. Support is currently only given to those who have particularly poor literacy and numeracy skills. Learners complete a self-declaration on the level of their experience and knowledge relating to work skills and key skills. This information is not used to identify gaps in experience and to plan appropriate training. Individual learning plans do not specify what training will be given, or when it will take place. PTL does not refer to or use the employers own training records to identify any additional training needs for learners. Some learners have been employed for several years and there is no planned training to update their knowledge before assessment. Additional coaching is provided for those learners who are reassessed. PTL has only recently started to develop relevant learning support materials.

33. Target-setting is inadequate. Learners know what they have achieved, but are unaware of any target dates of different activities they need to carry out. Various target dates are set on individual learning plans, but these do not take into account the learners' prior achievements. Some learners are on inappropriate training programmes. For example, some foundation modern apprentices are very experienced employees in positions of responsibility. Target dates on charts of learners' progress are not reviewed regularly. Until June 2002, progress reviews were not well structured. A new format has been introduced to provide a better structure. There is, however, insufficient focus on what actions learners need to take before the next progress review. There is insufficient feedback given to learners on their progress. There is insufficient involvement of employers in the review process, although monthly meetings are held with employers to review the training programmes as a whole.

34. There is insufficient use of diverse evidence in the learners' portfolios. Assessments are designed around a series of tasks, which are observed, and knowledge questions designed to meet NVQ requirements. Most portfolios contain insufficient work-based evidence. Some learners have produced some very detailed information about their jobs and include a good range of work-based evidence. However, this evidence has not been assessed and has not been cross-referenced to provide additional evidence for the NVQ. Key skills projects produce a range of evidence, which is not used as NVQ evidence. There is also insufficient use of witness statements.