

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Seetec Business Technology Centre Limited**

**27 May 2003**



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 learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

## Overall judgement

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

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

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

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

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

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **Seetec Business Technology Centre Limited**

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## INSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The SEETEC Business Technology Centre Limited (SEETEC) was founded in 1984 as an information technology centre. It is a private, limited company owned by six employees which provides training and employment services and supplies computers and computer software services to general medical practitioners. SEETEC operates from 21 locations mainly throughout London and the Southeast. It trains foundation and advanced modern apprentices, learners working towards national vocational qualifications (NVQs), and Jobcentre Plus clients on a wide range of programmes designed to get people into work. SEETEC provides training in land-based industries, construction, engineering and manufacturing, business administration, information and communications technology (ICT), retailing and customer service, and foundation programmes. It also provides training in hairdressing and beauty therapy, health and social care, art design and media, and hospitality, sport and leisure, but there were too few students on these programmes for them to be inspected. Funding for the work-based learning programmes is by Essex Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

2. SEETEC has training centres at its head office in Hockley and at Basildon, the City of London, Croydon, Chelmsford, Ilford, Romford, Rayleigh, Southend, Dagenham, Walthamstow, Hackney, Grays, Clacton, Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Derby, Long Eaton, Stevenage, Watford and Waltham Cross. The company subcontracts a small portion of its training to colleges and a number of private companies.

3. The senior management team consists of the managing director, a training director and a director of computing and software services. The training director is responsible for the management of all training provided by the company. SEETEC's 20 training centres are organised into three regions, each managed by a general manager. Each region is subdivided into districts that are managed by employment and training managers. SEETEC has clear policies and procedures for financial management, quality assurance and health and safety, each of which are managed centrally at the head office. The company employs 242 staff, of whom 207 are involved in training. At the time of the inspection, there were 1041 learners on programme.

4. SEETEC offers the following Jobcentre Plus programmes: New Deal 18-24; New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults; programme centre and Life Skills programmes. New Deal 18-24 includes environmental task force (ETF); further education and training (FTET) and voluntary sector (VS) options. New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults includes intensive activity period (IAP); basic employability training (BET); short job focused training (SJFT); longer occupational training (LOT) and short intensive basic skills (SIBS). Foundation programmes include most of the above, together with programme centre, Gateway, Gateway to Work and Life Skills.

## SCOPE OF PROVISION

### Land-based provision

5. There are 20 clients on Jobcentre Plus training programmes. Sixteen of the clients are on New Deal 18-24 ETF, three on New Deal 25+ programmes and one learner is on a work-based learning for adults programme. Land-based provision is available at eight of SEETEC's 20 offices. Clients receive practical training for four days each week at a wide variety of locations including country parks, conservation areas and woodlands. Assessment is carried out at the training locations by SEETEC's staff. All training leads to a recognised qualification or a SEETEC certificate in practical environmental skills. Some clients also achieve additional qualifications during their training, such as chainsaw handling and lift-truck operation. Clients have monthly progress reviews during which their progress is monitored and training targets are set.

### Construction

6. There are 62 construction clients on training programmes, delivered at nine SEETEC training centres. Thirty-six New Deal 18-24 clients are on the ETF, VS or FTET options and there are 26 New Deal 25+ work-based learning for adults clients. All clients are working towards a SEETEC certificate in painting and decorating, or the more general employability award. All clients receive an initial induction and complete an individual learning plan. They receive their practical training and work experience through projects in the community, supervised by SEETEC's trainers. The projects include community parks, museums, heritage centres and a primary school. All clients carry out at least half a day's jobsearch each week. Additional qualifications are available and provided by the training centres or subcontractors.

### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

7. SEETEC provides Jobcentre Plus training in engineering and manufacturing for clients at five of its 20 offices. At the time of the inspection, there are 15 clients, of which six are on New Deal 25+, two are on New Deal 18-24 and seven are on work-based learning for adults programmes. Additional training is provided in preparation for work, information and communications technology (ICT), health and safety, equal opportunities and introductory management courses. A range of external courses is provided by subcontracted organisations to meet clients' specialist needs. These include specific health and safety courses and mechanical, electrical, electronics, computer-aided engineering and coal-mining engineering courses. The length of programmes varies from two to 26 weeks. Clients are able to join programmes at any time of the year. All clients receive an induction during their first two weeks on programme. A further health and safety induction is provided to all clients in the workplace.

### **Business administration, management & professional**

8. There are 160 learners in total on business administration training programmes. There are 70 modern apprentices in administration or estate agency. Of the modern apprentices, 66 are on foundation and four on advanced programmes. There are 90 Jobcentre Plus clients. These include 44 on New Deal 18-24, nine on New Deal 25+ and 37 on work-based learning for adults programmes. Twenty-five of the 90 clients are on the self-employment option. Business and administration training is offered at 11 of the 20 SEETEC offices.

### **Information & communications technology**

9. SEETEC offers ICT training at 10 of the company's 20 offices. There are 92 clients working towards ICT qualifications in using common computer applications. Of these, 25 clients are enrolled on New Deal 18-24, and 67 on a number of work-based learning for adults programmes. Programmes last for between 10 and 26 weeks. Most clients attend SEETEC's own training centres for between 16 and 30 hours each week, where they learn in computer workshops guided by trainers. They also spend a half-day each week on jobsearch activities. A small number of clients find work placements. These attend SEETEC's offices less frequently, but usually for one day each week.

### **Retailing, customer service & transportation**

10. There are 209 learners in total on a range of retailing, customer service and transportation programmes delivered at 10 of SEETEC's 20 centres. There are 77 clients on New Deal 18-24 programmes, 114 clients on New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults programmes and 18 foundation modern apprentices. Most clients are trained on the job at employers' premises.

### **Foundation programmes**

11. SEETEC provides a variety of Jobcentre Plus and LSC-funded foundation programmes. Jobcentre Plus programmes range from those providing for a recognised literacy and numeracy need, to those for clients who are considered to be ready for employment and include: New Deal 18-24; New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults, and programme centre training. There is one LSC programme for Life Skills at two training centres. This programme is for 16 to 18 year-old learners with the opportunity to progress into further education, work-based learning or employment with training. At the time of the inspection, there was foundation provision at 16 of SEETEC's 20 centres. There were 460 learners on Jobcentre Plus-funded programmes and 23 on the Life Skills programme. The centres vary considerably across the organisation and include those in the inner city, market towns and urban areas.

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	19
Number of inspection days	76
Number of learner interviews	275
Number of staff interviews	107
Number of employer interviews	23
Number of subcontractor interviews	5
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	13

## OVERALL JUDGEMENT

12. The quality of provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, SEETEC's leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Its approach to equality of opportunity and quality assurance is also unsatisfactory. The quality of the Jobcentre Plus provision in construction and ICT is satisfactory. Jobcentre Plus-funded provision in land-based industries, engineering, business and administration, retailing and customer care, and foundation is unsatisfactory. The quality of work-based learning for young people in business administration, and retailing and customer care are satisfactory, but Life Skills is unsatisfactory.

## GRADES

*grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak*

<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>4</b>
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	4
Quality assurance	4

<b>Land-based provision</b>	<b>4</b>
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	4
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4

<b>Construction</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 18-24	3
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3



Engineering, technology & manufacturing	4
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4
New Deal 18-24	4

Business administration, management & professional	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4
New Deal 18-24	4

Information & communications technology	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3
New Deal 18-24	3

Retailing, customer service & transportation	4
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4
New Deal 18-24	4
Work-based learning for young people	3

Foundation programmes	4
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4
New Deal 18-24	4
Programme centres	4
Life Skills	4

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievement and standards

**13. A small proportion of land-based industry clients find employment at the end of New Deal and work-based learning programmes.** Most clients have a low level of achievement and low self-esteem when they start training. **Their motivation and determination to succeed increase significantly during their training period.**

**14. Construction clients show a high standard of practical work.** Work is to industrial standards in many of the commercial projects and covers a wide range of applications.

Clients are keen to show the quality of their work and to improve their skills.

15. **In construction, there is a low achievement rate for job outcomes.** In 2002-03, 29 per cent of New Deal 25+ work-based learning for adults clients found jobs, however, 14 per cent are still in learning. The proportion of New Deal 18-24 clients gaining a job in 2001-02 was 33 per cent.

16. The standard of work achieved by manufacturing and engineering clients is satisfactory. Clients can achieve additional qualifications, many of which are externally accredited. Resources for specialised training are inadequate. **In manufacturing, job outcomes for 2002-03 are low, averaging 22 per cent.**

17. **There is poor progression of business and administration learners into employment.** The percentage of clients who start Jobcentre Plus programmes and progress directly into jobs during, or on completion of their training has fallen from 57 per cent to a possible maximum of 35 per cent over the past two or more years. Learners' practical skills are satisfactory. Foundation modern apprentices make slow progress.

18. **A low proportion of ICT clients progress into jobs.** The proportion of adults finding work was 29 per cent and for clients on New Deal 18-24, it was 41 per cent.

19. **The proportion of retailing and customer service learners finding jobs is low.** The number of learners who have started on Jobcentre Plus programmes has increased from 92 in 2000-01 to 903 in 2002-03. During the same period, the proportion of learners finding permanent employment has fallen from 49 per cent to 31 per cent.

20. **Foundation programme learners develop good personal and social skills such as teamworking, communication, and organisational skills.** Learners demonstrate improved attitudes to learning and personal development, as well as increased self-confidence and self-esteem as a result of their training.

21. **The progression of foundation New Deal clients into employment is poor.** In 2002-03 only 24 per cent of New Deal 18-24 clients have found employment. For the New Deal 25+ programmes in 2001-02, only 16 per cent went on to employment. In 2002-03, the proportion finding work is just above the 2001-02 figure, with almost half the clients still on programme.

## Quality of education and training

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	2	0	0	0	3
Construction	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	4
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Business administration, management & professional	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Information & communications technology	0	0	6	1	1	0	0	8
Foundation programmes	0	1	4	7	0	0	0	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>

### 22. Land-based clients are well motivated and stimulated by their on-the-job training.

This takes place at a good variety of locations, such as country and public parks, conservation areas and woodlands. They develop good personal and employment skills during their practical training, such as good teamworking, communications, regular attendance and punctuality. Most portfolios of work are poor, the range of evidence is limited and photographic evidence is difficult to authenticate.

23. **There are no challenging targets in the progress reviews or individual learning plans of land-based clients.** Some of the clients' portfolios are unstructured and make poor use of work evidence. Insufficient use is made of clients' individual learning plans to structure the training programme.

24. **There is poor use of initial assessment.** Although they are offered an initial literacy and numeracy assessment, the results of these are not used in developing the clients' individual learning plans or to establish the clients' training programme.

25. **There is a good range of work placements for construction clients that includes commercial, public access and open sites in community settings.** Clients are able to plan and carry out a variety of practical tasks enabling them to demonstrate a good range of skills. A good range of additional qualifications is offered and achieved by construction clients. **The reinforcement of health and safety for construction clients is good.** Health and safety forms a key part of the induction programme and is included in every practical session. **Literacy and numeracy support for construction clients is inadequate.** Not all clients have been given a literacy and numeracy skills assessment.

26. **Engineering clients receive good training for work.** They are able to achieve a good range of additional qualifications. These improve clients' chances of finding work. **Training resources are inadequate.** There are not enough textbooks for some technical qualifications and limited reference books and materials.

27. **There is a wide range of supportive work placements in manufacturing.** There are good links with employers from a wide range of different manufacturing occupations. **Engineers' literacy and numeracy skills were not initially assessed until recently.** Existing

clients who started training before the assessment was introduced have not been assessed to determine if they required additional help and support.

**28. There is good assessment of business and administration work-based learning.** Portfolios for modern apprentices are satisfactory or better. **There are good work placements for business and administration clients.** Modern apprentices are carefully matched to their work-placement company. **Progress reviews and action-planning are good,** modern apprentices are visited in their workplaces at least once a fortnight. **Business administration foundation modern apprentices make slow progress.** Of the 15 learners in administration, some have taken more than 12 months to complete their modern apprenticeships, some have not yet done so. Support for learners is poor. Literacy and numeracy skills are initially assessed, but those identified as having needs are not required to attend training.

**29. ICT clients receive a good induction.** They are held regularly over five days and clients remember the process well. **Teaching and learning in ICT is good. Schemes of work are well designed and include challenging tasks. Individual learning plans are not used effectively in ICT** to monitor progress and promote learning. Learning plans do not show individual client's learning requirements. **There is poor jobsearch support for ICT clients.** There is insufficient reference to jobsearch in learning plans and progress reviews. Trainers and advisers do not provide sufficient help and advice. Literacy and numeracy skills are assessed at the start of training, but few clients are identified as having additional needs.

**30. Retail and customer service learners have good work placements.** SEETEC has developed good working relationships with employers and is keen to ensure that all learners are placed appropriate to their needs. Trainers are in regular contact with most retailing learners and provide them with good advice and support. **Retailing and customer service programmes are not well planned.** The outcome from initial assessment is not used to plan individual learning programmes. Not all learners receive initial assessments. Those learners who receive literacy and numeracy support are not monitored through their progress reviews. **Jobsearch sessions are poorly planned and structured,** some clients get little benefit from them and some question its value.

**31. Trainers provide foundation learners with good pastoral support.** Many trainers have been through the same type of training and are role models of what can be achieved. **Literacy, numeracy and language support arrangements for foundation learners are inadequate.** Initial assessment of basic skills is poor at most centres.

**32. Target-setting for learners is poorly developed.** Targets contained within individual training plans are often vague and are not specific or measurable. There is insufficient interim target-setting.

### **Leadership and management**

**33. There is good strategic and business planning.** SEETEC's training and business activities are supported by clearly focused strategic and business planning. Clear

strategic objectives provide challenging targets including corporate and departmental objectives for each of the centres. The staff development plan is also linked effectively to business plan objectives.

**34. SEETEC has established a good network of employers who provide work-placement opportunities for clients.** These employers provide generally good work placements for clients in land-based, construction, manufacturing, retailing and LSC-funded business.

**35. Subcontracted training is poorly managed.** SEETEC does not ensure that subcontractors offer good training. Service level agreements are not properly implemented and the company does not check that the subcontractors' quality assurance systems are properly applied to the training.

**36.** Learner feedback is used effectively to improve the quality of training provision. Learners complete questionnaires at the start, in the middle, and at the end of their training. These views are analysed by managers and used improve the service.

**37. SEETEC offers a broad range of training to meet the needs of a diverse client group.** Staff work hard to interest and engage clients, many of whom have experienced significant barriers in their lives. Training is provided in any vocational area and at any level.

**38.** The internal verification and internal moderation of accredited courses is satisfactory in land-based, IT, engineering, construction, retailing and business administration.

**39. Operational management is inconsistent.** SEETEC has expanded rapidly over recent years and there are variations in the ability of the different centres to meet increasingly complex needs. There are variations in the level of autonomy of different training centres and significant inconsistencies in the day-to-day operations of the centres. Some programme planning is poor. At some centres there is insufficient initial assessment, insufficient attention to individual learning plans, poor jobsearch facilities and job achievement rates and poor resources.

**40. Every area of learning has poor job achievement rates.** SEETEC is failing to achieve some of the targets set by Jobcentre Plus. This is in the context of relatively low unemployment rates and a buoyant economy. The current job achievement rates are closer to targets set by contracts in earlier years.

**41. Data are not used effectively by SEETEC's management.** Data are not used to support the planning and quality of training. For example, each training centre produces monthly returns of jobs gained. These data are used largely to monitor financial claims. SEETEC has recently introduced for the first time, a breakdown of clients in relation to areas of learning.

**42. The application of the new quality assurance framework is inconsistent.** There are inconsistencies in its operation throughout areas of learning and the various centres. Some of the most significant examples are in the writing and use of clients' individual

learning plans, the conduct of learners' progress reviews, jobsearch training, the quality of resources, initial assessment and the delivery of language, literacy and numeracy support for learners.

43. **Observation of training and learning is weak.** Trainers do not understand the reasons for the observations. Staff have not been trained to carry out the observations. The focus of observations is on teaching and not on learning or outcomes and they are not graded.

44. **Equality of opportunity is not promoted sufficiently.** Although some learners' recall of equal opportunities during induction is good, many could not remember it and had insufficient understanding of equal opportunities issues.

45. **SEETEC's self-assessment report is not sufficiently evaluative.** The latest report, written in December 2002, is its first company-wide report. It is generally descriptive. The areas of learning, and leadership and management have many strengths and few weaknesses and the grades given are higher than those considered appropriate by inspectors. There were few judgements about job achievement levels, or the other achievements by learners. Many SEETEC staff did not contribute to the development of the self-assessment report, despite an invitation to do so.

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

## **Leadership and management**

### **Strengths**

- good strategic and business planning
- effective links with employers
- good use of learners' feedback
- broad range of training provision meets needs of diverse client group

### **Weaknesses**

- inconsistent operational management
- poor job achievement rate
- poor use of learners' retention and achievement data
- inconsistent use of quality assurance
- weak observation of training and learning
- insufficient reinforcement of equal opportunities
- insufficiently evaluative self-assessment report

## **Land-based provision**

### **Strengths**

- good development of personal and employment skills
- realistic industrial on-the-job training

### **Weaknesses**

- low rate of progression into employment
- weak progress reviews
- some poor client portfolios
- poor use of initial assessment and individual learning plans

## **Construction**

### **Strengths**

- very good standard of practical work
- good-quality work project sites for training
- good achievement of additional qualifications
- good reinforcement of health and safety practice

### **Weaknesses**

- low job achievement rate
- inadequate literacy and numeracy support
- inconsistent quality assurance of training

## **Engineering, technology & manufacturing**

### **Strengths**

- good preparation for work training
- good range of additional qualifications for clients
- wide range of supportive work placements in manufacturing

### **Weaknesses**

- poor job achievement rate in manufacturing
- inadequate specialist training resources
- poor recording of clients' progress
- no initial assessment of basic skills for some clients
- some poor management of training

## **Business administration, management & professional**

### **Strengths**

- good work placements
- good assessment of work-based learning
- good staff development
- good progress reviews and action-planning

### **Weaknesses**

- poor progression rate into employment
- slow progress by foundation modern apprentices
- ineffective induction
- poor management of some programmes

## **Information & communications technology**

### **Strengths**

- good IT teaching and learning
- well-designed learning programmes
- good use of assignments to support learning
- good induction

### **Weaknesses**

- poor job achievement rate
- ineffective use of individual learning plans
- poor support in jobsearch



## **Retailing, customer service & transportation**

### **Strengths**

- good work placements
- good individual support for learners

### **Weaknesses**

- poor employment outcomes
- poor programme planning
- poor jobsearch facility
- poor promotion of equality of opportunity
- weak management of subcontractors

## **Foundation programmes**

### **Strengths**

- good development of personal skills
- good pastoral support for learners

### **Weaknesses**

- poor target-setting
- poor progression into employment
- inadequate literacy, numeracy and language support arrangements
- poor management of training

## **WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT SEETEC BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY CENTRE LIMITED:**

- kind, willing and helpful staff
- regular visits by trainers and the help they provide
- good work-placement experience that leads to a job
- local offices and convenient work placements
- the help provided by SEETEC towards work experience and a qualification
- good additional free training courses
- being treated well and with respect

## **WHAT LEARNERS THINK SEETEC BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY CENTRE LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:**

- the amount of detailed information on courses and programmes
- wage levels
- the learning environment for adults
- tutor-led computer classes
- the opening hours at the training centres to allow more flexible access to computers
- ways of meeting individual needs
- the timing of the training sessions
- the amount of stationery, current newspapers and computers for jobsearch training
- the ways of doing jobsearch

## **KEY CHALLENGES FOR SEETEC BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY CENTRE LIMITED:**

- continue to provide good-quality, realistic work placements
- improve learners' progress reviews
- improve the quality and frequency of assessment
- improve the promotion of equality of opportunity
- improve the collection and use of data to plan and manage training
- further develop the structure and planning of programmes and courses
- improve initial assessment and take up of literacy, numeracy and language support
- improve the management and quality assurance of training
- develop consistently good-quality training
- improve the quality of jobsearch
- increase the number of clients getting jobs

## DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Grade 4**

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

#### **Strengths**

- good strategic and business planning
- effective links with employers
- good use of learners' feedback
- broad range of training provision meets needs of diverse client group

#### **Weaknesses**

- inconsistent operational management
- poor job achievement rate
- poor use of learners' retention and achievement data
- inconsistent use of quality assurance
- weak observation of training and learning
- insufficient reinforcement of equal opportunities
- insufficiently evaluative self-assessment report

46. SEETEC's training and business activities are supported by good and clearly focused strategic and business planning. Clear strategic objectives provide challenging targets, including corporate and departmental objectives for each training centre. Corporate objectives cover the main functions of the company and include human resources, quality management, equal opportunities, health and safety, customer services, finance and management information systems (MIS), business development and marketing. Job descriptions are linked to the business plan and the appraisal process includes setting and monitoring targets against these objectives. The staff development plan is also effectively linked to business plan objectives. However, the objectives of SEETEC's training centres do not reflect sufficiently the specific context within which they operate and the same targets are applied throughout the whole organisation. Targets for each centre and its staff do not reflect their particular needs.

47. SEETEC has established a good network of employers who provide work-placement opportunities for learners. Most employers provide good work placements for learners in land-based, construction, manufacturing, retailing, and business and administration. Many work placements offer a very good realistic working environment. Employers are supportive and provide good training opportunities.

48. SEETEC has expanded rapidly over recent years and there are variations in the ability of the different training centres to meet increasingly complex needs. There are variations in the level of autonomy of different centres and significant inconsistencies in the day-to-

day operation of the centres. This situation was identified in four of the seven areas of learning inspected. There is some poor programme planning, insufficient initial assessment, insufficient attention to individual learning plans, some poor jobsearch and job outcomes and poor resources in some centres. The appraisal process does not operate consistently throughout the company and there are variations in the quality of support for staff, access to staff development, communication and management support.

49. Lines of communication are clear throughout the company and arrangements to support staff are satisfactory. Senior managers hold regular meetings which focus largely on monitoring performance against targets. Insufficient attention is paid to the quality of training at these meetings. At local training centres, staff meetings usually take place weekly. These meetings provide opportunities for the staff to discuss specific issues and the progress of clients. There has been some useful work by quality assurance control (QAC) meetings, although these groups do not meet regularly. The irregularity of QAC meetings limits managers' opportunities to identify and share good practice. A number of initiatives to support the motivation of staff has been introduced. These include employee of the month and year awards. An employee forum has also been established to promote better communication with staff. A group of nine employees representing different training centres meets the managing director and the personnel manager every three months. The outcomes of these meetings are circulated to all staff through a recently introduced newsletter. Staff development opportunities are linked to job roles and identified through the appraisal process. The training plan is comprehensive and clearly linked to improving the quality of provision. Some training is also offered at the specific request of staff. For example, a course in dealing with aggression and violence was offered in response to support needs identified by staff.

50. All areas of learning have poor rates for learners gaining jobs and SEETEC is not achieving some of the targets set by Jobcentre Plus. This is in the context of relatively low unemployment rates and a buoyant economy. In construction New Deal 18-24, the achievement rate was 39 per cent in 2001. In 2002, the rate dropped to 29 per cent and is declining further this year, although there are still clients on the programme. There are similar patterns in New Deal 25+. For example in retailing, the rate has declined from 42 per cent in 2002 to 26 per cent in 2003. In business administration, the rate has declined from 49 per cent in 2002 to 31 per cent in 2003. In LSC-funded provision, the achievement rates are satisfactory for retailing and ICT. There is slow progress on LSC-funded business administration programmes, but the rates are now improving.

51. Data are not used sufficiently to support the planning and quality of training. Each training centre produces monthly returns of job outcome data. These are sent to the head office for compiling and are shared with training centre managers. These performance statistics are used largely to monitor financial claims. SEETEC has introduced a breakdown of learners' data by areas of learning for the first time recently, but it too early to judge the effect of this on the quality of training and the success rate for learners gaining jobs.

52. SEETEC has not developed a strategy and development plan for literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). There is no consistent use of a

company-wide initial assessment which identifies such needs, and insufficient effective literacy, numeracy and/or language support within the areas of learning.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 4**

53. SEETEC offers a broad range of provision to meet the needs of a diverse group of learners. Staff work hard to interest and engage learners, many of whom have experienced significant problems in their lives. Many learners receive good support, including referral to a range of external agencies for support with personal needs such as homelessness or welfare support. The discretionary fund is used to help learners pay for travel costs and in some cases, interview clothes. They are offered a range of opportunities to achieve additional qualifications. For some learners these certificates offer the first formal recognition of their achievements. This supports their motivation, helps to develop their self-confidence and improves their chances of finding a job. Training centres display positive images of successful clients. Action plans to target particular groups, such as lone parents and older workers, further support widening participation strategies, though these projects are at an early stage of development.

54. The equal opportunities policy has recently been updated to an equality and diversity document for both learners and employees. This is a considerable improvement on the previous policy, the equity between learners and staff is reinforced by a single document. However, it is not easily accessible to some learners with literacy or language support needs. There are designated harassment officers at all sites and complaints monitoring is carried out and collated centrally. The review of equality of opportunity in the personnel section indicates a more active approach in promoting good practice. Recruitment procedures have been reviewed in relation to ethnicity and disability and a new application form for staff includes a broadening of monitoring categories to the European standard. Data are collected on recruitment patterns and staffing profiles. The staff training plan highlights equality of opportunity as mandatory training.

55. Data are not collected for equal opportunities analysis of achievement, retention and job outcomes by gender and ethnic origin. There is no strategy to develop inclusive training and learning strategies which more closely meet the needs of an increasingly diverse group of clients. There has been no action to include the needs of the relevant race and disability acts.

56. Equality of opportunity is not promoted sufficiently and learners' recall of equal opportunities training at induction is poor. Progress reviews are not used to develop an understanding of diversity issues and there is insufficient checking with employers that equality and diversity is promoted within the workplace. There are access difficulties for learners with mobility problems at some training centres. Equipment and services providing additional support are purchased at the request of learners. Arrangements for identifying additional learning support needs are inadequate.

**Quality assurance****Contributory grade 4**

57. Learner's responses to questionnaires are used effectively to improve the quality of provision. Managers seek learners' views by use of questionnaires at the start, in the middle, and at the end of the training. These views are analysed and used to improve the service. One notable example of an outcome from these questionnaires was the moving of a training programme to another building which is closer to public transport and easier for learners to attend. SEETEC has also bought additional learning resources to support learning as a result of these surveys.

58. Several recent initiatives have identified good practice and improved the quality of learning. The recently introduced QAC and performance improvement meetings have identified some weaknesses and action has been taken to bring about improvements. Performance improvement focus meetings concentrate more on the achievement of targets than on the quality of training. In some other areas of learning, the meetings have been infrequent.

59. SEETEC has recently introduced a new quality assurance framework. The essential elements of the new framework include feedback from learners, audits by managers, analysis of data, self-assessment, sharing of good practice and a development plan. It does not yet include the observation of teaching, learning and training. The application of the new framework is patchy and inconsistent and there are inconsistencies in its operation. Some notable examples of inconsistencies are in writing and using learners' individual learning plans, the conduct of learners' progress reviews, jobsearch training, the quality of resources, initial assessment and the delivery of language, literacy and numeracy support for learners. There are also inconsistencies in the monitoring of the quality of subcontractors' training. There is no overall time plan for introduction of the quality assurance processes. Internal verification and moderation of accredited courses is satisfactory in land-based, IT, engineering, construction, retailing and business administration.

60. SEETEC has recently introduced teaching observations, but staff do not understand the purpose of them. Staff have not been trained to carry out the observations, which are not graded. The focus of observations is on teaching and not on learning or outcomes. Observers are required to complete an observation form, but these do not include sufficient detail about the standards achieved by learners. Most comments are positive and there is insufficient reference to weaknesses or improvements that could be made. There is no indication of how the results of these observations will be used to improve the quality of learning and training.

61. The most recent self-assessment report was written in December 2002 and is SEETEC's first company-wide self-assessment. It is written for each area of learning and for leadership and management. It is generally descriptive and not sufficiently evaluative. Many of the graded areas have many strengths and few weaknesses, but are graded as satisfactory. Inspectors considered many of the strengths listed as normally required standards. The report did not identify several significant weaknesses such as poor jobsearch, weak assessment and progress reviews and poor target-setting. There were very few judgements about job outcomes or learners' achievements. Many SEETEC

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staff did not contribute to the development of the self-assessment, despite an invitation to do so.

62. SEETEC has produced an ambitious and challenging development plan in response to its self-assessment report. Satisfactory progress has been made in some areas of the report, but the timescales in some other areas are unrealistic and SEETEC has not been able to meet all the deadlines.



## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Land-based provision

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 18-24	16	4
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4	4

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

#### Strengths

- good development of personal and employment skills
- realistic industrial on-the-job training

#### Weaknesses

- low rate of progression into employment
- weak progress reviews
- some poor client portfolios
- poor use of initial assessment and individual learning plans

### Achievement and standards

63. The standard of New Deal clients' work and the level of practical skills, such as paving, fencing and brickwork is satisfactory. New Deal clients' practical work-based learning takes place for four days each week at a good variety of locations, such as country and public parks, conservation areas and in woodlands. Much of the work is on community projects in public and country parks. The work is stimulating and clients take a pride in their work. They make good progress in acquiring new work skills and in personal development. Many clients have a low level of self-esteem when they begin their training, but after a short period on the programme, their motivation and practical work skills improve. Clients also receive training and gain skills in a variety of additional craft courses, such as pesticide applications and chainsaw handling, which improves their chances of finding work. They also gain confidence and improve their communication skills by working together and dealing with the public. Clients also learn jobsearch skills that will enable them to seek permanent employment.

64. Although clients achieve satisfactory levels of practical and written work, their rate of progression into employment is poor. There are many reasons for the low numbers finding a job, but include some clients' poor attitude to finding a job and the low number of job opportunities available. The client retention rate on all programmes is low, with more than 40 per cent failing to complete any programme during the past three years. In the period 2002-03, 42 per cent of all land-based industry clients who started training completed their individual learning plan and only 27 per cent gained a job. This is well

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below the target set by Jobcentre Plus.

65. Client's data in the tables are recorded by financial year. For clients in the 2003-04 financial year on: New Deal 18-24, six clients have started this programme and all six are still in training. On New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults, one client started training and has found employment.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	81		190		215											
Retained*	34		101	53	116	54										
Planned learning completed	34		84	44	42	20										
Gained job	22		65	34	79	37										
Still in training	10		0	0	0	0										

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	38		28													
Retained*	19		17	61												
Planned learning completed	12		14	50												
Gained job	9		9	32												
Still in training	4		0	0												

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

## Quality of education and training

66. The quality of land-based training provided by SEETEC meets the needs of most land-based clients in preparing them for employment. A small proportion of clients who find a job at the end of their training are employed by garden centres, others become self-employed gardeners, landscape gardeners and country park wardens, others go on to further training. Training sessions are well planned and delivered by trainers who provide good individual support to clients to help them acquire appropriate levels of skill in a

short time. All learning objectives are clearly stated and fully understood by the clients. All clients have an individual learning plan, which is reviewed and updated regularly, but individual learning objectives are not always clearly stated or sufficiently challenging. There is a good relationship between the trainers and the clients, which helps the learning process. Most clients are enthusiastic and motivated by their course and take a pride and interest in their practical training and written work. They also learn the personal skills of communication, working with others and dealing with the general public which improves their chances of employment.

67. Trainers are well qualified and have appropriate industrial experience. There is an appropriate number of trainers to deliver the range of land-based options offered. Most staff are trained assessors and those who are not, are working towards achieving the assessor qualification. One member of staff carries out all internal verification of all NVQ assessment. SEETEC has a good staff development programme to ensure that the skills and knowledge of its land-based trainers are up to date.

68. Classrooms used for teaching have sufficient equipment, but the learning environment is limited by insufficient display materials. Clients have access to a good range of basic hand tools, machinery and equipment as well as materials for on- and off-the-job training. Some specialist machinery and equipment is hired when needed. All training takes place on employers' premises in conditions which meet health and safety requirements. Before starting work, clients are required to carry out their own risk assessments. Jobsearch facilities are adequate to meet the training needs of the clients and allow independent research into the local and regional job markets.

69. The land-based training provided by SEETEC meets the needs of most clients and satisfies the requirements of the local job markets. The range of courses on offer is limited, but is sufficient to meet the clients' needs when combined with specialist training. These additional training courses include lift-truck operations, chainsaw handling and car driving licences, if appropriate. SEETEC will provide for any reasonable training request which will help clients to find a job. All clients have equality of access and opportunity on these training programmes.

70. Most clients are from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds and require a lot of support and guidance to help them to remain in training. All staff are very supportive of the clients and provide both pastoral and learning support. Clients are given help with personal hygiene, confidence training and subsidised transport. Individual learning and pastoral support is offered to the clients throughout the option. Clients are given further help to improve their attendance, punctuality and attitudes to training and work. Induction, which lasts for one day is generally not well remembered and clients have poor recall of equal opportunities, complaints and appeal procedures.

71. The assessment of clients' progress is satisfactory and carried out at regular intervals. It is done under realistic working conditions at employer's premises. The outcomes of assessment are used in clients' four-weekly progress reviews to plan future training and assessment. The progress reviews are weak. They include the outcomes of assessment, client's attendance, punctuality, and attitude, but do not set challenging targets to be

achieved before the next review. Review records do not contain enough details to inform the client about what skills they should achieve before the next review, or set firm dates for completion of work. In some cases, the same targets are set time after time. Most clients' portfolios of work evidence is poor. It is not formally structured and there is no cross-referencing of the NVQ elements to units. Clients' prior achievements are not used to improve their progress. The range of evidence used is very limited and photographic evidence is poor and difficult to authenticate. Although internal verification meets awarding body requirements, it is not sufficiently thorough and does not include improvement targets for the assessors' performance when development needs are identified.

72. All clients are offered initial assessments to determine their literacy and numeracy needs and an appropriate level of training. The results of these assessments are not used to develop clients' individual learning plans or to establish their training programmes. Individual learning plans are not sufficiently structured or detailed and are not used as working documents. Individual support is provided for clients, for example in literacy and numeracy, or dyslexia support. The quality of this support is satisfactory.

### **Leadership and management**

73. The management of training is poor. The targets set to improve the training provision and to improve retention and achievement rates and the number of clients who gain jobs are not demanding. Quality assurance is not thorough enough. It relies too heavily on internal verification, which itself is not thorough. Insufficient use is made of management information to improve the quality of training for the client. There is good communication between SEETEC's head office and the land-based trainers, assessors and the verifier. Staff are kept up-to-date on all aspects of the company, through a series of regular team meetings. Physical and human resources are deployed efficiently and effectively in a cost-effective way. Not all trainers were consulted in the self-assessment process. Some staff do not take ownership of the self-assessment report and one trainer had not seen a copy of the report. Equal opportunities is covered during induction, but is not a regular feature of clients' progress reviews. Health and safety issues are well covered.

**Construction****Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 18-24	36	3
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	26	3

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

**Strengths**

- very good standard of practical work
- good-quality work project sites for training
- good achievement of additional qualifications
- good reinforcement of health and safety practice

**Weaknesses**

- low job achievement rate
- inadequate literacy and numeracy support
- inconsistent quality assurance of training

**Achievement and standards**

74. Clients produce a high standard of practical work during their training. Their work in a wide range of decorating applications is to industrial standards in most commercial projects in which they are engaged. Clients demonstrate the ability to strip down old surfaces of previous coatings and prepare for new finishes, they apply gloss coats to metal and woodwork, varnish interior floors, emulsion interior walls, and spray and hand-finish exterior fencing and posts. Lift truck training and other construction training are also given to improve clients' chances of finding permanent employment. Clients are keen to show the quality of the work they have produced and are committed to continuing to produce this standard consistently.

75. Only a small proportion of clients find permanent work after their training. There are many factors that contribute to this, but they include a culture of unemployment, the low number of job opportunities available and personal problems which are a bar to employment, such as having a prison record. In the 2002-03 financial year, 29 per cent of the clients on New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults who started training have so far gained a job, 14 per cent of these clients are still in training. The proportion of New Deal 18-24 clients gaining a job during 2001-02 was 30 per cent. In 2002-03, 25 per cent have so far found employment, while a further 10 per cent are still in training. The proportion of clients who complete their training programme varies considerably, and ranges from 87 per cent for New Deal 18-24 clients in 2002-03, to 23 per cent for New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults clients in the same year. Those who complete their training are well prepared to gain full-time employment.

76. Data for clients in the tables are recorded by financial year. For clients in the 2003-04 financial year on New Deal 18-24, 14 started this programme and all are still in training. On New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults, seven clients have started training and there are seven still in training.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	208		84		97											
Retained*	94		38	45	51	53										
Planned learning completed	87		33	39	38	39										
Gained job	52		25	30	37	38										
Still in training	22		0	0	0	0										

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	133															
Retained*	64															
Planned learning completed	51															
Gained job	39															
Still in training	19															

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

## Quality of education and training

77. The quality of the project sites used to train clients is very good. There is a good range of projects, including commercial, public access and open sites in community settings. Clients are able to plan and carry out a variety of practical tasks, enabling them to demonstrate a good range of skills. Practical training is well planned and clients are closely supervised and supported by SEETEC's staff. Many projects are long term, which enable new clients to see the skills that have been acquired by previous clients and the standards they will be able to develop. As much of the work is in public or open spaces, previous clients can continue to see the value and quality of the work they have

completed.

78. Staff are well qualified and experienced to deliver the training courses offered. However, staff appraisals are not carried out on a regular annual cycle. Planned review dates have slipped and there is insufficient target-setting for staff. Staff development opportunities are good and most staff have taken advantage of these in the past year.

79. A good range of additional qualifications is offered to clients during their training and most take and achieve them. Much of this additional training is certificated for example, lift truck driving, certificates for small maintenance work, and first-aid certificates. In some cases SEETEC has designed additional qualifications based on the specific needs of an employer, to help the employment opportunities for clients.

80. Trainers ensure that clients are constantly aware of health and safety issues during their training. Health and safety forms a key part of the induction programme and is identified in every trainer's lesson plan. SEETEC's own painting and decorating qualification has five modules, one of which is dedicated to health and safety which forms an integral part of the other four modules. All clients wear appropriate personal protective clothing and are fully aware of their own health and safety issues. Several of the work projects are based in open community settings and clients are very aware of the risks and the responsibility they have for the general public. At one location, clients were required to carry out work specifically to reduce the potential hazards to others before starting their task.

81. Clients are closely supervised during their training and their work is regularly assessed. Progress reviews are satisfactory. Realistic targets are set and monitored, but individual learning plans do not always record clients' qualifications or their achievements. A new progress review form has recently been introduced with the intention of improving the review process. The form has not been introduced at all training centres. There is a considerable variation in review standards. The new progress review form does not prompt the reviewer to record whether equal opportunities has been discussed during the process. SEETEC seeks the views of clients about the quality of their training during progress reviews and through questionnaires, and has used the results of this feedback to improve the quality of training provided.

82. Classroom-based training is satisfactory. Trainers make good use of practical equipment to demonstrate techniques and clients take an active part in these sessions. However, trainers do not take sufficient account of the different learning needs of individual clients. Questioning by trainers often only encourages contributions from the more able or experienced clients. Jobsearch training is uninspiring. It is too general, repetitive and does not cater for clients' individual needs. The practical training is very good with all learners fully engaged and committed to learning and developing new skills.

83. The support for literacy and numeracy needs is inadequate. Not all clients have had a basic skills assessment when they begin their training. The information on those who have had an assessment is not kept in all files. The recording of clients' information is incomplete. Training plans do not always record existing qualifications and achievements

gained by clients.

### **Leadership and management**

84. The leadership and management of construction training are unsatisfactory. Although SEETEC has a comprehensive quality assurance process, not all aspects of it are being carried out consistently. Not all supervisors have attended meetings to share information about new procedures, best practice or the standardisation of working practices. The system relies on the quality of internal verification, but at some sites this is inadequate. Trainers and the current vocational internal verifier have not been fully involved in the self-assessment process and are unaware of the action plans which relate to it. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. Equal opportunities is included during induction, and is regularly re-emphasised throughout training, but it is not monitored during progress reviews.



**Engineering, technology & manufacturing****Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	13	4
New Deal 18-24	2	4

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

**Strengths**

- good preparation for work training
- good range of additional qualifications for clients
- wide range of supportive work placements in manufacturing

**Weaknesses**

- poor job achievement rate in manufacturing
- inadequate specialist training resources
- poor recording of clients' progress
- no initial assessment of basic skills for some clients
- some poor management of training

**Achievement and standards**

85. The standard of work achieved by clients in the workplace is generally satisfactory. Many clients have no previous engineering qualifications and have been unemployed for long periods. Several are ex-offenders and have low expectations from their job outcomes. There is not sufficient time, even on longer programmes, to train clients to the standard that most employers expect, but every effort is made by SEETEC to place clients in appropriate work. Employers and clients agree the standard of work to be achieved during training and there are several examples of clients achieving job satisfaction and securing a full-time job.

86. There has been a fall in the number of clients attracted to engineering and manufacturing training in recent years. In the 2002-03 financial year, 73 clients started a training programme, but only 11 have joined the programme this year and there are currently 15 clients in training. The achievement of individual learning plans was satisfactory on all programmes in 2002-03, when 70 per cent of those that started, finished training and 55 per cent achieved their learning plan. The number of clients finding jobs has been satisfactory on work-based learning for adults programmes, averaging a 42 per cent success rate over the past two years. In manufacturing, the proportion of clients gaining a job last year was only 22 per cent.

87. Data for clients in the tables are recorded by financial year. Of the clients in the 2003-04 financial year on New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults, 11 have

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started training, three have been retained, two have completed their training, two have gained a job, nine are still in training.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2002-03															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	12															
Retained*	6															
Planned learning completed	6															
Gained job	4															
Still in training	2															

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	61		11													
Retained*	41		6	55												
Planned learning completed	33		5	45												
Gained job	24		3	27												
Still in training	4		0	0												

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

## Quality of education and training

88. Training provided by SEETEC is well planned and delivered through a series of modules aimed at improving clients' job-seeking skills. Training is given in the production of curriculum vitae (CVs), letter writing and interview techniques. Further occupationally specific training is delivered in health and safety, IT and the relevance of equal opportunities at work. If support needs are identified, clients are trained in programmes in confidence building, improving self-esteem and effective time management. Clients' value the motivation provided by trainers and report improvement in their confidence and approach to getting jobs.

89. Clients take a range of additional training modules. Many of these are externally

accredited and most are provided by subcontractors. Examples are lift truck training and motor vehicle driving licence. These are provided to meet individual needs and are a motivating factor for clients, as they are a necessary requirement for many jobs. Clients are also provided with additional specific training to meet the needs of local employers.

90. The induction of clients is thorough and well structured. The first two weeks of training are dedicated to identifying individual clients' needs. The accreditation of prior learning is investigated and used to inform individual learning plans. Clients' progress against targets is monitored at least monthly. Information from induction and initial assessment and progress reviews is not always accurately recorded on individual learning plans. In some cases, there are no planned dates for progress reviews or record of previous reviews.

91. SEETEC has developed links with a large number of manufacturing employers who are prepared to offer work opportunities to clients. There are fewer opportunities in engineering. SEETEC's staff make good use of the links they have established to promote training and are able to offer a wide range of engineering and manufacturing processes and practices to clients. Relationships are further developed through frequent workplace visits by trainers. Clients showed pride in having work experience on their CVs and are gaining confidence while improving their job prospects.

92. Some staff are not appropriately trained for their teaching or training role. There is a staff appraisal system, but this is not always effective in identifying the training needs of all trainers. There are insufficient appropriate training resources on some programmes. Where clients take specific modules linked to technical qualifications, there are not enough textbooks and reference materials for them to use. Clients often spend a lot of time at the training centres doing jobsearch activities. They are unable at that stage to take work placements, as they are still unqualified and need time to study for their chosen qualification and to meet employers' minimum requirements for the job. Employers' resources are generally good.

93. The recording of clients' progress is variable. At some training centres this is done satisfactorily, but at others it is poor. Trainers meet weekly at all offices to discuss clients' performance and progress. Action points for clients who are not progressing well are recorded and followed up at future meetings. Some clients do not receive adequate support to achieve their learning goals. Progress reviews of their training are weak and they do not have an adequate learning plan.

94. Clients who started training before April 2003 did not take a basic skills initial assessment. Some of these clients are still in training and their basic skills have not been assessed. Clients recruited after April 2003 are offered assistance with basic skills if a need has been identified. This is provided by a basic skills tutor who is available for one day a week for additional support. The planning and delivery of basic skills requirements in literacy and numeracy are poorly recorded. Trainers offer their clients individual support in numeracy and literacy on an ongoing basis. Clients are also offered advice and guidance from outside agencies for personal problems of a specific nature, for example drug abuse or financial problems.

## **Leadership and management**

95. Some programmes are poorly planned and managed. Management information systems are not effectively developed in all offices and there are clear differences in the abilities of local managers to effectively monitor retention rates, achievements, job outcomes and clients' destinations. Training centre managers do not always communicate well with senior management at head office about local requirements. Equality of opportunity is adequately promoted in engineering. All clients receive a copy of the company's equal opportunities policy, and information is clearly displayed in work areas. Clients have an acceptable level of understanding of equality of opportunity and are encouraged to identify any cases of unfair treatment and harassment.

96. The quality assurance system is not adequate to monitor clients' progress. Local staff ensure that clients' progress in manufacturing is monitored closely and that prompt action is taken where necessary. The monitoring of engineering clients' progress is poor. There is insufficient formal monitoring of the quality of training provided by subcontractors.

**Business administration, management & professional** **Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	70	3
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	48	4
New Deal 18-24	44	4

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

**Strengths**

- good work placements
- good assessment of work-based learning
- good staff development
- good progress reviews and action-planning

**Weaknesses**

- poor progression rate into employment
- slow progress by foundation modern apprentices
- ineffective induction
- poor management of some programmes

**Achievement and standards**

97. Learners acquire a satisfactory standard of practical skills, knowledge and understanding during their training. They benefit from the individual training given by trainers during their frequent visits to the learners' workplaces. Learners are set challenging targets and many achieve or exceed these, but some make slow progress. Some learners provide portfolio evidence that is of a higher standard than that required for their NVQ. Not all clients on Jobcentre Plus programmes are set clear targets. Some clients are given training that is of a lower standard than their prior achievements or does not support their learning goals. This includes clients who are learning computer applications that are not relevant to their individual needs.

98. The achievement rate by modern apprentices has not been satisfactory, but is improving. In 2000-01 only 31 per cent of those who started an apprenticeship were successful. Of the 58 learners who started training in 2001-02, 17 per cent have so far been successful, although another 29 per cent are nearing the end of their programmes. Of the 52 who started training in 2002-03 two have so far been successful and 80 per cent are still in training. The number of Jobcentre Plus clients has increased rapidly from 161 in 2000-01 to 1000 in 2002-03. During that period, the proportion progressing into employment has fallen from 57 per cent to a maximum possible 35 per cent. SEETEC trainers are aware of the fall in the progression to employment and have made improvements to their training to reverse the trend, but it is too early to detect the effects

of these improvements.

99. Data for learners in the tables are recorded by financial year. For clients in the 2003-04 financial year, on New Deal 18-24, 16 have started training, four have been retained, two have completed their training, two have found a job, and 14 are still in training. On New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults, 32 clients have started training, 17 have been retained, eight have completed their training, six have gained a job and 25 are still in training. Four foundation modern apprentices (FMAs) have started training, and four are still on programme.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2		12		21											
Retained*	1		5		7	33										
Successfully completed	0		2		8	38										
Still in learning	1		3		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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	50		58		50											
Retained*	2		16		14	28										
Successfully completed	2		10		14	28										
Still in learning	45		17		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

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	292		137		161											
Retained*	114		61	45	75	47										
Planned learning completed	114		72	53	81	50										
Gained job	79		51	37	92	57										
Still in training	30		0	0	0	0										

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	708		185													
Retained*	359		113	61												
Planned learning completed	337		95	51												
Gained job	222		81	44												
Still in training	23		0	0												

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

## Quality of education and training

100. Learners in administration and estate agency are placed with good and supportive employers for their training. The work placements are chosen to meet each learner's needs as closely as possible. Learners are supported by well-qualified trainers who provide good training. Trainers also take good care to understand learners' preferred learning styles, as well as how they relate to people. For example, someone who would feel uncomfortable in a large organisation would be placed in one of the smaller offices of an estate agency. Trainers establish and maintain friendly yet professional relationships with learners and their work supervisors and employers. Employers understand the modern apprenticeship programme and value the additional knowledge and competences that their learners develop through working towards the NVQ and key skills qualifications. Employers provide effective training for learners on and off the job. They welcome the frequent visits paid to learners in the workplace and are well informed about their progress and what support is needed for them to progress further. Some employers celebrate the successful completion of modern apprenticeships by their learners. In many cases, work placements lead to permanent employment with the same employer.

101. Training staff, including assessors and internal verifiers, are occupationally competent and take good advantage of the available staff development opportunities to keep up to date with current business practices. Estate agency trainers are particularly well qualified and experienced. Learning resources are satisfactory. Computer equipment is of industry standard, with good-quality seating and plenty of workspace. Good use is made of interactive smart boards and projection equipment. Handouts and supporting materials are of a satisfactory standard. Some training rooms are not adequately ventilated.

102. Work-based learning is well assessed. Clearly written assessment procedures are followed by all trainers in business administration and estate agency. A wide range of assessment methods is used, including good use of observation and questioning. Examples of work done by learners during these sessions are included in their portfolios. Estate agency learners produce a very good standard of work in their portfolios. The portfolios of administration learners are all satisfactory and contain well-authenticated evidence with good use of cross-referencing between units and key skills. Assessment of learners is pre-planned, with learners well aware of what is being assessed and by what method. Clear records of achievement of units are kept with information being regularly transferred to the learning plans. A clearly laid-out sampling plan is followed, showing formative and final verification of units. New members of staff are frequently observed when assessing, and a larger number of units is sampled to ensure that standards are strictly adhered to.

103. There are good progress reviews, with effective action-planning. All learners are visited in their workplaces every two weeks and many have more frequent visits, depending on their needs. On each visit learners have an individual tutorial at which previously agreed work targets are reviewed. New short-term targets are set after each assessment is completed. Other relevant information is also documented on these visits, taking into account work requirements. Every two months learners have a review of progress, including health and safety issues. On alternate months learners complete a questionnaire about their training and associated areas, and trainers deal with issues arising from this. Employers are consulted during these progress reviews. A quality assurance process helps to ensure that reviews are carried out on time. The reviews carried out with most Jobcentre Plus clients are satisfactory and show that targets are being met.

104. Modern apprentices in administration and estate agency training receive relevant advice and information about their training and career progression. They understand the requirements of their modern apprenticeship frameworks, including key skills. Assessors understand individual's different learning styles and adapt their approach to meet these needs. They are available at any time to help learners with their problems. Learners value the fact that their assessors are happy to receive calls and provide help on their mobile telephones.

105. The needs of most clients following the Jobcentre Plus self-employment programme are being met satisfactorily, although some administration programmes do not meet



clients' needs. Some clients receive insufficient information, advice and guidance on jobsearch. They spend up to five days each week in their training centres working by themselves on jobsearch and using computers. They make little progress in learning relevant additional skills and identifying suitable job opportunities. Clients who are not in work placements spend much of the time on jobsearch using newspapers, or by developing their ability to use standard software packages. Insufficient staff support is provided. The range of software applications available to them is restricted and not all clients are aware of the recognised qualifications available.

106. Some Jobcentre Plus business administration clients receive insufficient workplace visits. Many clients are not in work placements and those that are, do not always find them suitable. Jobcentre Plus business administration clients do not receive sufficient off-the-job training. In one centre, training is beginning to be offered, but the choice of administration units is too restricted. Clients who want to update their industry knowledge and skills are not always able to do so as part of their programmes. Some clients are not aware of how they may best use their time when they attend a training centre.

107. Some foundation modern apprentices are making slow progress. Fifteen learners in administration have been in training since June 2001, taking more than 12 months to achieve their qualification. Some of those in training have taken eight months to complete two units. There is good evidence that learners' progress has improved in the last five months now that SEETEC's staffing situation is more settled. Trainers have made good progress with the introduction of the new technical certificate and integrated it well with NVQ units. Progress in the estate agency NVQ is satisfactory.

108. Learners' induction is not effective. A SEETEC induction of about 90 minutes on the first day covers basic course requirements. Handouts on health and safety and equality of opportunity are discussed briefly. Learners also receive an induction when they start their work placements. Most learners have a poor recall of induction and are particularly vague about equal opportunities. Their recall of induction to their NVQ is better, as this is reinforced during subsequent visits. Basic skills support is inadequate. All learners are given a basic skills assessment, but all learners identified as needing support have declined the offer of additional help.

## **Leadership and management**

109. The leadership and management of learning programmes varies between satisfactory, at some training centres, and poor at others. Jobcentre Plus programmes are not well managed at some centres and many of the clients do not understand what plans are in place to prepare them to find work. Some clients spend several days a week left largely to their own devices in the training centre. The few work placements provided for clients are not all suitable. Clients are not always given good guidance on how to use the jobsearch facilities provided. Clients who are in suitable work placements spend half a day each week in their local training centre. Their programmes for these days are unstructured, with insufficient specialist support. The self-employment programme for clients starting their own businesses is satisfactory. Quality assurance is not effective. It

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does not ensure a good standard of learning for all. There are wide variations in the quality of learning, guidance and support experienced by learners on different programmes. The self-assessment report is insufficiently self-critical and staff were not involved in its development. Learners do not demonstrate a sound understanding of equal opportunities issues.

**Information & communications technology****Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	67	3
New Deal 18-24	25	3

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

**Strengths**

- good IT teaching and learning
- well-designed learning programmes
- good use of assignments to support learning
- good induction

**Weaknesses**

- poor job achievement rate
- ineffective use of individual learning plans
- poor support in jobsearch

**Achievement and standards**

110. The standard of clients' learning is generally good. Clients make good progress and those who remain on programme for its full duration achieve good practical IT skills, appropriate to their qualification. Those working on level 2 NVQ programmes, such as the foundation modern apprentices, are able to produce a good standard of work which integrates different applications, such as creating graphs within a spreadsheet and then inserting these into letters, reports and presentations. Some trainers do not pay sufficient attention to the different starting points of clients, or their differing abilities in lessons. Clients on most courses start and finish their course together. So if a client is identified as needing more help and attention the others have to wait before they all progress together again. All clients learn to use the Internet, including search engines and e-mail. They also learn to approach prospective employers with speculative letters, although they do not make sufficient use of these techniques.

111. At the end of their training most clients have sufficient IT skills to find permanent employment, although the progression rate into jobs is poor. Two of the many reasons why clients do not find employment include insufficient ICT and office jobs in the areas in which SEETEC offices are located and the late notification of jobs on the Jobcentre Plus computing system located at SEETEC's offices. In the 2001-02 financial year, only 40 per cent of New Deal 18-24 clients found jobs at the end of their training. On other programmes, the proportion progressing into jobs was below 30 per cent. The rate of completion of planned learning programmes is poor. At best it has been 68 per cent, but it has been as low as 27 per cent.

112. Clients' data in the tables are recorded by financial year. For clients in the 2003-04 financial year, the data are: New Deal 25+ and work based learning for adults, eight clients have started and eight are still in training.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes															
New Deal 18-24															
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000								
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Number of starts	43		105												
Retained*	12		68	65											
Planned learning completed	12		68	65											
Gained job	9		43	41											
Still in training	25		0	0											

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes															
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults															
	2002-03		2001-02												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Number of starts	91		351												
Retained*	24		240	68											
Planned learning completed	19		206	59											
Gained job	16		103	29											
Still in training	59		0	0											

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

### Quality of education and training

113. The standard of ICT training is good. Trainers prepare well for their training sessions, have good schemes of work and produce well-designed and challenging exercises for clients to practise and develop their computing skills. Clients receive good guidance and support from knowledgeable trainers. Trainers are enthusiastic about their work and the clients respond to the interest shown in them and make good progress. Learning takes place through a series of graded exercises which, as the course progresses, are drawn together to form a larger project. Through this process, trainers build clients' confidence, using the accumulation of small assignments, then linking the whole for the purpose of finding employment. In one very good learning session for

clients new to computing, the trainer used envelopes and string to create a visual representation of how files are stored in folders and subfolders in the computer. A floppy disk was also dismantled to explain why it was called a 'floppy' disk. Clients appreciate this approach and progress well.

114. Assessment practice is regular, thorough and effective. The range of assessment practices using resource-based learning is well prepared. For example, assignments are used to demonstrate research techniques, the evidence is then presented to the rest of the group, evidence is compiled and then presented to the class. Trainers carefully record the performance of each client against set standards. During assessments, clients are regularly given guidance about the standards required.

115. SEETEC provides good opportunities for those wishing to learn how to use those standard computer applications used in offices and business. However, this knowledge alone is often insufficient for employers, who want parallel skills in administration or other areas of learning. Opportunities to gain skills in technical support or the creation of software products are poor, even though there is a high demand for people with these skills in London.

116. Clients' induction to training is good. Induction is a regular event and takes place over a five-day period. The schedule includes a half day of health and safety training. The remainder of the time is spent on the company's policies, programme details, completing contract forms and the writing of individual learning plans. Clients have good recall of the content of induction. Those clients who complete the first aid and health and safety training receive a company certificate. For some clients this is their first certificate and many are proud of their achievements. Clients remarked on the relaxed atmosphere of the induction programme and greatly appreciate the time and effort spent by the staff to make the induction both memorable and enjoyable. Most clients find the induction week interesting and believe that it successfully prepares them for the rest of the course. Training advisers initially assess clients' literacy and numeracy skills. Few clients are assessed as in need of support. Those who are, attend training sessions in literacy and numeracy in place of IT training, with suitably qualified tutors.

117. The quality of training resources is generally satisfactory. Training rooms are bright, clean and well decorated, although some are too hot. Computer hardware and software are satisfactory for the level of training offered. SEETEC does not have sufficient screen-projection equipment. This makes the explanation of computing application tasks with multiple steps laborious and slow, as clients are talked through individual keystrokes. Most trainers are well qualified, with teaching and assessor qualifications. The ratio of trainers to clients is good.

118. Pastoral support for clients is good. They develop good relationships with trainers and feel well supported and valued as individuals. Clients are well motivated which helps progression and retention. There is insufficient reference to jobsearch activities in individual learning plans and progress reviews. The planning of jobsearch activities pays insufficient attention to the different abilities of clients. Trainers do not provide sufficient help and advice with professional development routes or further learning, such as further

education courses. Clients at one training centre were unable to access the local jobcentre website to identify vacancies. The tutors' promotion of the use of links with clients' previous employers or other contacts is unsatisfactory. Although jobsearch sessions are planned to use a variety of activities, they are not used in some sessions. Although some work placements are good, others are unsuitable because they are unlikely to lead to employment, or do not provide experience in the areas that clients want.

119. Trainers do not make good use of individual learning plans to monitor progress and promote learning. Although there are pockets of better practice, most learning plans are inadequate and do not show individual learning requirements. Many do not have enough detail of intermediate milestones and target dates and others do not detail the jobsearch training or the development of employment skills. At one training centre trainers do not record the clients' target qualifications and some clients are unsure what qualification they are working for. Progress reviews are frequent, and tutors pay good attention to identifying obstacles to IT learning. However, they do not refer to learning plans, or to update them to reflect progress made, difficulties encountered or changes to planned learning.

### **Leadership and management**

120. The management of the IT programmes is generally good. Staff are aware of their responsibilities and issues relating to training are dealt with promptly and effectively. Action-planning is effective, but managers have not been successful in increasing the proportion of clients who find permanent work. There is no action plan to increase this proportion. Equality of opportunity is well promoted. There has been equal opportunities training for staff and the subject is promoted to clients and frequently monitored. Quality assurance procedures are satisfactory. Staff attend regular quality assurance team meetings at which plans are written to resolve the issues raised. Meetings are held in turn at each of the SEETEC offices that offer ICT training. The ICT self-assessment report was not sufficiently evaluative. The report did not identify weaknesses found by inspectors, and most strengths were considered to be normal practice, or were overstated. There is no formal mechanism for the team to identify and share good practice.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	114	4
New Deal 18-24	77	4
Work-based learning for young people	18	3

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

**Strengths**

- good work placements
- good individual support for learners

**Weaknesses**

- poor employment outcomes
- poor programme planning
- poor jobsearch facility
- poor promotion of equality of opportunity
- weak management of subcontractors

**Achievement and standards**

121. New Deal and work-based learning for adults clients acquire good job skills and self-confidence while training in work. They benefit from the good training provided by the employers and are supported by frequent visits from SEETEC's trainers. Trainers encourage good relationships between employers and clients to improve the possible training outcomes. Most employers are pleased with the standard of clients' work and some are prepared to offer full-time employment to clients who meet their job entry requirements. Learners on modern apprenticeship programmes work towards an NVQ at level 2 and a key skills qualification. These learners make slow but steady progress and there is a satisfactory achievement level for the modern apprenticeship programme.

122. The number of learners who have started on Jobcentre Plus programmes has increased from 92 in 2000-01 to 235 in 2001-02 and to 903 in the year from April 2002 to March 2003. During the same period, the percentage of learners gaining a job has fallen from 49 per cent to 31 per cent. The number of learners achieving jobs is low. Of the 766 learners who left programmes between April 2002 and March 2003 only 240 (31 per cent) gained a job. Retention and achievement on FMA programmes are satisfactory. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory.

123. Data for clients in the tables are recorded by financial year. For clients in the 2003-04 financial year on New Deal 18-24, 35 have started training, none have been retained, seven have completed their training, eight have gained a job, and 16 are still in training.

124. New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults, 43 clients have started training, five have been retained, four have completed their training, two have gained a job and 38 are still in training. Ten FMAs have started training, and 10 are still on programme.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2002-03															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	16															
Retained*	10															
Successfully completed	10															
Still in learning	8															

\*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

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	321		72		92											
Retained*	136		41	57	61	66										
Planned learning completed	113		36	50	51	55										
Gained job	72		32	44	45	49										
Still in training	61		0	0	0	0										

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme



Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	582		163													
Retained*	286		91	56												
Planned learning completed	242		56	34												
Gained job	168		64	39												
Still in training	76		0	0												

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

## Quality of education and training

125. Retailing and customer service trainers are appropriately qualified and experienced to deliver the training programmes offered. Some trainers who do not have assessor qualifications are working towards achieving them. All trainers have the opportunity to keep abreast of training development through a good programme of staff development. The quality and availability of training resources is generally satisfactory. Some training centres are better equipped than others, with IT resources, Internet access and a good variety of current magazines and newspapers for jobsearch activities. Others have insufficient computers and not enough current newspapers for all clients. In some centres, trainers take laptop computers into work placements to enable learners to produce key skills evidence for their training programme. Some trainers have developed good learning resources, but these are not shared with other training centres. Some handouts given to learners are of poor quality.

126. NVQ assessment is satisfactory and meets awarding body requirements. Assessment is mainly by observation and carried out in the workplace. Planning for assessment is not always recorded. Assessments of key skills are rarely integrated into the vocational programme, although some trainers have recently started to record key skills evidence in the assessment observations. Key skills tests are taken after the vocational training has finished. Employers are made aware informally of learners' progress following progress reviews, but are not involved in the process.

127. The retailing, customer service and transportation training provided by SEETEC meets the needs of local employers and some learners. SEETEC will find alternative work placements for learners who become dissatisfied with their first choice employer, or change the type of vocational training provided. The range of courses are satisfactory, but some learners are enrolled on courses inappropriate to their needs. In one example, learners in a call centre were enrolled on a customer service programme instead of a more specific call centre operations programme. Many learners were unclear about the progression routes available to them when they complete their programme. Some

buildings are not easily accessible to wheelchair users.

128. Learners' induction usually lasts for three to four hours on the first day of their training and is satisfactory. Many learners were able to recall aspects of the induction such as health and safety and a lot of 'form filling', but not equal opportunities. Induction does not make much of an impression on clients. SEETEC provides good individual support for learners. Trainers visit their clients frequently, usually every two weeks. The personal support provided for most clients is good. SEETEC makes use of a range of support agencies to provide specialist services for learners if necessary.

129. The standard of retailing and customer care training is unsatisfactory. Work placements form the basis of most retailing and customer care training and SEETEC attempts to place learners in work that interests them. Learners' programmes are poorly planned. Training is not based on an initial assessment of each learners' starting point. Many learners are not sufficiently challenged. During training learners' progress is regularly reviewed, but they are not set clear targets of what they should achieve before the next progress review. Some learners make significant progress despite these weaknesses. Jobsearch sessions are poorly planned and poorly structured. Some learners get little benefit from them and some question their value. Jobsearch is not included in individual's progress reviews. The planning of key skill programmes for modern apprentices is poor. They are not integrated with vocational training and key skill tests are left until all other training is finished.

130. All learners are given an initial assessment to determine their career aspirations and previous qualifications, but no use is made of this in planning each learner's training programme. Some training centres give learners a literacy and numeracy skills assessment, but most do not use the information obtained. In many cases, learners can select whether to take further training in literacy and numeracy regardless of their capability. There is no evidence of learners' literacy and numeracy ability being reviewed or further assessments being carried out to monitor learners' progress. Learners are also invited to make SEETEC aware of skills that they would like to develop during their training. The company do not use this information.

## **Leadership and management**

131. The management of retailing, customer service and transportation training is poor. Insufficient management data restricts SEETEC's ability to improve planning of learners' progression, retention and achievement. The management of subcontractors is inadequate. Service level agreements and the quality of training are not satisfactorily updated or checked. The promotion of equal opportunities is poor. The equal opportunities policy is the same for learners and staff. It is complicated to read and does not take account of the varied reading skills level of learners. However, communications with learners and employers is good and staff generally feel well supported. There is a well-developed internal verification system for modern apprenticeship and New Deal programmes. Quality assurance of WBLA programmes is not well established. The self-assessment report was not sufficiently self-critical and did not identify many weaknesses.

**Foundation programmes****Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	256	4
New Deal 18-24	110	4
Programme centres	94	4
Life Skills	23	4

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

**Strengths**

- good development of personal skills
- good pastoral support for learners

**Weaknesses**

- poor target-setting
- poor progression into employment
- inadequate literacy, numeracy and language support arrangements
- poor management of training

**Achievement and standards**

132. Learners in training develop good personal and social skills, such as teamworking and communication and organisational skills. They demonstrate improved attitudes to learning and personal development, as well as increased self-confidence and self-esteem. Some learners are making good progress. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory, although some ineffective jobsearch sessions do not prepare them adequately for immediate employment. The range of work placements for foundation learners is limited. Target-setting is poor. Targets in individual learning plans are often vague and not measurable. Learners' progress reviews are superficial and do not set interim targets.

133. Approximately 20 per cent of SEETEC's foundation learners are on long training courses, such as BET and FTET programmes, working towards Wordpower and Numberpower qualifications or the new core curriculum qualification that has replaced them. The progression of clients into employment is poor. On the New Deal 18-24 option in the 2002-03 financial year, only 24 per cent have found employment and another 16 per cent of those who started are still on programme. On the New Deal 25+ programmes in 2001-02, only 17 per cent went on to employment. For 2002-03, the proportion finding work stands at 19 per cent, with 43 per cent of the clients still on programme. On the Life Skills programme there are only data for 2002-03. So far, 32 per cent of learners have found work, with another 37 per cent still to complete their training. Thirty-one per cent of programme centre clients have found a job, and of the 2002-03 intake, 6 per cent are still in training.

134. Learner data in the tables are recorded by financial year. For clients in the 2003-04 financial year on New Deal 18-24, 66 have started training, nine have been retained, nine have completed their training, seven have gained a job, and 50 are still in training.

135. On New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults, 99 clients have started training, five have been retained, eight have completed their training, five have found a job and 87 are still in training. In Programme centres, 43 clients have started training, two have been retained, two have completed their training, two have gained a job and 37 are still in training. On the Life Skills programme, six learners have started training, and six remain on programme.

136. SEETEC trainers provide learners with good pastoral support. Many understand the difficulties faced by learners, as a significant number of them have been unemployed and attended similar courses in the past. They are role models for what can be achieved and are able to offer good practical advice on how best to study and how to overcome some of the social and personal problems faced by learners. Trainers will refer learners to the appropriate external agencies for specialist support or advice. The type of support provided by outside agencies includes personal, financial and bereavement counselling, or help in overcoming claustrophobia. Other examples of help and assistance provided by SEETEC include helping learners to buy clothes to attend an interview, helping to meet travel costs and the purchase of specific trade magazines to support jobsearch.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																
Life Skills																
	2002-03															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	46															
Retained*	23															
Successfully completed	15															
Still in learning	17															

\*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

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 18-24																
	2002-03															
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	385															
Retained*	221															
Planned learning completed	193															
Gained job	94															
Still in training	60															

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	391		558													
Retained*	137		293	53												
Planned learning completed	103		217	39												
Gained job	73		94	17												
Still in training	169		0	0												

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

Jobcentre Plus funded programmes																
Programme Centres																
	2002-03		2001-02													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	910															
Retained*	478															
Planned learning completed	478															
Gained job	286															
Still in training	57															

\*retained clients are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their programme, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed, or who have gained employment during their time on the programme

## **Quality of education and training**

137. SEETEC trainers provide learners with good pastoral support. Many understand the difficulties faced by learners, as a significant number of them have been unemployed and attended similar courses in the past. They are role models for what can be achieved and are able to offer good practical advice on how best to study and how to overcome some of the social and personal problems faced by learners. Trainers will refer learners to the appropriate external agencies for specialist support or advice. The type of support provided by outside agencies includes personal, financial and bereavement counselling, or help in overcoming claustrophobia. Other examples of help and assistance provided by SEETEC include helping learners buy clothes to attend an interview, helping to meet travel costs and the purchase of specific trade magazines to support jobsearch.

138. The standard of learning and training is at least satisfactory, some learning and training is good. Some trainers plan group sessions well. In the best lessons, trainers have a good rapport with clients, using a range of teaching styles, and employing good question and answer techniques. In a BET communications session, the planning and teaching was clearly differentiated to meet individual needs. Individual learning plans take account of learners' different aptitudes and abilities. The handouts for a dyslexic learner were on yellow paper to help learning. In the less effective lessons, trainers do not always take sufficient account of the differing abilities of learners, with the result that some become bored and restless. In these sessions there is a limited range of teaching styles and not all learners are actively involved in the session. There is a limited use of IT in developing literacy and numeracy skills.

139. Most trainers do not have a teaching or assessing qualification. Few staff have specialist literacy and numeracy qualifications and most trainers who teach ESOL are not qualified, or have not attended an appropriate training course. There are poor training resources to support foundation courses at some of SEETEC's centres. Although paper-based basic skills learning materials are available at some training centres, these are not easily accessible to learners outside group sessions, which limits autonomy in learning and the ability to develop individual basic skills. There are often not enough personal computers for the number of learners who need to work on them. Learners are left with nothing to do while they wait for a machine to become free. There are not enough telephones in some training centres, and in others, learners cannot talk privately to prospective employers.

140. Initial assessment of basic skills is poor at most training centres and the literacy and numeracy support for foundation learners is inadequate. SEETEC and its subcontractors use a standard literacy and numeracy assessment but not all learners are given it when they start their training. Some learners are asked if they have a basic skills need and their answer is treated as if it were the outcome of assessment. There is insufficient follow-up of literacy and numeracy screening and some learners do not receive appropriate support. Where SEETEC identifies that a learner needs support, they arrange attendance at support sessions on a voluntary basis. Where support is offered, it is not well integrated with the foundation programme. Learning is not reinforced sufficiently in work-

related activities. The assessment of learners' written work is not sufficiently developed. Trainers do not usually provide learners with written feedback, but if they do, they do not give guidance about how to improve the quality of work.

141. SEETEC provides a wide variety of foundation programmes for Jobcentre Plus clients who have a recognised literacy, numeracy or ESOL need, and a Life Skills programme for young people aged between 16 and 18. In most cases, foundation programmes are designed to meet individual needs and to reflect employment requirements. ESOL provision is weak. Much of the ESOL provision is technical and does not meet the needs of learners. Currently, training for ESOL learners shows insufficient evidence of differentiated strategies. Individual progress is limited. It does not include references to jobsearch activities. SEETEC trainers have recognised this weakness and have developed new programmes that will include jobsearch work experience. Some ESOL provision is contracted to the local colleges and this also does not reflect the individual jobsearch and language support needs of learners. Learners on the Gateway programme are given the opportunity to achieve the lift-truck operative's qualification and a driving licence.

## **Leadership and management**

142. The management of foundation training is poor. There is an inconsistent approach to training that affects learners' ability to progress satisfactorily. There is no strategic direction for literacy, numeracy and ESOL training and development. Some programmes are inappropriately designed to meet the needs of learners. For example, in one training centre, three graduates are participating in a BET programme. Some learners with basic skills needs are not provided with structured literacy and numeracy sessions. A basic skills manager has recently been appointed and there is evidence of changes being introduced and piloted to improve learning, but it is too early to judge their effect.

143. A significant area of weakness is the quality assurance of subcontractors, with no feedback established to ensure that the identified needs of learners are being met effectively. Not all staff were involved in the self-assessment process. The self-assessment report is too generous in its judgements and does not reflect all areas of weakness. There is no consistent strategy for the observation of training and learning. Some observations have occurred recently, but these are not formally arranged and do not occur throughout the provision. There are insufficient data to monitor equal opportunities issues. This is of particular importance with regard to ethnicity data, SEETEC's ability to meet the needs of ESOL learners is restricted.