

INSPECTION REPORT

Chamber Training (Humber) Limited

05 November 2002



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

Overall judgement

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

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

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

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

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

SUMMARY

The provider

Chamber Training (Humber) Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary company of the Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Shipping. Established in 1997, the organisation operates from two sites, in Hull and Scunthorpe. The main site in Hull houses most of the staff. The organisation offers work-based learning for young people in construction, engineering, business administration and estate agency, customer service, retailing and warehousing, and health and care. It also offers training in horticulture and information technology, but these areas were not inspected as there were too few learners.

Overall judgement

The quality of provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, training is satisfactory in construction, engineering, business administration, and health and care. Training is unsatisfactory in retailing and customer service. The leadership and management of Chamber Training (Humber) Limited is good, and quality assurance and equality of opportunity are satisfactory.

GRADES

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

Construction	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

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

Business administration, management & professional	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

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

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

KEY STRENGTHS

- good opportunities to develop skills in the workplace
- good strategic and operational business planning
- thorough appraisal and staff development processes
- thorough self-assessment process
- very effective strategy to support learners

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ineffective progress review process
- no systematic monitoring of internal procedures
- poor monitoring and reinforcement of equal opportunities in the workplace

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more systematic initial assessment for employed learners

THE INSPECTION

1. A team of seven inspectors spent a total of 28 days at Chamber Training (Humber) Limited (CTHL) in November 2002. Inspectors carried out 46 interviews with staff and interviewed 73 learners, 25 workplace supervisors and visited 16 employers. They examined 45 portfolios of evidence, 70 individual learning plans, CTHL documents, and documents from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and awarding bodies. Inspectors observed and graded 10 learning sessions. They also studied the organisation's self-assessment report and the accompanying development plans, which were produced in January 2002 and updated in October 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Construction	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Health, social care & public services	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	5
Total	0	0	6	3	1	0	0	10

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. CTHL is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Shipping. It employs 35 staff, including 20 training staff. Training for learners on construction and engineering programmes is subcontracted to two major training providers and a local college. CTHL currently offers training for 249 learners who are working towards foundation modern apprenticeships, advanced modern apprenticeships and national vocational qualifications (NVQs). This figure includes the learners who were not included in the inspection. Eighty-four per cent of learners are employed by a range of employers throughout Humberside and the East Riding. Training takes place in the workplace and off the job at CTHL training centres, colleges and subcontractors. CTHL contracts with approximately 135 employers across the region.

3. Yorkshire and Humberside has the second highest unemployment rate in England, at 3.7 per cent, compared with 3 per cent nationally. In May 2002, the unemployment rate in Kingston upon Hull was 6.6 per cent. The 1991 census shows that the proportion of people from minority ethnic groups in Kingston upon Hull is 1.2 per cent, in the East Riding of Yorkshire is less than 1 per cent, and in North Lincolnshire is 1.6 per cent, compared with 6.2 per cent nationally. In 2001, the proportion of school leavers in Kingston upon Hull achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 27.5 per cent, in the East Riding of Yorkshire it was 50.1 and in North Lincolnshire it was 42.3 per cent, compared with the national average of 47.9 per cent.

Work-based learning for young people

4. Learners at CTHL receive a satisfactory standard of training in all occupational areas except customer service. There is a good level of learning support available for learners and particularly good personal support. Learners, staff and employers are listened to by managers and action is taken in response to their concerns. To improve the range of provision, CTHL has recently opened a new base in Scunthorpe to meet the needs of learners on the south bank of the Humber. Learners are placed in good work placements and many learners gain employment. There is a good range of additional qualifications on offer to learners. Leadership and management are good, with effective communication systems. Self-assessment is thorough. Senior managers are quick to identify and deal with problems which may impact on the experience of the learners. Monitoring of internal procedures is reactive.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

5. CTHL is a non-profit-making organisation which was created to meet the needs of its employer-led parent company, as well as meeting the training needs of other non-member companies. The company has two main sites, one in the town centre of Hull and the other in the town centre of Scunthorpe. CHTL employs 35 staff. The chief executive is responsible for the strategic development of the programmes and for achieving the company's aims and objectives. The operations director, administration manager and quality assurance manager all have responsibility for the operational management of the programmes. Other staff are administrators, trainers or assessors carry out the progress reviews. CTHL has up-to-date policies and procedures for the promotion of equality of opportunity and there are procedures for dealing with harassment and discrimination. There is an annual review of the policies to determine their effectiveness. The quality assurance manager is responsible for the co-ordination, implementation and evaluation of all quality assurance activities. There are procedures for assuring the quality of the training programme, although they are not in a common format. The company has produced three self-assessment reports. The latest one was published in January 2002 and was updated in October 2002.

STRENGTHS

- good strategic and operational business planning
- effective internal and external communications
- thorough appraisal and staff development processes
- thorough and effective self-assessment process
- good strategy to widen participation
- effective strategy to support learners

WEAKNESSES

- no systematic monitoring of internal procedures
- poor monitoring and reinforcement of equal opportunities in the workplace

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more systematic observation of teaching
- more formal subcontractor agreements
- more formal initial assessment for employed learners
- more effective use of resources for equal opportunities

6. The strategic and operational management of CTHL is good. A detailed three-year strategic plan feeds directly into an effective business plan each year. The second site, at Scunthorpe, was opened as a result of CTHL's strategic planning after researched

needs analysis. The appointment this year of the quality assurance development officer resulted from the recognition that the organisations' quality assurance system needed more focus to ensure effectiveness. All management staff are responsible for putting the plan into practice and involving the rest of the staff in how it will be achieved. Each staff member is given specific objectives from the business plan. Management information is used to set and monitor targets for staff. The whole process gives clear direction about what the company wants to achieve, how it is to be achieved, and how managers and staff will assist in achieving the goals and targets. Through this process CTHL recognised areas in need of improvement, such as effective actions to improve the management of, and delivery by, subcontractors. There is clear evidence that the management works towards continuous improvement and is quick to deal with problems that may impact on the experience of learners. There is much evidence that the clear and detailed action plan is already dealing with the weaknesses identified in the latest self-assessment report.

7. There are effective internal and external communications at CTHL. All staff are kept fully informed and are included in the development of the organisation. There is regular and effective involvement of the chief executive and operations director with all staff to discuss ideas. Detailed minutes of all meetings are distributed to staff, and standard agendas include equal opportunities and quality assurance. Clear, achievable actions are agreed and monitored at subsequent meetings. Regular meetings between employers, subcontractors and CTHL have led to significant improvements in the training. For example, investigations into the training at one subcontractor led to improvements for all learners. The informal relationships between the senior management, staff and subcontractors are very good and promote effective training for learners. However, some contracts are out of date and contain no real information about the levels of service expected.

8. Detailed and well-structured staff appraisals are held every six months between staff and managers. Job descriptions are reviewed and individual targets and objectives are set, in line with the company business plan. There is a very active programme of staff development in response to identified problems in the self-assessment report and development plan. All staff are required to keep a reflective journal to record and analyse all forms of personal development.

9. There is little systematic observation of learning by managers. CTHL had a process for this, but has identified the lack of teaching qualifications as a barrier to effective observation. The observations were infrequent and lacked proper recording and feedback to improve individual performance. This was identified by CTHL, and most staff, including senior managers, are now working towards a teaching qualification. CTHL is using the observations of staff's performance by the college, during their teaching qualification, to improve the quality of training and have planned a structured programme of observation.

10. Learners are given a detailed assessment of their skills to ensure that they are enrolled on the most suitable training programme. The initial assessment also highlights additional training needs. There is a strong commitment to identify and offer the

support required to help learners' progress. The poor performance of the review process has been identified by CTHL and a detailed examination of documents has been carried out, with a continuing investigation into further improvements. A system of identifying the percentage achievement towards the learners' NVQ has been introduced to promote better monitoring of progress, and this information is then referred to in the progress reviews. The support needs of employed learners are identified during training, but their initial assessment is not as thorough as for other learners. However, there are excellent levels of support when additional needs are identified.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

11. CTHL has a clear strategy supported by effective policies and procedures to promote equality of opportunity. The policy and procedures are reviewed and updated each year and some internal monitoring takes place. However, the monitoring is not planned and a more systematic and proactive approach is being implemented. The recent equality and diversity strategy and action plan are detailed and cover all aspects of CTHL's operations. The strategy is a clear statement of CTHL's commitment to the fair treatment of its learners and to ensuring that the company meet the needs of all sections of the community. The strategy has resulted in a proactive approach to widening participation in training at CTHL, but it is too soon to measure the effectiveness of this work. A detailed list of community groups reflecting the ethnic, cultural and religious picture of the Humber area is targeted by letters, telephone calls and visits to the groups. For example, there has been recent contact with a local religious-based care association and a local minority ethnic group. The quality assurance development officer is responsible for the implementation of the action plan. In addition to community groups, there is a wide network of contact with local schools, particularly with the aim of attracting learners into non-stereotypical occupations, such as girls into engineering. Effective use is made of the many links and networks of senior members of CTHL at both sites to enhance the experience of learners.

12. There is an effective strategy to support learners from their first contact with the company until they leave. All staff are knowledgeable about equal opportunities. Induction for staff and learners includes equal opportunities training, with reinforcement in later training sessions. One member of staff has good training resources for equal opportunities, but these are not shared. All applicants are offered an interview and detailed assessment session to determine their occupational interest, basic skills and learning styles. The individual needs of all applicants are identified by the recruitment officer who refers them to a designated member of staff. Work placements are appropriate to learners' needs, particularly if they have additional support requirements. CTHL's staff quickly challenge discrimination or harassment against learners, and learners are confident about reporting such incidents to their tutors. CTHL has effective links with many outside agencies to support learners, particularly those with additional social or learning needs. The recently developed personal adviser service offered by Connexions is based at the CTHL site with close involvement from the chief executive. Annual awards and presentation events celebrate learners' achievements and promote self-esteem.

13. There is poor monitoring and reinforcement of equal opportunities in the workplace. The responsibilities of employers regarding equal opportunities are indicated in the contract signed when a learner is placed with them. There is little formal initial checking of the employers' equal opportunity policy, nor any regular review by CTHL's staff. Review forms have been changed to include questions on learners' understanding of equal opportunities, but use of the forms varies and answers often reveal only a superficial understanding.

Quality assurance**Contributory grade 3**

14. There is clear direction from the operations director at CTHL, who is responsible for quality assurance. A full-time quality assurance development officer helps the director to improve the quality of the organisation. There are simple procedures showing many of the key processes in the company. Learners' and employers' views are analysed and are used to improve the training processes. For example, CTHL identified that the quality of training by one of its subcontractors required further investigation. The quality assurance development officer from CTHL spent two weeks producing a report which highlighted areas of concern, and this resulted in actions to rectify the problems. This proactive working with the subcontractor has led to a closer working relationship between the organisations and some sharing of systems and resources to improve the training and recording processes.

15. The self-assessment report follows the 'Common Inspection Framework' and thoroughly assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the training programme. It takes account of the views of learners, workplace supervisors and all staff involved in the NVQ programmes. Comprehensive action plans are in place to deal with the weaknesses and build on the strengths identified through self-assessment, and staff are actively involved. Staff review the self-assessment action plan at their monthly team meetings.

16. There is no systematic monitoring of internal procedures at CTHL. There is some monitoring, but it is usually in response to an identified problem rather than as part of a structured approach. There is evidence of some inconsistent application of key processes being carried out by staff and this affected the quality of some areas of the provider's work.

17. There are good internal verification procedures for the verification of NVQs and key skills. There is some variation by teams in the use of the procedures, but internal verification is satisfactory or good for all occupational areas.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	55	3

18. CTHL offers training for foundation modern apprentices and advanced modern apprentices in a range of construction occupations. There are 30 foundation modern apprentices and one advanced modern apprentice in gas installation, two foundation modern apprentices and five advanced modern apprentices in electrical installation. There are also 13 refrigeration and air conditioning foundation modern apprentices, and two advanced modern apprentices in wood occupations and two in bricklaying. Foundation modern apprentices work towards an NVQ at level 2, and advanced modern apprentices work towards an NVQ at level 3. Learners are recruited directly from employers or by referral from the Connexions service. All learners have an induction, during which they undergo initial assessment for basic skills. Additional learning and support needs are identified during this process. All off-the-job training, assessment and internal verification are subcontracted to two local training providers where learners attend on a day-release basis. On-the-job reviews of learners' progress are carried out at six-weekly intervals by CTHL's training advisers. A qualified member of CTHL's staff checks all employers for health, safety and welfare arrangements.

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			13		9		12		2							
Retained*			0		1		5		2	100						
Successfully completed			0		1		5		2	100						
Still in learning			4		5		1		0	0						

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	15		26		9		4									
Retained*	0		10		4		0	0								
Successfully completed	0		1		0		0	0								
Still in learning	14		23		8		0	0								

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

STRENGTHS

- particularly good opportunities to develop skills in the workplace
- effective integration of workplace experiences with key skills
- good retention rates for foundation modern apprentices

WEAKNESSES

- slow progress towards achievement in gas installation
- poor target-setting in progress reviews

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more formal monitoring of health and safety arrangements

19. The quality of work placements is particularly good. Learners develop occupational skills on a wide variety of commercial and domestic contracts. They work alongside experienced tradespeople and take an active role in construction activities. This enhances the off-the-job training sessions and provides good opportunities for assessment. Learners who are employed by a local authority have the benefit of a mentor who also provides witness testimony and other good assessment evidence. The opportunity to develop skills has allowed most learners to take on extra responsibilities. Learners talk confidently of their achievements in the workplace and feel valued by their employers. CTHL's staff respond quickly to concerns or problems the learners might be experiencing.

20. Retention rates for foundation modern apprentices are good. Over the past three years, the average retention rate is over 90 per cent and, for the current year, the

retention rate is 93 per cent. When transfers from advanced to foundation apprenticeships are taken into account, the retention rate for advanced modern apprenticeships is 65 per cent.

21. Key skills are an integral part of the NVQ training. Learners have a useful induction into key skills which gives relevant advice and guidance. The key skills co-ordinator works closely with the occupational tutors to identify evidence for key skills alongside the NVQ evidence. For example, learners in gas installation routinely work in domestic premises, and details of meetings with customers are recorded in the learners' logbook as evidence for communication. Similarly, calculations which are carried out to determine pipe sizes and heat loss are used as evidence for the application of number unit. This use of natural evidence helps the learners to understand the relevance of key skills to their occupation.

22. Learners are making slow progress towards achievement of the gas installation NVQ. Recent national changes in this qualification have resulted in learners being transferred to alternative programmes and this has caused significant problems with achievement. For example, some learners are now six months behind their target achievement date. Problems with staffing resources have also impacted on the assessment process. CTHL has worked closely with the assessment provider to deal with these problems. An operational assessment plan has been developed and recently implemented, but this has yet to have a significant impact on learners' progress. An additional assessor is also now in place.

23. There are no demanding targets set for achievement during progress reviews. Short-term targets are often only comments on continuing progress towards achievement of units. This does not help the learners to gather appropriate evidence or practise skills in preparation for assessment. Employers or supervisors are usually involved in the review process, but this mainly only involves comments on personal effectiveness and attendance. Learners are not given a copy of their individual learning plan. Although the original is held in the learners' file, it is not always referred to during reviews and some learners do not understand the structure and requirements of their framework. The review process is also used to discuss changes to the arrangements for health, safety and welfare. Although this prompts some useful discussion on health and safety, it does not sufficiently monitor the employers' safety arrangements.

Good Practice

Learners in gas installation give a presentation to new learners, parents and employers, about their experiences in their first year of training. As well as providing guidance for new learners, this presentation is also used as evidence for key skills achievement.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	29	3

24. There are 29 learners on engineering programmes, of whom 12 are advanced modern apprentices, 16 are foundation modern apprentices and one is on NVQ work-based learning. Most learners take up to four years to complete the advanced modern apprenticeship framework and two years to complete the foundation modern apprenticeship framework. Learners are working towards achieving NVQs up to level 3. CTHL's training advisers carry out progress reviews in the workplace and at the subcontractor's training centre every six weeks. The subcontractor for engineering carries out all off-the-job training in the first year of training, initial assessment of new learners, assessment of key skills and NVQs and internal verification of assessments. The first year of training is spent in the subcontractor's training centre where learners work towards achieving a foundation engineering NVQ at level 2. Some learners spend up to 48 weeks in the training centre, others attend full time for between four and six months, the rest attend on a day-release basis. Learners study the background knowledge on one day a week at a local college of further education or for one and a half days in the training centre. They spend the rest of their time at work.

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	3		15		11		1									
Retained*	0		2		5	45	1	100								
Successfully completed	0		1		5	45	1	100								
Still in learning	1		11		0	0	0	0								

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	17		8		4											
Retained*	2		0		0	0										
Successfully completed	0		0		0	0										
Still in learning	11		5		0	0										

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

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			1													
Retained*			0	0												
Successfully completed			0	0												
Still in learning			1	100												

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

STRENGTHS

- effective use of workplace opportunities to enhance learners' skills
- good achievement of additional qualifications
- good integration of workplace experiences with key skills

WEAKNESSES

- over reliance on witness testimony for assessment purposes
- poor progress review process

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better awareness of apprenticeship framework by learners

25. There are good opportunities to enhance the learners' skills in the workplace. CTHL and the subcontracted training provider have effective long-standing relationships with

local engineering employers that provide learners with a wide variety of good training opportunities. There are good resources in the workplace and learners can develop their competences by carrying out tasks in the companies. An effective induction programme includes detailed initial assessment of the learners' skills. The subcontractor, employer and learner devise individual NVQ programmes to suit the needs of the employer and the learner. All aspects of the NVQ are covered in the workplace and learners progress well. Most employers are very supportive and some encourage and sponsor progression to higher education.

26. All learners achieve additional qualifications in addition to those required for their modern apprenticeship programme. Learners on the first year of their foundation modern apprenticeship follow courses such as abrasive wheels regulations, computer-aided design, programmable logic controls, wiring regulations, testing and inspection of electrical circuits, and lift truck driving. These courses enhance learners' skills and employability and give flexibility within the workforce. Most learners take additional theory courses to help their progression. Courses include national and higher national certificates, and one learner is being sponsored for a degree course in engineering. The off-the-job training is satisfactory and there are appropriate resources available.

27. There is good integration of key skills with the vocational training. All learners have a good understanding of key skills and most know how they are progressing. Evidence is gathered from projects and practical tasks, and learners also visit schools and local community groups and give presentations to promote engineering. Evidence is used from these events to gain key skills accreditation. Learners are motivated to succeed in completing the apprenticeship framework by their good understanding of key skills.

28. There is an overreliance on the use of witness testimony for assessment purposes. In the first year of the engineering foundation programme, qualified assessors assess learners in the training centre by direct observation. Assessments are well recorded and monitored. Learners know how they are progressing and they are well motivated to succeed. After this period of training, the learners enter the workplace and collect a good standard of evidence which is witnessed by the workplace supervisor or mentor. Evidence is diverse and well presented in logbooks and portfolios. Qualified assessors do not visit the workplace to carry out assessments. This has been recognised by CTHL and the subcontractor, and action is being taken to provide work-based assessor training, which has yet to be implemented. Internal verification is carried out by the subcontractor to a satisfactory standard.

29. The progress review process is poor. Reviews are regular and take place in the training centre and employers' premises every six weeks. However, some of the employers are not involved in the process. Learners are not set specific targets at their progress reviews and many of the statements on the review document are repetitive and general. Most learners do not feel that the reviews are important and attach greater importance to the informal support that is given by the reviewer.

30. Learners are insufficiently aware of the apprenticeship framework. Most learners

understand the NVQ and key skills, but they have little understanding of the overall apprenticeship framework.

31. CTHL has only been providing training in engineering apprenticeships for the past four years and engineering apprenticeship take up to four years to complete. Learners are progressing well in occupational units and key skills and are well aware of their progress to date and what is required to succeed. Most learners are on target to achieve within the expected timescale. There is a potential 80 per cent achievement rate for advanced modern apprentices for 1999-00 and 62 per cent for foundation modern apprentices in 2000-01.

Business administration, management & professional**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	64	3

32. CTHL offers training in administration and estate agency. There are 59 learners on administration training programmes and five on estate agency training programmes. A single subcontractor provides all training in estate agency. There are eight advanced modern apprentices and 56 foundation modern apprentices. Advanced modern apprentices and all estate agency learners are referred directly from employers. Foundation modern apprentices are recruited from the Connexions service. In March 2000, 71 administration learners transferred to CTHL from another training provider which had ceased trading, but they have all since left. All learners who are unemployed when recruited carry out a one-week induction programme. Learners who are employed carry out a half or one-day induction programme in the workplace. Off-the-job training takes place at CTHL's training centre and on the job at employers' premises. All staff involved in administration have appropriate qualifications and experience for their roles.

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		5		9		11		8		20					
Retained*	0		0		5		9	82	7	88	16	80				
Successfully completed	0		0		4		7	64	6	75	13	65				
Still in learning	1		4		3		0	0	0	0	0	0				

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	10		45		67		32		1		1					
Retained*	0		4		26		19	59	1	100	0	0				
Successfully completed	0		2		16		17	53	1	100	0	0				
Still in learning	10		32		14		0	0	0	0	0	0				

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

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	21		32		18											
Retained*	11		24	75	18	100										
Successfully completed	9		24	75	16	89										
Still in learning	0		0	0	0	0										

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

STRENGTHS

- good achievement rates for advanced modern apprentices
- very effective support to develop work skills
- particularly effective training for key skills and additional qualifications

WEAKNESSES

- slow progress for foundation modern apprentices
- ineffective use of progress reviews

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more involvement of employers in training programmes

33. Achievement rates for advanced modern apprentices are good. In 1997-98 to 2000-01, 63 per cent of learners completed the full framework and a further 6 per cent are

still in learning. For the period 2001-02 to 2002-03, there has been no achievement to date, but 83 per cent of learners are still in learning. This strength was not identified in the self-assessment report.

34. CTHL provides very effective support to help learners develop work skills. Learners have a comprehensive induction week, with well-structured training sessions on relevant topics. For example, they practise telephone and communication skills and receive an effective introduction in to the use of software packages. They receive effective training from a specialist tutor, in attitudes and behaviour at work and equality of opportunity. When induction is complete, learners have a thorough understanding of the requirements of their training programmes. CTHL uses an extensive database of employers to provide suitable work placements for unemployed learners. CTHL's staff are effective in negotiating appropriate arrangements for day release. They also offer good personal support when learners need it. For example, one learner who has a physical disability was given extensive support by CTHL when she was having difficulties in meeting the efficiency requirements of her employer. Her team leader now regards her as a productive member of staff. However, CTHL's staff do not encourage employers to get involved in helping learners produce evidence for their qualifications. This was identified as an area for improvement in the self-assessment report.

35. CTHL provides particularly effective training in key skills and for additional qualifications. Most learners attend off-the-job training at CTHL's training centre for one day every two weeks. They are taught in well-resourced training rooms and effective use is made of information technology (IT) facilities. They have well-structured training modules in key skills at an early stage of their training programmes. Learners' initial level of competence is assessed and exercises are effectively adjusted to meet individual needs. Tutors make good use of questioning to monitor learners' progress. CTHL also provides effective training for additional qualifications, including an examination-based qualification in IT and enterprise-based certificates. Tutors effectively illustrate the links between classroom exercises and workplace practices. For example, during training on touch-typing, tutors fully explain the differences between formal reports, letter designs and different house styles which employers may use. CTHL also offers additional training on computerised accounting systems, if learners need to use them in their work.

36. Progress is slow for foundation modern apprentices. Only 24 per cent of learners who started in 2000-01 have completed the framework and 20 per cent are still in learning. For the whole period 1997-98 to 2000-01, only 34 per cent of learners have so far achieved the framework and only 13 per cent are still in learning. Only 4 per cent of learners who started in for 2001-02 have achieved the full framework, although 68 per cent are still in learning. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report.

37. Progress reviews are ineffective. Reviews take place frequently, but only short-term targets are set and they often only describe activities which are to take place in the next few weeks. There are no challenging milestones. Assessment results are not adequately used to plan future steps for individual learners. The review forms are poorly completed

and do not contain sufficient detail for effective planning. There is a formal process for checking learners' understanding of equal opportunities in the progress review, but in many cases it is not used.

38. Procedures for internal verification are satisfactory overall, although there is no process for ensuring that portfolios are verified at regular intervals. In some cases, internal verification does not take place until learners have almost completed their portfolios.

Good Practice

CTHL has recently employed a learner to work in its offices and has encouraged him to assist newer learners by joining tutors in off-the-job training sessions.

Most learners carry out an enterprise training programme. CTHL has used its links with local business to provide a prize for the best performance and this is awarded each year by a prominent local business man.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	39	4

39. There are 39 learners working towards qualifications in customer service, warehousing and international transportation and shipping. Thirty-two are working towards modern apprenticeships in customer service, 28 are on an advanced modern apprenticeship and four are on a foundation modern apprenticeship. There are three foundation modern apprentices in warehousing and four learners are working towards NVQs in international transportation and shipping at level 2.

40. Most learners are employed at the start of their training. Learners who are not employed are recruited from the Connexions service and are found a suitable placement by CTHL. A major national retailer, working in different stores throughout the Humber region, employs 24 of the advanced modern apprentices. Other employers include a hair and beauty supplies outlet, the Chamber of Commerce, a hospital, and a local bakery. Induction for most of the employed learners is carried out in their own workplace by their assessor, and in CTHL's training centre for those on work placement. All assessment is carried out by two of CTHL's assessors. Internal verification of customer service qualifications is carried out by one of the assessors and a subcontractor. Another subcontracted internal verifier has recently been employed to verify the international transportation and shipping qualification. A subcontractor carries out assessment and internal verification of the warehousing qualification. Progress reviews are carried out in the workplace by CTHL's staff every six weeks.

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		17		28		1		2		2					
Retained*	0		0		0		0	0	0	0	0	0				
Successfully completed	0		0		0		0	0	0	0	0	0				
Still in learning	1		11		16		0	0	0	0	0	0				

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	3		5		12		1									
Retained*	0		0		0		0	0								
Successfully completed	0		1		0		1	100								
Still in learning	3		3		1		0	0								

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

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	4		4		1											
Retained*	0		0	0	0	0										
Successfully completed	0		3	75	1	100										
Still in learning	4		0	0	0	0										

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

STRENGTHS

- good development of occupational skills in the workplace
- good support and guidance by assessors

WEAKNESSES

- poor completion rates for apprenticeship frameworks
- inadequate key skills assessment in customer service
- ineffective progress review process

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- greater involvement in planning achievement by employers
- better use of workplace evidence

41. Learners' occupational skills are effectively developed in the workplace. The self-

assessment report identified that most employers offer a wide range of activities, which allows learners to broaden their skills while increasing their level of responsibility. Many learners are promoted within their company during the training. Learners gain considerable experience through good coaching, work shadowing and specialist training from suppliers. Most managers are keen to support and encourage their learners, although, due to the pressures of the business, rarely take an active part.

42. Assessors offer good support for learners in the workplace through frequent visits. They arrange visits at times that will cause least disruption to the company. One major employer allows very little time for customer service learners to be away from their area of responsibility, but despite this there are good working relationships between learners, assessors and individual managers. Learners contact assessors by telephone between visits if they need additional help. CTHL's assessors have developed a booklet which gives useful guidance on visits. The booklet clearly explains the qualification and give very detailed guidance for learners to help them identify evidence to meet the requirements of their qualification. Learners find the information clear and informative. There is clear and comprehensive evidence information for learners working towards the international transportation and shipping NVQ. Warehousing learners are given effective individual support by their assessor.

43. There are poor completion rates for advanced and foundation modern apprenticeship frameworks. Since 1997, none of the learners has completed all aspects of the advanced modern apprenticeship framework. Sixty-five per cent of advanced modern apprentices who started in 2001-02 and 57 per cent of those who started in 2000-01 are still in learning. Forty per cent of these learners are five months beyond their intended completion date. Progress towards achievement of the NVQ is slow, with some learners who have been in learning for nearly two years only completing two units of the NVQ. Ninety-two per cent of foundation modern apprentices who started between 2000 and 2001, left without achieving their qualification. One learner achieved the full qualification and three are still in learning. The self-assessment report identified slow progress towards achievement, but failed to identify poor completion rates.

44. There is minimal assessment of key skills. Accreditation of prior achievement is used to identify previous key skills achievement at the appropriate level. Eighty-three per cent of customer service advanced modern apprentices are working for a major national retailer who does not recognise the benefits or value of key skills. Due to conflict with this employer there is no assessment of key skills for the customer service learners. Only one of the 12 learners who do not work for this retailer is being assessed for key skills competence. Self-assessment identified the problem with the poor achievement rates for key skills and the NVQ and CTHL has stopped recruiting from the national retailer until the areas of concern have been resolved.

45. Progress reviews often do not identify slow progress and are ineffective in identifying action to resolve this. On many forms, statements on agreed action are insufficiently specific to allow learners to take appropriate action. Learners are confused

about the purpose of progress reviews. Employers are not involved in the progress review discussion and only see the form after discussions have been concluded. Participants rarely complete the sections designed for their comments. The learners' individual learning plan does not record the final qualification achievement date or target dates for individual units and is not referred to or amended during progress reviews.

46. Learners who are recruited directly by CTHL have a thorough initial assessment. The initial assessment for employed learners occurs through the programme and results in effective support, but this may not be until learners have been in training for some time. A job match process is used to identify the appropriate level of qualification for each learner, but the national retailer has stipulated that all learners must work towards a customer service NVQ at level 3. This is not appropriate for some of the learners' job roles.

47. Customer service and warehousing learners do not attend off-the-job training, but learners on the international transportation and shipping qualification attend a comprehensive series of workshops to provide the considerable technical knowledge required by the import/export business and the NVQ. A member of CTHL's staff who has extensive experience in the shipping business leads the workshops. Foundation modern apprentices attend CTHL's training centre one day a fortnight for key skills development, and the same facility has recently been offered to advanced modern apprentices working for the major retailer. These learners attend in their own time, as their own employer is not prepared to allow them time away from the workplace. CTHL is offering to pay these learners each time they attend training. A laptop computer is available for use by learners in their workplace.

48. CTHL's assessors are appropriately qualified and occupationally experienced. A variety of methods is used to assess learners' performance in their workplace, although there is a heavy reliance on learners' personal statements in customer service. Opportunities are not taken to maximise the use of everyday tasks in the workplace. Internal verification is satisfactory, but there is no verification plan.

Good Practice

The major employer of customer service learners does not allow CTHL staff or learners enough time for effective reviews and assessments in the workplace. Learners are not encouraged to develop their key skills or to attend off-the-job training. CTHL has stopped recruiting learners from this employer.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	48	3

49. CTHL offers work-based learning in care for 48 learners, of whom 34 are foundation modern apprentices and 14 are advanced modern apprentices. There are eight male learners. Advanced modern apprentices work towards the NVQ at level 2 and 3 and the foundation apprentices work towards the NVQ at level 2. The programme is co-ordinated by the operations director who works with a team of four full-time assessors, one of whom is also an internal verifier. A major employer employs a second internal verifier. A trainer has recently been employed to work with the team to develop the off-the-job training. All learners are employed in residential care homes or nursing homes. The homes offer a wide range of experience in care of the elderly, high dependency, elderly mentally infirm and those with learning difficulties. Recruitment of learners is mainly through the workplace. The employers contact CTHL to advise them of potential learners, and staff then arrange to visit to complete the application process and induction to the programme. All training takes place in the workplace and is supported by an experienced assessor from CTHL.

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		3		53											
Retained*	0		0		8											
Successfully completed	0		0		4											
Still in learning	1		2		11											

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

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	14		20		28											
Retained*	0		0		15											
Successfully completed	0		0		5											
Still in learning	14		13		7											

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

STRENGTHS

- very effective pastoral support for learners
- wide range of good work placements

WEAKNESSES

- late introduction of key skills
- ineffective progress review process

50. There is very effective pastoral support for learners. Assessors work flexibly to meet the needs of the learners, and make visits to suit learners' shift patterns. Learners can contact staff at any time. CTHL's staff carry out a good induction in the workplace. Learners' job roles are assessed to determine the most appropriate level of NVQ, and learning support needs are identified. Referrals are made for more detailed assessment if required. There are many examples of effective support being given to learners to help them progress. There are very good working relationships with care staff in the workplace and this was partly identified in the self-assessment report.

51. Learners work in a wide range of workplaces, which include residential services for people with learning difficulties, nursing homes for older people, and residential care homes for older people including high dependency clients. Some workplaces include a variety of clients, and learners gain good experience of different client groups. Learners can spend time in other workplaces to gain the experience needed to achieve specific NVQ units. There is an effective checking system for making judgements on the quality of the workplaces and whether they can offer the range of experience needed for the NVQ.

52. Off-the-job training is shared between CTHL and employers. Learners can use a

good range of learning resource materials including distance learning packages, CD-ROMs and books. CTHL's staff teach in the workplace and many employers offer good additional training sessions. A structured programme of seminars for care learners has been recently introduced.

53. Assessors and verifiers are all appropriately qualified and suitably experienced. They maintain a personal record of training and development and are supported by CTHL to carry out additional training as required. Assessment practices are satisfactory, and are well planned between the learners and their assessor. Learners are given detailed written feedback by their assessors. Portfolios contain a good range of evidence, including direct observation, witness testimony and evidence of oral questioning. The internal verification system is effective in monitoring the standards of assessment. When poor practice is identified, the internal verifier and the assessor work together to resolve the problem. Regular meetings take place between care assessors.

54. CTHL started all modern apprentices on the advanced programme in 1999, but close monitoring showed this to be inappropriate as learners were not achieving their targets. Most modern apprentices are now enrolled on the foundation programme and the retention rates are good. There is evidence that most learners are progressing well towards achieving their NVQs. Completion of the foundation modern apprenticeship framework is being delayed by the late achievement of key skills. There is a potential achievement rate of 50 per cent from 2000-01, 65 per cent from 2001-02, and 100 per cent for 2002-03. The number of learners on the advanced modern apprenticeship framework is low, but the retention rates have been excellent over the past two years.

55. Key skills training is introduced late in the training programme and this was identified in the self-assessment report. Learners are unaware of the key skills assessment process and some assessors have little knowledge of, or training in, key skills. Resources are available, but are not introduced until the NVQ has either been achieved or is halfway through. Learners have two day's training at CTHL for the IT key skill. Some attempts have been made to modify the generic key skills pack to make it more applicable to care learners.

56. Progress reviews are ineffective. They are carried out every eight weeks in the workplace with the assessor and the learners. However, some employers are only consulted at the end of the review. The targets are poor and do not reflect the learners' learning needs. The individual learning plan is not used as a basis for the review process. Assessors identify learning needs for employed learners as they arise and then refer the learners for support, rather than using a systematic initial assessment.