

INSPECTION REPORT

Nacro

16 September 2002



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Estyn

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi Dros Addysg
A Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate
For Education and Training in Wales

Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

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

Nacro is a voluntary sector organisation registered as a charity, and a company limited by guarantee. It works with unemployed people whose disadvantage in the labour market, places them at risk of social exclusion. Nacro is a national training provider with 59 training centres across England and south Wales. It provides work-based learning for young people in land-based industries, construction, engineering, information technology, retailing, sport, care and early years, graphic design and foundation programmes. There are 238 learners working towards national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at level 2. There are 714 young people on foundation programmes working towards the full NVQ or units towards an NVQ at level 1. There are 355 young people on the Life Skills element of the Learning Gateway, including 20 learners on the Skill Build programme in Wales. There are 200 clients on New Deal 18-24, in retailing, graphic design and foundation programmes on the full-time education, voluntary sector and environment task force options. In addition, the organisation provides training for 234 clients on New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults training programmes.

Overall judgement

The quality of provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, the quality of work-based learning in engineering, information technology, retailing, sport, care and early years, graphic design, and foundation training is satisfactory. The leadership and management of Nacro are satisfactory. The organisation's equal opportunities provision and quality assurance arrangements are good.

GRADES

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

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

Information & communications technology	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

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

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

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

Visual & performing arts & media	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3
New Deal 18-24	3

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3
New Deal 18-24	3
Life Skills	2
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	4

KEY STRENGTHS

- excellent learner support
- good range of additional qualifications
- good retention rates
- effective initiatives to engage and retain learners
- productive and wide-ranging external communications
- effective action to promote social inclusion
- good work to promote continuous improvement

KEY WEAKNESSES

- some poor accommodation and resources
- poor NVQ achievement rates
- insufficient target-setting for learners
- inadequate completion of individual learning plans and progress review records
- some poorly qualified and inexperienced teaching staff
- insufficient equal opportunities training for staff
- no systematic observation of training

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better links between literacy and numeracy and vocational areas
- better sharing of good practice across training centres and divisions
- more effective jobsearch for New Deal clients
- better promotion of equality of opportunity to staff and learners

THE INSPECTION

1. A team of 18 inspectors, including a colleague from Estyn, the inspectorate for Wales, spent 125 days at Nacro in England and in south Wales. Land-based and construction areas of learning were not inspected due to the very low number of learners. Inspectors examined 259 portfolios of learners' work, interviewed 480 clients and learners and conducted 271 interviews with staff. They visited 85 work placements and interviewed 74 workplace supervisors and employers. They studied 323 individual learning plans and made 83 visits to Nacro sites. In addition, policies, procedures, minutes of meetings and other records were viewed along with internal and external verification reports and assessment records, lesson plans and schemes of work. They carried out 96 observations of training. They also studied the self-assessment report which was produced in April 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	0	1	2	3	1	0	0	7
Information & communications technology	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	5
Health, social care & public services	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Visual & performing arts & media	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Foundation programmes	1	8	15	26	18	9	0	77
Total	1	11	20	36	19	9	0	96

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. For approximately 35 years, Nacro has been involved in the development of policies for criminal justice and penal matters, and in the provision of practical resettlement for offenders and ex-offenders. Recently, this work has emphasised crime prevention and promoting community safety. Nacro works with unemployed people whose disadvantage in the labour market places them at risk of social exclusion, whether or not they have been involved in the criminal justice system.

3. Nacro was reorganised in early 1998. There are six directorates. One directorate is now responsible for education and employment, promoting consistency of training. The education and employment directorate consists of nine divisions in the Black Country and Shropshire, Birmingham and Staffordshire, Cymru, East Anglia, Greater London, the North West, South Yorkshire and Tees Valley. Two national operations managers report to the director and are responsible for the work of all the divisions. Each division is led by a manager responsible for overseeing the training centres within their region. Each division has a finance manager and a quality manager. Area managers are responsible for training contracts and local sites and report to the divisional managers. They manage the recruitment, appraisal and development of staff in their training centres. The national quality assurance team and the services, publication and information unit, provide support to all the divisions. This includes learning resources, staff development and literacy and numeracy developments.

4. Nacro has reduced its involvement in training programmes for those with no additional social or learning support needs, for example, modern apprenticeships. Nacro currently contracts work-based learning for young people with 21 local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) across England and ELWa in Wales. It contracts with Jobcentre Plus to provide New Deal 18-24 and New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults in eight training centres. Learners work towards either formally accredited NVQs, short-course provision, and/or appropriate awards which acknowledge their personal and social skills development. The range of training programmes is intended to match the needs of the learners with local labour markets. Nacro covers nine of the 14 learning areas, the largest of which is foundation programmes, with 84 per cent of learners. Seven of the nine areas of learning were inspected. On foundation programmes involving work-based learning for young people, 74 per cent of learners had literacy and numeracy skills at or below entry level, while 90 per cent had at least two social barriers to learning. Of the 240 young people undertaking NVQs at level 2, 94 per cent were assessed as having additional learning and/or social support needs. Nacro holds the Investor in People award, a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people. It is currently working towards accreditation for the basic skills award. All of the training centres are accredited by the appropriate awarding bodies.

Work-based learning for young people

5. Retention rates are satisfactory in all areas of learning except for sport and recreation. The retention rate for this occupational area in 2001-02 was 38 per cent. Achievement of the NVQ at level 2 in the vocational areas of learning in 2001-02 is poor, ranging from 14 per cent in early years and care to 32 per cent in information technology. Many learners, however, achieve a positive outcome in terms of unit accreditation, additional qualifications or moving onto further education or into a job. For example, on foundation programmes, although only 19 per cent of learners completed their main qualification, 49 per cent achieved an additional short qualification or units towards a qualification. In all areas of learning there is effective development of learners' confidence, self-esteem, employability, and social skills.

6. Approximately 50 per cent of all learners are on work-based learning programmes for young people, 75 per cent of whom are on foundation programmes. There is particularly good learner support. Staff provide good advice and guidance on personal issues. There are highly effective links with many other organisations. Good links exist with the court services, which provides learners with a smooth transition into training programmes. Learners have access to effective counselling. Learners are able to work towards additional training across a range of courses, including driving theory and licence programmes, first aid, youth awards and outdoor pursuit awards.

7. Training programmes are designed to meet learners' individual needs. Learners develop a good range of occupational skills relevant to their vocational area. Training is satisfactory in the six occupational areas. In retailing, and sport and recreation, there is particularly good training. On foundation programmes, many training centre staff use good teaching methods. For example, literacy and numeracy training is well planned and effectively integrated with learners' vocational or employability skills training. Some training is unsatisfactory. Some trainers use a narrow range of teaching methods and some staff are not appropriately qualified.

8. There are good resources for learners in graphic design and sport and recreation. Resources are inadequate for learners on early years and care training programmes. Accommodation is poor in some training centres, however, the training provider is currently moving into new premises. There is some very good accommodation, for example at the Ipswich training centre.

9. In all occupational areas, work placements are good and are used effectively. Work placements are generally well managed. Staff effectively match the work placement to the learner's interests and career aims. In engineering, and early years and care, there is poor co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training. On information technology, graphic design and foundation programmes, not all learners have work placements.

10. Initial assessment is comprehensive for most learners, and includes barriers to learning and employment. Results of initial assessment are not always used effectively to develop individual learning plans. Initial assessment is poor for learners who speak

English as an additional language. No targets are set for language development. Induction programmes are generally thorough and informative. In some training centres, there is insufficient reinforcement of topics covered in induction, for example rights and responsibilities in the workplace.

11. Staff conduct frequent progress reviews. There is insufficient use of targets in both individual learning plans and progress reviews. Many action points are not sufficiently detailed and are insufficiently challenging. Some learners are unclear about how to progress. In many cases, learners and workplace supervisors are not given copies of individual learning plans and review records. Most learners have a good understanding of their progress. There are some poor examples of assessment practices in engineering and on foundation programmes at level 1 NVQ. There are inconsistencies in assessment practice across the organisation. Nacro is in the process of implementing new assessment and internal verification processes and procedures to rectify this weakness.

New Deal 18-24

12. The retention rates in 2001-02 for clients on New Deal 18-24 training programmes in graphic design, foundation, and retailing, are 65 per cent, 51 per cent, and 18 per cent respectively. Currently, job outcome rates are unsatisfactory in all areas of learning. The average job outcome rate is 10 per cent across the three occupational areas. Clients' achievement of qualifications is low. However, regional variations exist on foundation programmes. For example, a New Deal project in Liverpool secured a job outcome rate of 76 per cent.

13. There is good client support, and in some areas good use is made of the New Deal discretionary fund. Full-time education and training clients make good progress in their development of skills in graphic design, including the use of industry standard computer packages. The in-house commercial print unit enables learners to work in a real work environment. There are insufficient work placements beyond this provision. In retailing, there is an inadequate range of work placements. However, on the full-time education and training, VSO and environment task force options of the foundation programmes, clients gain valuable work experience in supportive work placements and projects.

14. There is insufficient use of short-term targets on development plans and at progress reviews. The progress review system for retail clients is not co-ordinated effectively. Clients' progress is reviewed by subcontracted assessment providers, New Deal personal advisers, work placement and jobsearch officers. No one is responsible for collating this information and discussing it with the client. Jobsearch is generally poorly planned. There is insufficient jobsearch training for retail clients early in the planned training.

Life Skills

15. In 2001-02, the retention rate for Life Skills learners was good at 61 per cent, with 17 per cent of learners still in training. In 2001-02, 68 per cent of learners achieved a successful outcome. Forty-four per cent of these learners progressed onto other training programmes, further education or gained jobs. The remaining 24 per cent of learners achieved a short, nationally recognised qualification or relevant units. Achievement is celebrated by displaying learners' certificates or through presentation events.

16. The Life Skills training in England and the Skills Building programme in south Wales are good. Learners receive excellent pastoral support. Staff respond promptly to learners' issues and provide a range of relevant support. Learners' self-esteem and confidence improve during their training programmes.

17. The training programmes are designed with maximum flexibility to meet learners' individual needs. They include a range of activities to improve confidence and build social skills. These include drama, outings, outward bound activities, writing and producing music. Some training sessions are poor. In some training centres, there is good integration of literacy and numeracy training into other training activities. For example, staff effectively use art and computer graphics to help learners with poor literacy skills.

18. Most Life Skills learners undertake a work taster or work placement. These are well managed and help learners to develop a good range of skills, including those for employment. Some learners make good use of learning diaries and support logs. However, learners are not always encouraged to keep a work placement log to record their progress. Progress reviews are frequent and focus on setting short-term behaviour targets with achievement dates.

New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults

19. In 2001-02, 72 per cent of clients were retained on the training programmes. Approximately 50 per cent of the clients completed their individual development plans. However, job outcomes are poor with only nine per cent of clients gaining employment. Regional variations exist, for example, in Sandwell and Shropshire, 39 per cent of clients gained jobs.

20. Clients receive very good personal support. There are good links with employers and specialist agencies to tackle the many barriers facing clients experiencing long-term unemployment. Clients develop good social, vocational and occupational skills. Work placements in the voluntary sector, for example with the National Trust, provide good work experience.

21. Jobsearch is not managed or planned well in most training centres. Generally, the learning activities are poor. Clients are not sufficiently involved in the training. Records of activities in jobsearch are not kept systematically to help motivate clients. Many clients have literacy, numeracy and language needs. In some training centres, the development of these basic skills are not well planned or effectively integrated with the clients' vocational or employability skills development. Clients are not sufficiently aware of their progress. Learning targets are not sufficiently specific in individual development plans or progress review records.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

22. Nacro is a national voluntary organisation and a registered company limited by guarantee. There is a board of trustees responsible for the strategic direction of the organisation, in accordance with its charitable aims. There is a chief executive with overall management responsibility, and six directors who oversee specific components of the organisation's work. A director, supported by two national operational managers, manages the directorate concerned with education and employment. There are nine divisional managers nationwide, overseeing 59 training centres. Most of the central support functions are based in London, however key managerial and research staff are also located regionally. Nacro has a number of Jobcentre Plus contracts to provide work-based learning for adults, New Deal 25+ and New Deal 18-24 provision, through direct contracts and arrangements with other organisations. It also has a small number of subcontracts for some of its training and assessment.

23. The trustees meet every two months and support the work of the management board, which comprises the directors. The director of education and employment, with the directorate's executive group, drafts the department's annual business plan. This then forms the framework for divisional plans with key performance indicators. Staff performance is measured against these targets. There are staff induction and appraisal systems and Nacro has a range of policies and procedures for administration, finance, human resources, marketing, audit, equality and diversity, child protection and quality assurance. Procedures covering the main training processes and specific areas of work, such as youth work, are also available.

24. Each divisional team comprises of a manager, with responsibility for a team of managers and operational and administrative staff, which includes area managers, training centres managers, tutors and training staff. The executive group and divisional teams meet on a monthly basis. The senior management team meets every two months. The major themes of the directorate's work is organised into strands which meet the organisation's strategic objectives. The current strands are social inclusion, skills development, employment and criminal justice work. In addition, there are corporate strands, which include equality and diversity, health and safety and quality assurance. Representatives from each division are involved in co-ordinating and developing the work in each strand. There are 636 staff involved in the education and employment directorate.

25. The directorate has an equality and diversity policy and a race equality policy statement that is issued to all learners and employees. In addition, some divisions adopt this for learners. Equality of opportunity is covered during learners' inductions and is a standing agenda item at learners' forums. All staff are issued with an internal publication entitled 'equality matters'. Nacro has recently introduced a race equality scheme with a three-year action plan which outlines how the requirements of the relevant government act will be met. The directorate has developed its own race equality action plan using the corporate scheme. Implementation of the action plan is regularly monitored and

reviewed. Equality and diversity within the directorate is overseen by the work of the equality and diversity strand group. Equality and diversity is a regular agenda item at staff meetings at centre, division, and senior level.

26. The directorate has a quality assurance policy and quality assurance manual. Written procedures cover a range of activities including key training processes. The national quality assurance manager is responsible for the development and implementation of quality assurance within the directorate. There is also a quality improvement team which supports the work of the national quality assurance manager. The quality systems manager is part of the quality improvement team. Her responsibilities include internal auditing. There is a quality strand group comprising representatives from each of the divisions within the directorate. The quality strand group meets on average every six weeks. Seven of the divisions employ a dedicated quality manager. Arrangements for quality assurance and individual staff responsibilities are clearly set out in the quality assurance manual, copies of which are available at each training centre. All staff receive an internal quarterly publication entitled 'quality matters'.

STRENGTHS

- clear strategic direction and management arrangements
- effective and wide-ranging external communications
- good internal communications
- Some good target-setting within local divisions
- some effective local strategies to improve retention of early leavers and non-achievers
- effective action to promote social inclusion
- good equal opportunities target-setting in the business planning cycle
- comprehensive evaluation of equality of opportunity by learners
- effective work to promote continuous improvement
- effective internal auditing arrangements
- good use of evaluation
- effective ongoing monitoring of national and divisional development plans

WEAKNESSES

- late recognition of poor achievement rates
- some poorly qualified and inexperienced teaching staff
- poor management of national retention and achievement data
- poor access to some training centres for people with mobility difficulties
- inadequate monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace
- insufficient equal opportunities training for staff
- insufficiently critical national self-assessment report
- no systematic observation of training

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better promotion and use of work-placement information pack
- better promotion of equality of opportunity to staff and learners
- better sharing of evaluation results with staff and learners
- better consistency in learners' records

27. Strategic direction and management arrangements are clear and are effectively communicated to all staff and stakeholders. The directorate of education and employment is organised well. There is effective management and development of the work with young people and adults. This was acknowledged as a strength in the development plan. The introduction of specific strands, identified as key objectives in the business plan, are an effective method of policy implementation. The key objectives ensure that learners from disadvantaged groups are able to learn new skills, increase personal effectiveness, gain employment, or continue in education. The groups who manage the strands include representatives from all divisions, including staff who work with learners on a day-to-day basis, trainers and managers. They focus on factors which affect young people and adults in their learning and their participation in society, and highlight the methods and approach to this work, the development of appropriate policies and procedures, and their effective implementation across the directorate. Staff development and training is well established and linked to the organisation's priorities. Staff receive good support and supervision sessions approximately every six weeks to review professional practice, share concerns and issues, and to exchange information. Divisional conferences take place to highlight new project work in training centres, explore the work carried out in the strand groups, and to share good practice.

28. There are effective and wide-ranging external communications, partnerships and links. Staff and managers have good links with a wide range of organisations. Senior managers are involved in various strategic partnerships. Nacro is a partner in a group which comprises major national voluntary organisations involved in education and training. This group collectively campaigns to raise the profile of education and training for disadvantaged learners. Across the country, the training provider's representatives have good working relationships with local LSCs and Jobcentre Plus staff. The director

sits on the government's modern apprenticeship board. There are good external links with government bodies, such as the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Home Office and national organisations, such as, awarding bodies, the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA), and with small, medium and large employers.

29. Internal communications are good. There is a regular cycle of meetings held at all levels of the organisation. Meetings are minuted, many with action points and dates for completion. E-mail is used effectively to keep staff up to date. A newsletter for the education and employment directorate, called 'quality matters', includes useful information about policy and procedural issues, staffs' roles and responsibilities, and good practice examples.

30. There is some good target-setting within local divisions. This applies to staff performance in meeting contract profiles for learners starting training programmes, personal and professional development, and the implementation of key initiatives. As part of the business plan, divisional offices have collected information on learners, breaking down the additional learning and social needs, analysing achievement and retention rates in relation to these factors, to identify local trends. This information is used in staff meetings to discuss and resolve issues. Key performance indicators are monitored, analysed and compared.

31. There are some effective local strategies to improve retention of early leavers and non-achievers. Improvement in retention rates are a local key performance indicator for all divisions. A number of good strategies have been devised to improve the retention and achievement of learners in local divisions and training centres. Projects have been initiated which provide good incentives to learners. For example, one project provides driving lessons as a reward for learners meeting specific behavioural or other learning objectives. There are partnership projects which focus on young people excluded from school, outreach work with disaffected young people and neighbourhood social fund (NSF) work with children and young people at risk of offending. Several training centres have a breakfast club, providing food for learners who are homeless or live in difficult circumstances. As a result of this work, the average length of stay for learners has increased by six weeks. All divisions provide short accredited courses and other additional qualifications, encouraging learners to stay on training programmes longer, to ensure that even if they do leave early they have some useful qualifications. In one division, the number of learners currently on training programmes, compared with the same period in the previous year, shows a marked increase in retention rates.

32. There is late recognition of poor achievement rates. The achievement rate for work-based learning programmes in 2001-02 was 19 per cent. The job outcome rate for New Deal 25+ was 9 per cent for the same year. Poor achievement of full NVQs has recently been acknowledged by the organisation and some action has been taken to remedy the problem. Achievement rates are good on the Life Skills training programmes.

33. Some teaching staff are poorly qualified and do not have relevant vocational experience. They do not have sufficient knowledge of a range of effective teaching

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methods to best meet the learning needs of the young people and adults they work with. There are control problems with some large groups of learners. There has been a high staff turnover and difficulties in recruiting appropriate staff in key areas across the country. This has resulted in long-term vacancies. Nacro is looking to address this issue through improved salaries and career progression opportunities.

34. There is poor collection and analysis of data on national achievement and retention rates. These data are collected and collated at a local level, but are not used effectively to analyse learners' achievements in specific areas of learning or within particular programmes. This was acknowledged as a weakness in the development plan. National data are not produced in a clear and understandable form. No comparison data are produced to enable analysis of issues affecting learners' performance. Data relating to achievement and retention rates for the past three years are not accurate. There is insufficient consistency in how each division holds learners' data.

35. A good work-placement and employers' pack has been produced to provide information about the training provider's values, policies and principles, as well as qualification details, and expectations. However, employers are not systematically given effective instruction in the use of the pack. There is insufficient promotion of the pack to employers.

Equality of opportunity**Contributory grade 2**

36. Senior managers are responsible for implementing equal opportunities policies and procedures. Staff give priority to providing equality of opportunity and engaging with learners from a wide range of disadvantaged groups. There are effective measures to prevent discrimination and harassment. There is effective action to promote social inclusion and increase the participation in education and training of ex-offenders and people from disadvantaged groups. A range of projects are available to help learners gain training and jobs. These projects are promoted well through published reports and promotional material. This work extends into school exclusion projects. Many learners from these projects progress into education and training.

37. There is good equality of opportunity target-setting in the business plan. Key performance indicators, listed in the directorate's business plan, are discussed in divisional business plans, and are supported with an equality and diversity action plan. All divisional business plans set targets for the next three years. These include a minority ethnic group staff profile, which reflects learners' ratios at local level, and the recruitment of learners to match local population profiles. There is effective monitoring of action plans. Monitoring takes place in all meetings at senior, divisional and training centre level, and through the work of the equality and diversity strand group. Although there is a good understanding of the targets at management level, not all staff and learners have a good understanding of equality of opportunity issues. Many learners do not understand the equality and diversity statement. Some divisions have introduced more easy to understand version of the statement. The training provider is currently developing a relevant training module for staff and learners. Learners are aware of the complaints procedure. Records of actions in response to complaints are kept at all training centres.

38. There is comprehensive evaluation of learners' experiences of equality of opportunity. The annual learner questionnaire covers all of the key training processes and is evaluated in terms of ethnic and gender groups. Results of this analysis are circulated to managers and are reviewed at the equality and diversity strand group.

39. There are access difficulties to some premises for people with mobility difficulties. The directorate has identified this weakness in the national development plan and has made resources available to some sites for the installation of lifts or stair lifts. It is now policy that before any new lease can be taken, the premises must have adequate access for all users. In addition, Nacro is carrying out an equality audit of all offices and sites covering access, signage, and the use of languages for people whose first language is not English.

40. Monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace does occur, but is not sufficiently thorough to most divisions. All work placements sign Nacro's equality and diversity statement and complete a thorough health and safety risk assessment check, which incorporates equality of opportunity. Progress reviews carried out in the workplace do not always cover equality of opportunity. Effective action is taken when learners' experience discrimination. However, at two work placements there are

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inappropriate displays.

41. There is insufficient equal opportunities training for staff. Although all new staff plan to carry out an induction that includes equality of opportunity, some staff have not had this induction. Although staff receive a great deal of information on how the directorate is responding to the equality and diversity agenda, there is currently insufficient relevant training for staff to help them recognise and deal effectively with inappropriate behaviours. The three-year action plan for the implementation of the race equality scheme, acknowledges the need to review racism awareness training, and to ensure that there is a consistent strategy to provide appropriate staff training. This training is now planned to take place.

Quality assurance**Contributory grade 2**

42. There is effective work to promote continuous improvement. The work of the quality assurance strand group is responsible for continuous improvement. Each representative on the group is responsible for continuous improvement within their division. Good practice is promoted through the quality assurance strand group and through promotion in the relevant newsletter. Most staff have a good understanding of quality assurance.
43. The national internal audit arrangements are effective and help ensure continuous improvement. There are 37 trained internal auditors. All members of the quality assurance strand, and some members of the senior management team, are qualified internal auditors. There is comprehensive internal auditor training. A schedule of internal audit visits is prepared and audit teams visit training centres at least annually, or more frequently if necessary. The comprehensive internal audit covers policies and procedures and most of the key training processes. The audit fulfils contract compliance and includes evaluated judgements on the standard of completed learners' records. Identified problems are acted on and remain an action point until satisfactorily implemented. For example, a common action is the need for staff to meet the required minimum standards when completing progress reviews and individual learning plans.
44. There is good use of evaluation. Annual questionnaires are issued to learners, employers, and key stakeholders, including the LSC, Jobcentre Plus, and subcontractors. These are evaluated at national and divisional level. The results are used to draw judgements in the self-assessment report. Results are not always issued to staff and learners. Development work is in place to issue more frequent and ongoing evaluation questionnaires to learners. Many training centres have introduced forums for learners to discuss the training received and the training environment. Improvements have resulted as a direct result of these forums.
45. There are effective arrangements for the ongoing monitoring of national and divisional development plans. The national development plan is monitored through the senior executive group, and in meetings held between the national quality assurance manager and senior management. The quality assurance strand group also monitors the implementation of the national development plan. Local development plans are monitored at senior and divisional level, and through the work of the quality assurance strand group. The monitoring of the implementation of divisional development plans forms a major part of the work of the national audit team.
46. The national self-assessment report is not sufficiently critical. It comprises strengths and weaknesses from divisional self-assessment reports, but does not identify common key strengths and weaknesses. Identified strengths and weaknesses are not supported with relevant text. There are no identified strengths and weaknesses for leadership and management, quality assurance, and equal opportunities. No achievement and retention data are published in the national self-assessment report. There is no analysis of performance trends for the past three years. Published internal audit reports are not used

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sufficiently to draw judgements in the national self-assessment report. Not all strengths and weaknesses identified in the national self-assessment report are linked to those in the national development plan. The national development plan is satisfactory. Divisional self-assessment reports are satisfactory and use data to inform judgements.

47. There are no arrangements in place to ensure the systematic observation of training across all divisions. Development needs are not identified and trainers are unaware of a range of teaching methods to meet learners' needs. Good practice is not systematically shared. This weakness has been identified in the divisions' self-assessment reports and in the national development plan. The quality strand group is currently developing criteria and procedures to ensure that there is systematic observation of training against published criteria, but these have yet to be introduced.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	88	3

48. There are 88 learners on motor vehicle training programmes. Most learners are working towards NVQs at level 1 in motor vehicle repair and maintenance. Learners, where appropriate, then progress to NVQs at level 2 and can be assessed at unit level. Learners complete an initial assessment, followed by an induction and the completion of an individual learning plan. There are resources in some training centres to provide off-the-job training, which is supported by training in work placements. Some learners receive all their NVQ training and assessment in the workplace. Where training is provided in the training centres, generally it is on a day-release basis and includes literacy and numeracy. Motor vehicle training is often used to provide vocational tasters for learners on foundation training programmes. Trainers visit learners in the workplace at least once every four weeks. Work placements are with a range of small to medium companies involved in fast-fit motor vehicle work. A small number of learners are placed within larger companies involved in the repair and preparation of vehicles for sale.

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

Work-based learning for young people																	
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97		1995-96		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts			244													
Retained*			149														
Successfully completed			56														
Still in learning			88														

*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 learner support
- thorough initial assessment and induction
- good on-the-job training

WEAKNESSES

- weak co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- poor achievement of NVQs at level 2

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better consistency in assessment practices

49. There is particularly good learner support throughout the training programme. Staff have good working relationships with learners. There is good support for learners' individual learning and/or social needs. Learners can work towards a wide range of additional qualifications such as the driving ambitions course, which help to prepare them for the driving test. These additional qualifications help to motivate learners and keep them on the training programmes. In addition, learners use information technology (IT) and the Internet to develop their life skills and employability. Employers provide good learner support during training. Many learners gain jobs at their work placements.

50. There is a thorough initial assessment and induction process. All learners complete a basic skills test which covers reading, spelling, punctuation and numeracy. This, combined with an assessment of learners' work choices, learning styles and self-esteem, provides a comprehensive analysis of a learner's ability, and where learning and personal support are required. This information is used in a thorough induction programme which covers all aspects of the training programme. Staff use information collected during initial assessment to produce individual learning plans. These are informative, kept up to date and reviewed regularly.

51. There is good on-the-job training. Learners are matched effectively to work placements, usually within two weeks of starting the training programme. A thorough work-placement information pack is used to inform the employer of their role and responsibilities, and other operational details. Some employees do not fully understand this information. In Sheffield, learners are in a work placement where each month up to two thousand nearly new vehicles of all makes, are serviced and prepared for sale. These learners have mentors to teach them and monitor their progress. Learners are involved with many aspects of the business and learn valuable life skills as well as the vocational elements appropriate to the qualification. Nacro staff frequently visit learners to review their progress, deal with any problems and assess learners' performance towards the achievement of their NVQs.

52. Nacro staff are aware of the needs and aspirations of their client group, give good support and monitor progress throughout the training programme. There is good team working among teaching and training staff, and most staff clearly understand the values

and direction of the organisation. However, in some training centres, action points arising from some management meetings, although discussed, are not implemented. For example in Norwood, instructions relating to the frequency of reviews is not being followed. In Sheffield, NVQ assessment requirements identified in formal meetings are not being implemented.

53. All training staff have good, relevant industrial experience. Learning sessions are good and taught well. Some recently appointed training staff have insufficient teaching experience and others do not have recent formal teaching qualifications. Lesson plans are brief and rarely individualised and there is insufficient differentiation in training when learners of NVQs at level 1 and 2 are in the same learning session. There is a wide variation in the standard of learning materials used in some sessions.

54. Many of the training centres which deliver practical training are well equipped and maintained to a high standard, and others meet the minimum requirement for delivering NVQs. Some learners have to wait to use tools and equipment. The accommodation used to teach the theory sessions is satisfactory and the resources available are good.

55. There is inadequate co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training. Most training takes place in the workplace. Learners achieve units of their NVQ according to the flow of work at each work placement. This does not always provide the full range of work for assessment. Evidence collected at the work placements does not often relate to the theoretical and practical work in the training centres. Assessment is not consistently or thoroughly carried out. There is a policy for assessment, but it is not consistently implemented by staff.

56. Most learners have an initial learning goal of achieving their NVQ at level 1. Once this is achieved they may progress to an NVQ at level 2. However, the achievement of NVQ at level 2 is poor. The current assessment rate for NVQs at level 2 in 2001-02 is 23 per cent. Many learners gain jobs during their training programme and do not continue with their NVQ at level 2. The retention rate for NVQs at level 2 is satisfactory at 61 per cent. The training programme is well structured. It provides learners with a wide range of vocational and other personal skills. Learners also participate in a variety of activities, such as visits to vehicle manufacturers, leisure and heritage venues, and competitions. These activities contribute effectively to learners' personal development.

Information & communications technology**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	18	3

57. There are 18 learners on information and communication technology (ICT) training programmes covering a range of qualifications. Most learners work towards NVQs at level 1 and 2 in using IT. Learners also study computer literacy and IT and elements of other qualifications such as an NVQ at level 2 in information business technology. Training is carried out in open-plan training centres. In one division, training is currently subcontracted to another training provider. In other divisions, Nacro staff carry out the training. Initial assessment includes learners' current IT skills, and literacy and numeracy to identify any support needs. Learners are referred mainly through external agencies including Connexions, the youth offender team and other agencies with which Nacro works in partnership.

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

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97		1995-96	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	6		87												
Retained*	0		40													
Successfully completed	0		28													
Still in learning	6		12													

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

STRENGTHS

- excellent learner support
- effective development of skills to improve learners' employability
- effective matching of learners' needs and abilities to training programmes and work placements
- good management and quality of work placements
- good teaching of background knowledge

WEAKNESSES

- insufficient work placements
- poor achievement of full NVQ
- inadequate recording of learners' progress

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better sharing of good assessment verification practices
- better layout of training areas

58. Learner support is excellent. There are regular and effective reviews covering pastoral as well as, learning issues. Staff respond effectively to relevant issues and problems. Learner support is provided throughout the training programmes. For example, staff ensure learners are able to travel to work placements and training centres. There are a number of effective national and regional incentive schemes that are supportive and motivational. For example, breakfast clubs bring learners in to training on time and the provision of driving lessons motivates learners to achieve their individual targets. Feedback from learners is used effectively to make changes to the training programme.

59. There is effective development of skills to improve learners' employability. Nacro works with learners who have a range of barriers to employment. These barriers are effectively identified by initial assessment. Mentoring develops the relevant skills learners require for employment. Learners' motivation, attitude to work, timekeeping and attendance, and self-confidence improves significantly during the training programme.

60. Learners' needs and abilities are matched well to training programmes and work placements. There is a thorough initial assessment of learners' abilities and career aims. Learners are put on to appropriate training programmes. For example, some learners are put straight on to an NVQ at level 2. The effective allocation of learners to work placements helps them to develop employability as well as vocational skills.

61. Work placements are good and are well managed. There is a comprehensive initial check of potential work placements. This covers all aspects of the work placement effectively. Full and informative records are kept, which include details of the available on-the-job training and other learning, as well as environmental issues, such as health and safety requirements. There are regular and detailed work-placement monitoring checks. There are good links with work-placement providers. Nacro's staff respond effectively to changes required to improve the training. Work-placement co-ordination information is recorded clearly and efficiently.

62. There is good teaching of background knowledge, which meets the required NVQ standards. The attainment of this knowledge is effectively recorded. Some of the classroom-taught sessions include IT and business administration learners, however, most of the background knowledge is taught on an individual basis in the form of tutorials. These sessions are effectively tailored to meet the individual needs of the learners and are provided at the appropriate time in the learner's training programme. Some training centres teach background knowledge in the workplace. This enables learners and tutors to directly relate their knowledge to job roles and work tasks.

63. There are insufficient work placements. Some learners are currently not on work placement and cannot achieve their NVQ. Staff are active in looking for additional relevant work placements. Those learners who do not have a work placement also study for additional units and qualifications. The proportion of learners who completed their training programme in 2001-02 was 32 per cent. Twelve learners are still in training. Forty-four per cent of learners have gained jobs. Many learners achieve part of their training programme or additional qualifications.

64. There is inadequate recording of learners' progress. Progress is monitored informally by tutors and assessors, and formally during progress reviews. Most learners are set challenging targets. Learners are not always aware of key targets such as programme end dates. Individual learning plans are not kept up to date or used consistently as working documents. There is some poor recording targets and actions towards targets. Some learners do not have copies of their individual learning plans.

65. Assessment and verification is satisfactory. In the workplace, there is assessment by observation, and portfolios are verified. Some of the processes used for monitoring verification are inadequate for example, some verification is by documentation only. Internal verifiers and assessors do not meet formally to discuss assessment and verification issues. There is insufficient sharing of good practice, however, a comprehensive assessment and verification process has recently been implemented. It is too early to judge on the effectiveness of this process.

66. Resources are satisfactory for learners. The training centres are laid out as IT work centres. In some cases, the open-plan environment of the training centres allows learners to be easily distracted. The layout of one room causes difficulties for the trainer demonstrating applications effectively. Not all of the computer systems use the most current version of common software applications, however, they are all sufficient for the task. Staff are suitably qualified and there is effective appraisal and staff development.

Good Practice

Learners who are not on work placement are involved in refurbishing and maintaining personal computers for a charity project. This helps to develop their occupational knowledge and skills as well as employability and interpersonal skills.

Retailing, customer service & transportation**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	27	3
New Deal 18-24	19	4

67. There are 27 learners on work-based learning programmes in retailing, customer service, distribution and warehousing, at the training provider's premises at Shrewsbury, Wellington, Ipswich and Clacton. Learners work towards NVQs at level 2 in retailing, distribution and warehousing. Learners are referred through the careers service or by personal choice. Most learners progress from foundation programmes in this occupational area, to related NVQs at level 2. Learners complete an induction comprising health and safety, equal opportunities and the qualifications offered at the training provider's premises and in work placements. Initial assessment of literacy, numeracy and vocational skills is also carried out at this time at the training centres. When a work placement is found, learners spend most of their time at work where occupational training is given. Learners attend weekly off-the-job occupational training, which includes literacy, numeracy and jobsearch. Training is planned over 12 to 16 months. Learners are assessed in the workplace at least monthly and more often if necessary. Assessments are carried out in the workplace by qualified assessors employed by Nacro. Qualified staff also internally verify the awards. Learners are reviewed by their assessor every one to three months.

68. There are 19 clients on New Deal 18-24 training programmes. All clients are completing the voluntary sector option in Barnsley. Clients are working towards three units of NVQs at level 2 in retailing, customer service, distribution and warehousing and transportation. Until recently, personal advisers at Jobcentre Plus found work placements for clients before their referral to Nacro. Currently Nacro matches clients to work placements and move clients to further work placements if they are not progressing. Induction is carried out at work placements on health and safety, equal opportunities and relevant qualifications. Assessment is subcontracted to another training provider. Clients attend the subcontracted training provider's premises weekly in Barnsley for portfolio-building and assessment. Clients' literacy and numeracy skills are assessed at Jobcentre Plus and relevant support is provided. Clients also attend jobsearch near to their homes. This becomes increasingly frequent as they progress through the 26 weeks of their training programme. Clients' progress is reviewed at various intervals throughout the training programme.

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

Work-based learning for young people																	
NVQ Training																	
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97		1995-96		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts			84														
Retained*			53	63													
Successfully completed			26	31													
Still in learning			27	32													

*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

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

New Deal 18-24											
New Deal 18-24											
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	19		65								
Retained*	0	0	12	18							
Planned learning completed	0	0	12	18							
Gained job	0	0	7	11							
Still in training	19	100	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

STRENGTHS

- effective strategies to keep learners on training programmes
- effective development of employability skills
- some well-structured off-the-job training
- particularly good learner support provided by work placements

WEAKNESSES

- poor retention, achievement and job outcome rates on New Deal 18-24
- no challenging targets agreed with learners

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- wider range of work placements for New Deal clients
- more effective jobsearch for New Deal clients
- better training qualifications for staff

69. There is a good range of effective strategies to keep learners on training programmes. Barriers to employment are significantly reduced during the training programme. Time spent in work placements gradually improves learners' timekeeping and attendance. Literacy and numeracy support is available at each training centre. Work experience motivates learners and clients to gain jobs. For example, one learner, whose hobby is cycling, works in a bicycle shop where he is required to assemble new models and undertake repairs. One learner was given anger management training to improve skills in dealing with customer complaints at work. Learners are placed on work placements with the greatest chance of providing sustainable employment. Many learners and clients are employed part time by their work-placement provider during the training programme. There is good access to additional social needs workers, drug counsellors, court mentors and resettlement workers, as well as practical advice on housing and debt. One training centre provides a breakfast and lunch club. Most training centres offer incentives to learners and clients who show consistent commitment to their training, including driving lessons and related theory training, and examination-based qualifications in computing, lift truck, and basic food hygiene.

70. Off-the-job training is well structured and planned effectively to ensure learners and clients have a comprehensive understanding of the background knowledge required for their qualifications. There is effective development of employability skills. Team building skills are developed during group training sessions. There is effective learning with colleagues through discussion and other tasks. Most training rooms are satisfactory. Some assessors do not have accreditation for their training skills. Learners and clients enjoy their off-the-job training. Employers and work-placement providers provide good in-house training. For example, one learner at the citizens advice bureau participates in their extensive employee training. Assessment is satisfactory and learners make steady progress. Assessors have relevant retail experience and respond promptly to external verification requests. Assessors give effective portfolio-building sessions. Portfolios of evidence are well structured.

71. Work-placement providers provide particularly good support for learners. They give

effective training in the workplace and are involved in planning training and assessment with assessors and learners. Learners gain experience in the tasks needed to develop the skills essential to their target qualifications. Work-based projects help learners to increase their knowledge about their workplace. Good working relationships are established between learners, assessors, learning advisers, and employers and work-placement providers. In some locations, a series of work placements are used as tasters to help learners decide on the most suitable work placement. Some employers continue to provide work placements to a series of learners.

72. There are poor retention, achievement and job outcomes rates on New Deal 18-24 training programmes. Only seven of the 65 clients who started training programmes in 2001-02 gained jobs. There is an insufficient range of adequate work-placements for clients, a weakness acknowledged by the training provider. Work placements were found by Jobcentre Plus under the previous contract. The management of work placements is now the responsibility of Nacro. There is insufficient jobsearch training early in the training programme. Jobsearch comprises mainly letter writing. Many clients do not complete the planned duration of their training programme or gain their qualifications. In 2001-02, only 12 of the 65 clients who started training programmes, stayed for the planned 26 weeks or achieved the awards agreed on their individual learning plans.

73. No challenging targets are agreed with learners. Most learners easily achieve the targets agreed. The only time bound targets shown on individual learning plans are the last date of planned training. Some employers are not given copies of individual learning plans. Initial assessment is thorough, but is not used effectively to develop individual learning plans. For example, additional learning needs are often identified, but how the relevant support will be provided is not clear. There is no focus on achieving NVQ units. There is infrequent sampling of completed units in portfolios. There is insufficient accreditation of NVQ units for learners and clients who leave the training programme early. Most progress reviews are thorough. Some records are poorly detailed and agree targets which are met easily by learners before the agreed completion time. Employers are not always invited to attend progress reviews. Some progress reviews are conducted in the presence of other staff. Many learners and employers are not given a copy of progress review records. The progress review system for clients is not co-ordinated effectively. Records clearly monitor the progress of clients' skills. Clients' progress is reviewed by subcontracted assessment training providers, jobsearch, New Deal personal advisers and work-placement officers. The final review of learners' experience is comprehensive.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	13	3

74. There are 13 learners on work-based learning programmes in sport and recreation. There are 11 learners working towards NVQs at level 2 and two learners working towards NVQs at level 3. During training, learners are able to work towards additional qualifications, including first aid, sports leaders' awards and basic food hygiene. Training is the responsibility of sports trainers who are either internal verifiers, or are working towards this qualification. One trainer, who is also an assessor at the Newcastle training centre, works with a sports outreach assistant and a football project officer. There are two trainers who are also assessors working at the Bolton training centre. All learners complete an initial assessment and induction, which includes the production of individual learning plans. Learners receive on-the-job training at work placements in local authority sports centres. Background knowledge is taught at the training centres in Newcastle and Bolton. Nacro also uses the local authority sports facilities for some off-the-job training sessions and its own summer activity programmes. Nacro markets its provision through regular contact with Connexions, the youth offending team, and schools.

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

Work-based learning for young people																	
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97		1995-96		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	3		47													
Retained*	0		18														
Successfully completed	0		8														
Still in learning	3		10														

*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 learner support
- good initial assessment
- well-planned training

WEAKNESSES

- low retention and achievement rates
- insufficient information on short-term targets for learners

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better communication with work-placement staff

75. Learner support is good, a strength acknowledged in the self-assessment report. It is a planned part of the induction programme as well as being incorporated into progress reviews held at four- to six-weekly intervals. The continuing needs and interests of learners are discussed during progress reviews. Learners who have additional personal and social problems receive extra pastoral support. Staff provide personal support on request. Extra help is given with accommodation, confidence building, drug and alcohol problems and probation issues. Additional support is provided for those who have problems with their training programmes, including literacy, numeracy and portfolio-building. Learner support is also good in the workplace. Issues raised by learners are dealt with quickly and effectively.

76. All learners complete a comprehensive initial assessment. Staff use the results of initial assessment effectively to produce individual learning plans, which take into account learners' past experience and present needs and career aims. Learners also complete an assessment for their need for additional support. Learners are able to add to their training programme through access to additional qualifications.

77. Training is planned well and effectively meets NVQ requirements and learners' needs. Training is good and provides sufficient teaching of relevant background knowledge. Training sessions develop learners' self-confidence and their understanding of the demands of the workplace. Trainers use a variety of activities according to the learning styles of the learners. Good task sheets and exercises are used for training. Aims and objectives are shared effectively with learners. Learners' progress is checked thoroughly during portfolio sessions. Effective lesson plans are used for all teaching sessions. In some sessions, there is insufficient differentiation in the way groups of learners are taught. Some training is too formal. The summer activity programme and work placements in the local community sports centres provide learners with valuable experience of working in the community, and help them to develop vocational, social and employability skills. Portfolio development is well-planned. Learners have a good understanding of the NVQ requirements.

78. The local authority sports centres are satisfactory for the provision of training and provide a wide range of on-the-job activities. The training centres at Bolton and Newcastle provide adequate facilities for the delivery of training. Staff are well qualified

and experienced in the provision of the training programmes. They have access to a good range of specialist training materials and facilities through partnerships with local authority sports centres.

79. There are poor retention and achievement rates. In 2001-02, 38 per cent of learners completed the training programme and 17 per cent gained a full NVQ. Fifty-five per cent of these learners are ex-offenders. Police checks are needed for most learners before they can start work placements. The outcomes of some of the checks affects the provision of work placements. Nacro provides learners with a place on training programmes and then, when appropriate, moves them to other training providers. Forty-one per cent of learners leave the training programme with positive destination outcomes, including employment, college, other training programmes, and further qualifications.

80. Individual learning plans are generated at induction and are held centrally. Learners do not have access to their individual learning plans. The review process takes account of the individual learning plans and sets targets for learners based on their individual needs and abilities. However, these targets are not easily accessible to learners as the review record is not kept in their portfolio. The forms used for assessment and the recording of progress are adequate. The assessment, verification and moderation procedures follow awarding body requirements.

81. Employers and work-placement providers are not given adequate information on the qualifications. Communication with work-placement providers is insufficient in terms of their involvement in the development of individual learning plans, progress reviews and the assessment of learners.

Good Practice

Learners' representatives chosen from the vocational areas attend fortnightly meetings at each training centre. At these meetings, learners are able to influence the training programme. They raise issues with the management team and then report back to their peers on actions agreed.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	67	3

82. There are 67 learners working towards NVQs at level 2 in early years care and education, or care. Most learners are expected to complete the full NVQ. Some learners are working towards completing some of the units of the NVQ. The number of units to be achieved is determined by an initial assessment, which measures the learners' individual basic skills level. In addition, a general assessment of their social skills is carried out. Learners' induction lasts a week, and they spend four weeks in a work placement. If their performance is satisfactory, their place on the training programme is confirmed. Learners attend their work placements for four days a week and off-the-job training for one day a week. Off-the-job training includes teaching and learning sessions covering the background knowledge for the NVQ. Learners also receive individual support and guidance, and help with arranging their portfolio of evidence. Learners receive help with literacy and numeracy, social skills and other vocational training, such as food hygiene, first aid and moving and handling courses. On-the-job training involves shadow working or observing, with qualified supervisors in private nurseries, day centres, nursery classes within schools, playgroups and residential care homes. Assessment is carried out by either Nacro staff or work-based assessors. Trainers and assessors visit the work placements frequently, to liaise with workplace supervisors, learners and other key staff. Jobsearch is offered to learners as they near completion of their training programmes or to early leavers as and when required.

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

Work-based learning for young people																	
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99								
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts			267													
Retained*			176														
Successfully completed			37														
Still in learning			67														

*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

- exceptional guidance and support for learners
- thorough monitoring of learners' progress in work placements
- good on-the-job training
- productive teamwork between trainers and workplace supervisors

WEAKNESSES

- poor recording of off-the-job training in some training centres
- poor range of learning resources
- some inappropriate qualification levels for learners
- poor achievement rate

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better strategies to encourage evaluation returns from employers
- further clarity on the responsibility for teaching background knowledge

83. Staff provide exceptional guidance and support for learners. More than 80 per cent of learners on the care training programmes have additional social and/or learning needs. These include lack of confidence, poor attendance, health problems, behavioural issues, communication problems, poor home environments and problems with motivation and management of behaviour. Most learners have low levels of prior achievement, literacy and numeracy skills. Trainers have a good understanding of learners' individual needs. Literacy and numeracy support is provided to meet individual learner's needs. Most off-the-job support is carried out on an individual basis. Learners are offered additional support sessions to meet their social needs. There are training programmes specifically designed to tackle these issues. There is good pastoral support. For example, accompanying learners to the doctors, and sorting out problems with the housing department. Outreach workers are used to support learners in their initial week on work placement. The settling-in process is reviewed, personal issues are examined and aspects of induction are discussed.

84. There is regular and frequent monitoring of learners' progress. The review system is well established. Learners review their progress from the last visit and plan appropriately for the next. There is effective assessment planning and feedback on performance. Learners fully understand their achievement and progress and are able to track this in their portfolios. Learners receive constant encouragement in their work placements and are included as part of the work teams. The monitoring visit details are recorded and

shared with the workplace supervisor to enable effective co-ordination of activities.

85. There is good on-the-job training. Work placements are good, with appropriately experienced, well-qualified staff. Learners observe good practice at work and are carefully guided through relevant tasks and activities. Workplace supervisors provide good support. They ensure that the programme of off-the-job training and background knowledge is linked to daily activities at work. They understand the needs of learners and work with them to overcome difficulties in numeracy and literacy or other factors that act as barriers to the development of practical skills at work. Learners participate in employers' training programmes and local initiatives provided by the early years childcare development partnerships or social services departments. Training courses include care practice certificates, child protection, managing children's behaviour and working with children with special needs.

86. There is productive teamwork between all staff involved in the provision of care and early years training programmes. This is co-ordinated well by Nacro training staff. There are effective working relationships between trainers, assessors, workplace supervisors and learners. Workplace supervisors receive good support from trainers. Trainers visit the workplace frequently, often weekly, to discuss relevant issues with workplace supervisors and learners and to carry out assessment. Trainers are available to receive phone calls and visits from learners or workplace supervisors between planned visits to the work placement. Trainers respond promptly and liaise with workplace supervisors to find solutions. Some workplace supervisors are also assessors. The training provider works with other workplace staff to become assessors.

87. In some training centres, there is poor recording of off-the-job training. There are inadequately detailed notes for lesson plans, insufficient relevant information, and poor clarity of aims and teaching methods. Schemes of work comprise only a list of topics. Records do not adequately detail what should take place in each training session. There is no plan showing when group work, individual work, film, videos or discussion will take place.

88. There is a poor range of learning resources. Only the training centre at Sandwell has a good range of textbooks, videos and written materials to support learners' understanding of the relevant background knowledge for their NVQs. Two training centres rely on the use of a single textbook. Learners' needs are wide ranging and a diverse range of materials and learning resources are not available to reflect their learning styles and needs.

89. The contract requires that learners assessed as below NVQ level 1 in literacy and/or numeracy, are placed on NVQ level 2. This is an inappropriate qualification level for some learners. Nacro has successfully rectified this issue in two training centres and now provides housekeeping and practical caring skills at foundation level. This is completed before the learner starts working towards an NVQ at level 2.

90. NVQ achievement rates are poor. Of these learners who started training

programmes in 2001-02, only 14 per cent achieved their NVQ. However, some learners working towards the care awards have completed NVQ units. Many learners complete short-course qualifications in vocationally relevant skills, such as first aid and food hygiene. They are also able to complete a basic computer literacy award and a driving ambitions project. All learners increase their self-confidence and self-esteem. Employers are sent questionnaires to evaluate the training programme. Many employers do not complete the form. Employers and workplace supervisors do not fully understand who is responsible for the teaching of background knowledge for the NVQ.

Visual & performing arts & media**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	17	3
New Deal 18-24	10	3

91. There are 17 learners on work-based learning programmes and 10 clients on New Deal 18-24 in visual and performing arts and media. Clients are on the full-time education and training option. Learners are working towards NVQs at levels 2 and 3 in graphic design. One learner is on an NVQ at level 2 in community media. At one training centre, learners work towards additional qualifications in manual handling, first aid and health and safety. All learners have access to a training programme in communication. Learners attend their training centres for vocational training throughout the week. They receive an induction and initial assessment which determines their attendance at basic skills sessions. Progress reviews take place in the training centre on a monthly basis. Some learners are on work placements with local print companies. Clients attend a jobsearch programme for one day each week. Training programmes last from six months to one year.

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

Work-based learning for young people																	
NVQ Training	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98		1996-97		1995-96		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts			101													
Retained*			48														
Successfully completed			26														
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

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

New Deal 18-24										
New Deal 18-24	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts			37						
Retained*			24	65						
Planned learning completed			14	38						
Gained job			8	22						
Still in training			10	27						

*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

STRENGTHS

- well-planned and effective training
- good individualised learning
- effective comprehensive support for learners
- good learning resources

WEAKNESSES

- poor achievement rates
- insufficient work placements

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more challenging and focused jobsearch for clients
- better progress reviews

92. Training is well-planned and effective. The design studios at each training centre provide good learning environments and learners work well on tasks. Learners develop a good range of skills in visual communication, from freehand observational drawing to digital imaging and video editing. Learners are involved early in the training programme in all stages of the design process, researching and generating design ideas, and seeing these through to final production. Trainers arrange visits to local museums and exhibitions to help learners develop their understanding of wider historical and cultural

contexts. Learners improve their understanding of local arts facilities and improve their confidence in making good use of these resources.

93. There is good individualised learning. A project-based approach enables learners to work independently. Tasks are closely matched to learners' skills, development needs and career aims. Projects require learners to follow professional working practices. Learners are able to explore and develop their own ideas. Learners produce good evidence for their portfolios. Learners fully understand their work. They explain the design rationales and technical processes they have adopted and they review their work using appropriate terminology. They have a good understanding of design principles and contemporary design practices. Learners at three training centres can progress on to working in a commercial print unit where they work in small teams and deal directly with customers. Working to an agreed brief, learners prepare designs, cost proposals, and oversee the final production process, often within tight time constraints.

94. There is effective comprehensive support for learners. Learners are given a thorough induction, which includes health and safety specifically related to the design studio working environment. In addition to the initial assessment, which identifies literacy and numeracy needs, a secondary assessment is carried out. This identifies the studio practice skills which need to be acquired during the first four weeks of training. New learners, who join the training programme throughout the year, are quickly integrated by pairing them with more experienced learners. At one training centre, an initial taster programme is provided for new starters. Trainers develop good working relationships with learners. Potential barriers to learning are identified early in the training programme. Learning activities cover the development of vocational skills and the further development of individual, personal and social skills.

95. There are good learning resources. Computers with industry standard graphic design packages are available at each training centre. Two training centres have well-equipped commercial print facilities, including digital pathway options. Another training centre has video and audio-editing facilities, and another has a photographic darkroom. Resources are used well. Some accommodation is cramped, and where specialist facilities are not located on the ground floor, or are situated through narrow corridors access is poor for people with restricted mobility. Learning materials are well presented, regularly updated and reflect contemporary design practice. Staff have good vocational qualifications. Some staff have not completed their assessment qualifications.

96. There are effective arrangements for learners' feedback. Learners' forums are held regularly and learners are asked to complete evaluations at the end of training sessions. Learners add their own written comments to the formal assessment. Internal verification procedures are satisfactory. At some training centres, new management structures have not been in place for sufficient time. Procedures for the observation of teaching and learning, regular team meetings and arrangements for the formal appraisal of staff have only recently been introduced. The sharing of good practice is not well established. However, staff involved in this area of learning show notable consistency in their working methods, despite being located at different training centres. Their practice is

informed by a high level of commitment to meeting the needs of the client group served by this organisation.

97. Achievement rates are poor. Of the 101 learners who started their training programmes in 2001-02, 53 left early, including 44 learners who left without gaining any qualifications or NVQ units. Currently, only 26 learners have completed their training programmes with 17 learners still in training. Slow progress in achievement of NVQs was acknowledged as a weakness in the self-assessment report. Unit accreditation is not carried out routinely. Opportunities to gain additional qualifications are not made widely available to learners. Measures are in place to improve learners' motivation, such as the public exhibition of work, teamworking activities, breakfast clubs, and rewards for individual improvements in punctuality and attendance. These have not yet impacted on achievement rates. The number of clients who complete their training and the number who gain jobs is low. Of the 37 clients who started training programmes in 2001-02, less than half have so far completed their planned learning, and less than a third moved into employment.

98. There are insufficient work placements. Some work placements do not provide appropriate work tasks to generate NVQ evidence. Workplace assessment is not adequate for some learners. Trainers do not make sufficiently frequent visits to learners on work placement, to carry out assessment or provide additional learning support. There are poor links between vocational training and the workplace. However, at three training centres, the commercial print units provide good work tasks for learners to gain good commercial experience in a real working environment.

99. Some progress reviews are not effective. At one training centre, there are weekly progress reviews which provide a clear indication of progress. At other training centres, progress reviews are not sufficiently detailed. They do not include specific targets. Comments are not adequately detailed. Some learners keep weekly logs of their activities, but these are not clearly related to the NVQ requirements. Some learners are not involved in reviewing their individual learning plans and are unaware of the outcomes of this process. The analysis of performance of groups of learners is not systematically carried out.

100. Jobsearch sessions take place on weekly basis. Learners are not sufficiently challenged by the tasks assigned to them. There do not progress beyond their current level of skills. Activities lack a specific vocational focus and are not matched adequately to learners' career aims.

Good Practice

At one training centre, learners' graphic design work is exhibited in the public gallery of a local museum. The work is presented to professional standards and fresh selections are made during the six-week period of the exhibition.

Foundation programmes**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	714	3
New Deal 18-24	171	3
Life Skills	355	2
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	228	4

101. There are 1,468 learners on foundation programmes. There are 355 learners on Life Skills training programmes. Most of the Life Skills training programmes last for 20 weeks and extensions are available if required. The Life Skills training programme aims to re-engage young people in learning and help them gain a job or take further training. Nacro also provides a range of other relevant training programmes for learners before they start Life Skills training. There are 714 learners working towards NVQs at level 1, in a range of occupations including joinery, motor vehicle, IT, amenity horticulture and graphic design. Training programmes are for approximately one year. In some areas, short occupational taster programmes are available for young people. The Skills Build programme in south Wales provides prevocational training for 18-24 year olds.

102. There are 399 clients following Jobcentre Plus programmes comprising 171 clients on New Deal 18-24 programmes and 228 clients on New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults programmes. These programmes aim to help clients gain jobs. Clients spend between two weeks and 12 months in training, depending on the programme they follow. Clients are following a variety of programmes including environment task force, full-time education and training options, the intensive activity period of New Deal (IAP), basic employability training (BET), New Deal innovation projects and New Deal for lone parents. BET is for 26 weeks and aims to improve employability, literacy, numeracy and oral communication as well as developing jobsearch skills.

103. Learners on Life Skills and work-based learning for young people training programmes are usually referred by Connexions. Most clients are referred by Jobcentre Plus. Some learners refer themselves. Most learners and clients have additional learning and social needs. All learners and clients are interviewed and complete an assessment of literacy and numeracy needs. A risk assessment is also completed. Most training takes place in training centres. Group size ranges from under five to over 20, dependent on the training programme or activity. Work placements form an integral part of the training for those working towards NVQs. Assessment is carried out in the workplace. Other learners have optional work tasters or longer work placements. The range of employers includes small garages, primary care trusts, hospitals, manufacturing and distribution organisations, shops, voluntary organisations and nurseries. Learners' progress is usually reviewed every four weeks. Nacro has an overall basic skills strategic plan and divisional action plans are in place.

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

Work-based learning for young people																	
NVQ Training																	
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99								
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts			2136														
Retained*			1112														
Successfully completed			396														
Still in learning			714														

*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																	
Life Skills																	
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts			2115														
Retained*			1293														
Successfully completed			938														
Still in learning			355														

*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

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

New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults												
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults												
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts					1354							
Retained*				973	72							
Planned learning completed				644	48							
Gained job				125	10							
Still in training				228	17							

*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

New Deal 18-24										
New Deal 18-24										
	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	97		944							
Retained*	0	0	482	51						
Planned learning completed	0	0	343	36						
Gained job	0	0	167	18						
Still in training	97	100	74	8						

*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

STRENGTHS

- particularly effective links with other organisations
- excellent pastoral support
- good retention rates
- flexible training programmes to meet individual needs
- wide range of additional qualifications
- good achievement by learners on Life Skills training programmes

WEAKNESSES

- poorly planned NVQ assessment in some training centres
- insufficient use of targets in individual learning plans and progress reviews
- some poor training accommodation
- poor range of teaching methods
- poor achievement of NVQ at level 1 on work-based learning programmes for young people
- poor job outcomes on Jobcentre Plus training programmes

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better handouts
- more effective links between literacy and numeracy and vocational areas
- better sharing of good practice between training centres and divisions

104. There are particularly effective links with other organisations. For example, Nacro

works in partnership with the local authority and a national conservation agency to plan activities for the environment task force option of the New Deal. In Wales, Nacro works effectively with another national charity to provide social and outdoor activities for learners. In Liverpool, a New Deal innovation project enables clients to train in ICT, which is an area of local skills shortage. Good links exist with the court services which enable effective transition into training programmes. Staff work well with other agencies for young offenders on intensive support and supervision programmes. There are excellent links with local schools and youth services to tackle the needs of disaffected and excluded learners. Effective links with employers provide supportive work placements. There is excellent use of work placements in the voluntary sector. However, not all learners have a work placement and some are unsuitable. In some work placements there is a poor understanding of equal opportunities and some learners carry out tasks for which they do not have the relevant skills.

105. All learners and clients receive excellent pastoral support. There are good working relationships between staff and learners and clients. Peer support is encouraged by staff to help clients and learners develop social and life skills. Staff respond promptly to issues and provide a range of support. Critical issues, such as homelessness, are tackled effectively and a range of resources and contacts are used to find practical solutions. Staff accompany learners and clients to vital appointments, such as court appearances and interviews. There is good identification of practical support needs. There is good use of the New Deal discretionary fund in some areas. For example, one client was able to take up an offer of employment which required transport, after staff helped him to access support for his road tax and motor vehicle licence. Breakfast clubs encourage punctuality and regular attendance.

106. There are good retention rates on most foundation programmes. Many learners who leave the training programmes at times of personal crisis return at a later date. In 2001-02, 61 per cent of Life Skills learners, 51 per cent of young people on New Deal programmes and 52 per cent of young people on work-based learning programmes stayed on their training programmes. For the same year, 72 per cent of adults completed their training programmes. There are many regional variations in these figures, for example in 2001-02 in Tees Valley the retention rate on the adult training programme was 82 per cent. There is good use of incentives to increase participation and retention rates.

107. Nacro provides flexible training programmes designed to meet learners' individual needs. Training programmes frequently include a range of activities to improve confidence and social skills, such as drama, outings, writing and producing music. Vocational tasters and work tasters are widely used to build skills and help with career choices. Work-placements are matched well to learners' needs and interests. Many Life Skills learners complete a work taster or work placement. Learners have access to a wide range of qualifications. Driving theory and licence programmes are used successfully to motivate learners. Good strategies are in place to improve achievement through the use of relevant short courses. These include manual handling, basic computer awards, youth awards, communications courses, first aid, rope access

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programmes, community sports awards and outdoor pursuits awards. Extensive use is made of in-house certificates to effectively acknowledge less formal achievements which are major milestones for some learners, for example, taking up a new sport and regular attendance.

108. Achievement rates are good on the Life Skills training programmes. In 2001-02, 68 per cent of learners achieved a successful outcome. Forty-four per cent of these learners progressed into other training programmes, further education or gained jobs. The remaining 24 per cent of learners achieved a short, nationally recognised qualification or relevant units. Achievement is acknowledged and celebrated. Staff make good use of alternative ways of recording achievement, such as, using photographs and displays of learners' art work. In some training centres, staff use art and computer graphics effectively as a means of engaging and enabling achievement for young people with very low levels of literacy. Many training centres have presentation events.

109. In some training centres, NVQ assessment is poorly planned. On some adult training programmes, there is insufficient assessment and in one training centre, young people have been on NVQ programmes at level 1 for up to four months without any assessment being carried out. There is delayed assessment for learners on graphics training programmes. Some files of work have not been assessed. Competencies achieved are not always clearly recorded. For many learners, assessment is left until late in the training programme. There is insufficient use of formative assessment. However, one assessment of a catering learner with additional learning and social needs, was well planned, assessed appropriately and the learner clearly understood what she needed to achieve. There is insufficient sharing of assessment good practice.

110. There is insufficient use of targets in individual learning plans and progress reviews. Many action points are not adequately specific. Many learners do not understand how to work towards achieving targets. Progress reviews are regular but do not set or record achievement of short-term goals. Many individual learning plans contain standardised wording. Targets for learning in the workplace are rarely recorded or monitored. Information collected during initial assessment is not used effectively to plan the training. Initial assessment is poor for learners who speak English as an additional language. Although learners' literacy and numeracy needs are identified, language needs are not identified and individual learning plans do not set targets for language development. Some individual learning plans are incomplete, with support needs and arrangements not recorded fully. However, in some areas, there is good use of milestones and short-term targets, particularly on Life Skills training programmes. For example, learners are set milestones relating to behaviour, which aim to reduce swearing, take small steps to control anger, and improve timekeeping. Some learners have appropriate tasks set, such as finding out about a particular career or to take part in a sporting activity. In some areas, there is good use of learning diaries and support logs. Nationally Nacro has introduced a new format for individual learning plans. These have recently been implemented. In some areas, staff are unclear of how to use the individual learning plans or of how to plan training for literacy and numeracy

development.

111. Some training centres are poor. Some training rooms are inappropriate for group work. In one training centre, a large training room is used to teach two subject areas. Some accommodation is cramped, poorly lit, and poorly ventilated. There is insufficient space for confidential interviews at some training centres. Some training centres do not have adequate toilet facilities. Noise from some training can affect other learning sessions. Some training centres have poor furnishing and décor. Some training centres are not sufficiently clean. In some areas, Nacro is in the process of moving into new premises to remedy the weaknesses in accommodation.

112. Training sessions in occupational skills, such as joinery, make effective use of demonstration and coaching. However, this good practice is not shared effectively across all foundation programmes and training centres. Trainers use a poor range of teaching methods. In some areas, there are ineffective links between literacy and numeracy and other areas of training. Many training sessions are not satisfactory. Staff do not use a good range of teaching techniques. Many trainers rely on talking to learners and writing on the board as the main method of teaching. Learners do not take part in discussions and copy text from the board. Questioning techniques are poor. For example, some trainers ask questions and, before learners can respond, provide the answer. They use writing as the main method of consolidating learning and checking understanding. This does not effectively engage learners, many of whom learn more effectively through practical activities. Trainers rely on worksheets and other paper-based materials. Some of these materials are not suitable for learners' abilities. Although generally satisfactory, in some areas, photocopied worksheets are poorly produced. For example, some sheets are not suitable for learners with poor literacy skills. Some training sessions are not planned adequately. Lesson plans are not always used. There are poor links between practical and theory sessions. Some trainers have poor group management and discipline skills.

113. There is poor achievement of NVQs at level 1 on work-based learning programmes for young people. In 2001-02, 19 per cent of learners have successfully completed their NVQ and 33 per cent are still in learning. However, 49 per cent of learners achieved an additional short qualification or NVQ units. Good use is made of NVQ unit accreditation for learners who do not complete the full training programme.

114. Nationally, there are poor job outcomes on Jobcentre Plus training programmes. Many clients face barriers to employment. In 2001-02, 18 per cent of young people on New Deal programmes gained jobs. For adult training programmes for the same period, only 9 per cent gained jobs. Regional variations exist. For example, in Sandwell and Shropshire, 39 per cent of adult clients on BET gained jobs, a higher rate than the Jobcentre Plus contract requirements of 25 per cent. Some areas use effective innovative projects to increase employment opportunities. For example, in Liverpool, a pre-recruitment programme with Jobcentre Plus for New Deal 18-24 clients, resulted in 76 per cent of them gaining jobs.

Good Practice

Nacro has designed a three-day in-house programme called 'Getting Connected'. It enables trainers to work with small and large groups of learners. The accompanying handouts are well-presented and produced, and reflect the diverse groups of learners. Trainers use the programme to develop learners' oral communication skills, team building and social skills. Learners' self-esteem, confidence and communication skills greatly improve.