

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Burleigh College

05 August 2002



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

## Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

## Inadequate provision

A provider's provision will normally be deemed to be less than adequate where

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

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. The overall judgement as to whether the provision is adequate or inadequate is included in the summary section of the inspection report.



## SUMMARY

### The provider

Burleigh College (trading name of Martinex Limited) is a small, privately owned training organisation based in Hammersmith, West London. Since 2001, the company has become increasingly involved in operating a contract for Jobcentre Plus for basic employability training for New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults. Currently, there are 48 clients. Burleigh College also holds a small contract with the local Learning and Skills Council for national vocational qualification (NVQ) training in administration and customer service. There are only six clients on this programme, and it was not inspected.

### Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training on the basic employability programmes for New Deal 25+ and for work-based learning for adults is unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of Burleigh College are satisfactory. The arrangements to ensure equality of opportunity are good, but quality assurance is unsatisfactory.

### GRADES

| Leadership and management | 3 |
|---------------------------|---|
| Contributory grades:      |   |
| Equality of opportunity   | 2 |
| Quality assurance         | 4 |

| Foundation programmes                           | 4 |
|---|---|
| Contributory grades:                            |   |
| New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults | 4 |

### KEY STRENGTHS

- good communication within the college
- effective policies and procedures to support equality of opportunity
- good individual support for clients

### **KEY WEAKNESSES**

- inadequate teaching for some clients
- weak planning, monitoring and assessment of learners' progress
- insufficient work placements
- unsystematic approach to quality assurance

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- further develop new systems to support teaching
- better staff training
- better milestones and success criteria
- further develop the management information system

## THE INSPECTION

1. Three inspectors spent a total of 12 days at Burleigh College in August 2002. Inspectors had previously evaluated the college's self-assessment report and reviewed data. They carried out 20 interviews with learners and nine with staff. They observed and graded six learning sessions. Inspectors visited six work placements and interviewed six employers/supervisors. They examined a range of documents including 32 individual learning plans and 23 portfolios of evidence. The inspection did not include Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded learners, but inspectors examined their portfolios and individual learning plans and this evidence contributed to the judgements on leadership and management. Inspectors examined college plans, policies, procedures and other relevant documents.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

|                       | Grade 1  | Grade 2  | Grade 3  | Grade 4  | Grade 5  | Grade 6  | Grade 7  | Total    |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Foundation programmes | 0        | 0        | 2        | 1        | 2        | 1        | 0        | 6        |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>6</b> |

## THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

### Context

2. Burleigh College was established in 1933 in Manchester. It moved to London in 1988 and for the past 12 years it has been based in Hammersmith, West London. It is a small private training company, owned and managed by two working directors. The company has six additional staff including an administrator, and regularly employs a consultant to work across the range of its activities. Until recently, Burleigh College offered business administration and information technology (IT) training for adults. However, over the past year, the company has undertaken a significant change in its contracting arrangements and currently receives 85 per cent of its funding from Jobcentre Plus. Through this contract, it offers basic employability training (BET) for New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults. There are currently 48 clients and of these, 17 are New Deal 25+ clients and 31 are on work-based learning for adults. There are also six young people in administration and customer service who are funded by Central London LSC. Burleigh College has training and administrative premises in the town centre of Hammersmith. Burleigh College was accredited with the Investors in People Standard, a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people, in March 2000 and was reaccredited in 2001.

3. The largest employment sector in Hammersmith and Fulham is retailing and professional and business services. Other large employers are the high technological industries and public services. In April 2002, the unemployment rate in Hammersmith and Fulham was 3.9 per cent compared with 3.6 per cent for London and 3.1 per cent nationally. Eighteen per cent of unemployed claimants in Hammersmith and Fulham had been unemployed for over two years, compared with 10.9 per cent nationally. Figures from the basic skills agency suggest that in some wards, approximately 21 per cent of the adult population have very poor literacy and numeracy skills. The 1991 census shows that the proportion of people from minority ethnic groups in Hammersmith and Fulham is 17.5 per cent, compared with 6.2 per cent nationally. In 2001, the proportion of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 51 per cent, compared with a national average of 47.9 per cent.

### **New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults**

4. Forty-three per cent of learners have completed the training programme since it was started last year. Some learners gain additional qualifications and in the current year, the achievement of IT qualifications is good. The learners' portfolios of work are good and indicate some effective development of study skills. Staff offer good support for learners, who become more confident and motivated as they progress through their training programme. The teaching of learners who speak English as an additional language (ESOL) is inadequate and this has a significant impact on the progress and achievements of a significant number of learners. Staff are insufficiently trained and there is inadequate communication within the organisation. Individual learning plans do not show specific targets and they are not regularly updated. There are insufficient work placements to meet the interests and aims of learners.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

5. Burleigh College is managed by two directors. In 2001, the organisation gained a number of Jobcentre Plus contracts for work-based learning for adults and New Deal 25+. The organisation offers BET with basic skills and ESOL for adults. It also offers the intensive activity period (IAP), short intensive basic skills training, and IT. In addition, the college offers a small business administration NVQ programme which is funded by the LSC.

6. The directors develop the strategic direction of the college which includes the setting of performance targets. There are staff induction and appraisal systems in place. Burleigh College has a range of policies and procedures for administration, finance, human resources, audit procedures, equality of opportunity and quality assurance and they are available to staff. Procedures covering the main training processes are also available. The two owners who are supported by a manager, administration staff, trainers and assessors, share responsibility for contractual matters and the organisation's key functions. A team of staff offer internal verification, assessment, training and monitoring of the training programmes.

### STRENGTHS

- good communication within the college
- thorough staff appraisal process
- good policies and procedures for equality of opportunity
- positive staff role models for clients
- good arrangements for collecting clients' feedback
- good internal verification processes

### WEAKNESSES

- weak target-setting for improvements
- no reinforcement of equality of opportunity
- unsystematic approach to quality assurance
- inadequate process for observing training

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- further develop the management information system
- better monitoring of equal opportunities at work
- more detailed questionnaire about teaching
- better milestones and success criteria

7. The directors' management style is open and supportive. The directors are very committed to the aims of the college and this is transmitted to staff and learners. Staff roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear. Many staff have taken on new roles as a result of recent changes in the learning programmes. Staff are fully involved in the business planning process and are aware of the challenges facing the college. An informal and informative newsletter for staff and clients is circulated every three months. Trainers meet every morning to discuss matters arising from the previous day. Staff formally meet for one hour every month. The meetings follow a fixed agenda which includes health and safety, equal opportunities, assessment, and learners' progress. However, the minutes are brief and focus on information rather than action-planning. The college has good links with a wide range of external agencies including local and national voluntary organisations, advice and guidance groups, the local LSC, professional bodies and employer networks. There are annual events for employers who provide work placements for clients. However, once clients are on a work placement, the college's contact with employers is limited and informal.

8. There is a well-established annual appraisal system for staff. Prior to an appraisal, the appraiser and the member of staff complete a well-designed pre-meeting proforma. The outcome of the review is recorded and individual learning plans are updated. While the planning of staff training is mostly good, personal goals and targets are often unclear. There is an annual budget for staff training. Most staff attend some external training courses during the year, including the directors. Whole day training events provide an opportunity for colleagues to update each other on matters such as harassment. However, there are few records or follow up of topics covered.

9. The college is clearly committed to the development of the company, although some changes needed for new contracts are not fully implemented as yet. The strategic and business plans set a clear direction, but there is slow progress in developing the skills of staff to meet the needs of the new client group. The change of focus from what was largely an IT training organisation, to one which supports clients into jobs, most with literacy and numeracy or ESOL needs, has required radical changes. Although clients benefit from working with trainers who used to be learners at the college, few staff have a relevant teaching qualification. Trainers who are responsible for leading teams or teaching literacy, numeracy or ESOL, have limited experience of the clients' needs and have received very limited training. However, the teaching of IT is generally good and clients are encouraged to take additional qualifications. Past retention and achievement rates were good, and 35 of the original 44 learners for the current year are still in learning and one has gained a job. There are insufficient work placements to meet the needs of the current clients. The college has identified this problem and is dealing with it. A marketing strategy is being developed, but there is a very limited range of marketing materials.

10. The college sets no targets other than those for contractual purposes. There is a lack of understanding of the need to set measurable performance standards and the expectation is that the college will maintain or improve its standards by reacting to problems when they arise. Individual plans for staff and learners do not contain clear

and specific targets.

11. The management information system is limited. The college makes accurate claims to the funding agencies and there is a spreadsheet showing learners' details and individual paper records for each learner. However, there is no monitoring system for learners. Although staff constantly discuss the clients' progress, the college is not able to maintain an objective overview of progress or its effectiveness. For example, reviews are often missed and clients' progress is not monitored. The college produces some reports for managers such as equal opportunities and leavers' analysis. While these are useful, there is little evidence of resulting action. There has been no consideration given to the types of reports which would enable staff to manage the training process more effectively.

**Equality of opportunity****Contributory grade 2**

12. Burleigh College's equal opportunities policy and code of practice are clear and up to date. There is reference to recent legislation on disability discrimination and human rights and relates to employees as well as clients. The most recent review of the policy and code of practice was in September 2001. The customer complaints and care policy is incorporated in to the quality assurance manual. Equal opportunities and other information is circulated and included in the staff handbook, or discussed at staff meetings. Equal opportunities is a standing agenda item at staff meetings. The equal opportunities policy is updated at least once a year and more frequently if needed. There are data on gender, ethnicity and disability. Information is shared with staff who are actively involved in the collection and presentation of the data. Analysis of the data are informal and very few are produced in a report format. The college has statements about bullying, harassment and unacceptable behaviour and clients and staff are made aware of them at induction. Clients are aware of the complaints procedure, but in the past year, there have been no serious incidents or complaints from learners.

13. There is a well-balanced ethnic and cultural mix of staff. Some of the staff were previously at the college as clients. Many of the clients are refugees and have a range of difficulties and barriers to learning and employment. Staff are able to identify the clients' difficulties and offer good practical support or refer them to appropriate agencies for help. The directors have good relationships with local voluntary organisations and support groups. One director is actively involved in discussions and working groups to enable the identification of transferable skills for refugees in the West London area. This group has produced a useful report, which makes recommendations to help identify and deal with the needs of refugees who have professional qualifications and skills. A directory which lists organisations which can endorse professional qualifications in the United Kingdom accompanies the report. The guidance aids the identification of appropriate placements for ESOL clients who have a professional background.

14. Clients are given useful information about Burleigh College's equal opportunity policy and procedures, but their understanding is not continually checked throughout the training programme. Progress reviews and visits by staff while the client is at work, does not include the monitoring of harassment or bullying problems. There are few formal learning sessions to collectively discuss equal opportunities. A lot of informal interaction is evident and learners have gained from the culturally mixed environment. In BET, some of the training materials are not appropriate to the client group.

15. Burleigh College has a policy and procedures which state that the equal opportunities policies of work-placement employers are monitored and reviewed on work-placement visits and that advice and assistance is offered to employers who do not have their own policies. Burleigh College has ensured that those organisations who do not have a policy are helped to produce one. However, the work-placement files do not always contain copies of employers' equal opportunities policies. The systems to check whether the clients' experience on work placement is comparable to that which is offered by Burleigh College, are not systematically applied.

## Quality assurance

## Contributory grade 4

16. Burleigh College has good arrangements for collecting and analysing clients' feedback. Most feedback is collected on a daily basis or through regular group sessions with the directors. When problems arise, they are dealt with speedily and sensitively. Learners are also required to complete a questionnaire at three-monthly intervals. The questions enable learners to identify their likes and concerns, but the questions about teaching do not encourage a critical analysis. The questionnaires are reviewed and then analysed to identify annual trends. After formal training sessions and when clients leave, additional information is collected. However, there is no procedure for ensuring that clients are told about actions that result from the analysis. Internal verification systems are effective. Although this applies mainly to NVQ work which is diminishing, some of the IT courses are subject to the same processes. Assessors and internal verifiers understand their roles and the sampling of assessments is effectively planned. Assessors are regularly observed and assessment practice is mostly good. External verifier reports are favourable and the college has reacted positively to concerns raised.

17. Burleigh College's approach to quality assurance is unsystematic. There is a quality assurance policy, a wide range of associated procedures and other documents. However, many of the documents contain broad statements and are not clear. In particular, it is not clear how the learning process will be monitored. Commitments to undertake audits are not linked to a schedule of activities and most of the monitoring activities take place informally. All staff sign a declaration each year to state that they agree to abide by the contents of the quality assurance manual. However, staff do not understand the system or how it should work. The self-assessment process is well established. The college has produced a report for the past four years. The development plan is thorough and is monitored, but it lacks milestones and measurable outcomes. The self-assessment report which was produced for the inspection was insufficiently critical. Few strengths or weaknesses relate to the effectiveness of the training process. The college over estimated some strengths and were not aware of significant weaknesses. The system has failed to control the introduction of revised documents, while others are still in use. In particular, it has not been effective in dealing with weaknesses in ESOL training and in improving learners' outcomes.

18. The system used for monitoring the standard of training is ineffective. Trainers regularly observe each other teaching and everyone has received in-house training. However, the feedback is very general and there is little mention of the quality of learning that takes place. There are no grades awarded. Other observation activities include interviews with clients which are more constructive.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Foundation programmes

Grade 4

| Programmes inspected                            | Number of learners | Contributory grade |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults | 48                 | 4                  |

19. Burleigh College offers BET as part of its foundation programme. BET lasts for up to 26 weeks and is aimed at learners who experience serious barriers to employment, including poor basic skills and poor written and spoken English. Seventy per cent of the clients speak English as an additional language and many come from local refugee communities. Some clients have professional qualifications from their country of origin, while others have little education. The courses include basic skills, and ESOL at pre-entry and entry level 1 and 2. Training is largely classroom based and includes literacy, numeracy and language skills, IT training, jobsearch, confidence building and the development of personal skills. Clients are referred by advisers at Jobcentre Plus. Currently there are 48 clients registered on BET, 17 are New Deal 25+ clients and 31 are on the work-based learning for adults programme. Burleigh College's staff interview all applicants before they start their training and carry out an initial assessment. Training starts with an induction, during which an individual learning plan and action plan are drawn up and agreed with clients. Induction also includes information about health and safety, equal opportunities and other college policies.

The following table shows 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.     | % |
| Number of starts                                | 44      |    | 157     |    |         |   |           |   |         |   |
| Retained*                                       | 0       | 0  | 109     | 69 |         |   |           |   |         |   |
| Planned learning completed                      | 0       | 0  | 67      | 43 |         |   |           |   |         |   |
| Gained job                                      | 1       | 2  | 25      | 16 |         |   |           |   |         |   |
| Still in training                               | 35      | 80 | 13      | 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

- effective individual support for learners
- good portfolios of work

## **WEAKNESSES**

- inadequate teaching for some clients
- weak planning, monitoring and assessment of learners' progress
- insufficient work placements

## **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- further develop new systems to support the quality of teaching
- more appropriate training for staff
- further develop the organisation of the training programme

20. Programme outcomes mostly meet the contract requirements. In 2001-02, 17 per cent of the 157 clients who started on New Deal 25+ and work-based programmes, gained a job, while a further 8 per cent are still in training. In the current year, 20 per cent of clients have left the programme and only 4 per cent have gained a job. Burleigh College offers a range of additional qualifications. In the current year, 20 clients achieved an introductory computer course and five clients achieved an examination-based qualification in IT. Over the past two years, 21 of the 24 clients entered for ESOL examinations passed, four at the basic level, 13 at elementary level and four at intermediate level. Four clients have gained a food safety certificate. The achievements of clients are celebrated and the college's quarterly newsletter includes success stories. The achievement levels of many clients are inconsistent. Some are insufficiently challenged, while for others the activities are too difficult and do not meet their individual learning needs. Targets are not sufficiently challenging and clients are not aware of their goals.

21. The standard of work in clients' portfolios is good. Portfolios are well organised and carefully presented. Clients are developing good study skills as part of this process. Work is marked and although some comments are not sufficiently detailed, successes are identified and used to build confidence. Portfolios contain a good range of worksheets although some are not at an appropriate level.

22. Staff give effective pastoral support and counselling to individual clients. Staff are very aware of the barriers that many of the clients face and they are responsive to the specific needs of clients. Clients report that the supportive environment at the college helps them to develop confidence, self-esteem and motivation. Staff spend extra time with clients who have personal problems and additional learning needs. Some staff speak a number of languages and offer invaluable bilingual support. Some clients have progressed into employment within Burleigh College and are good role models. All

clients attend an induction. There are well-established links with a range of external agencies, support groups and employers. These strengths were identified in the self-assessment report.

23. There is inadequate teaching for ESOL clients. Currently, English is an additional language for approximately 70 per cent of clients across the two programmes. Clients have a diverse range of needs and many are asylum seekers and refugees. The organisation of the options within the overall programme does not allow for the growing number of clients with few English language skills. Course and lesson planning is at an early stage of development and does not meet the needs of what is a relatively new client group for the college. Tutors do not plan activities at different levels to meet the diverse needs of their group. The range of teaching methods is limited and tutors pay insufficient attention to language development. There is a heavy reliance on worksheets and clients have few opportunities to practice the communicative language needed to interact, and gain or maintain employment. Although staff have started to undertake training to support the development of appropriate teaching skills for this client group, currently they are not adequately qualified or experienced. There is some good teaching in computer courses. They are well organised and include clear learning objectives. Clients are motivated, engaged and aware of individual targets and goals. Teaching for the relatively small number of clients who do not have language learning needs is satisfactory.

24. The planning, monitoring and assessment of clients' progress is weak, but this was not identified in the self-assessment report. Initial assessment is poor and few diagnostic assessments for ESOL clients are used. Individual learning plans do not adequately identify learning needs or clear objectives and clients are not set specific short-term targets. There is little checking of clients' understanding in training sessions. There is little evaluation of individual lessons and little updating of clients' progress. Progress reviews are irregular, too general and clients are unable to read some of the staffs' comments. There is no analysis of prior achievements, aims and individual learning needs.

25. Resources are adequate and the ratio of clients to tutors is good. Classrooms are welcoming learning environments and there are some good teaching materials including course books, dictionaries, games and tapes. However, there are also some inappropriate materials.

26. Currently, there are insufficient work placements. At the time of inspection, there are only four clients in three work placements. They offer very good on-the-job training, but this is largely due to the commitment of the employers. Arrangements with employers are not sufficiently formalised and are dependent on good personal relationships between staff. There is little formal input by Burleigh College staff into the on-the-job training while clients are on work placement. Clients are not clear about what work placements are available and when.