

INSPECTION REPORT

Ethnic Minority Business Services

15 July 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

Oxfordshire Ethnic Minorities Enterprise Developments Limited, trading as Ethnic Minority Business Services, is a private training provider based in Oxford. There are 39 clients funded by Jobcentre Plus for work-based learning for adults. Ten are working towards information technology qualifications as part of longer occupational training. Nineteen are following foundation programmes in basic employability training. The number of clients following longer occupational training programmes in sewing and in crèche work were too few to inspect separately. Ethnic Minority Business Services also has a franchise agreement with a local college for training, funded by the local Learning and Skills Council and has learndirect centre status. Learning on these programmes was outside the scope of this inspection.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training in information and communications technology is satisfactory, as is that in foundation. The quality of leadership and management of the company are satisfactory. Its approach to equal opportunities is good, but quality assurance is unsatisfactory.

GRADES

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

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

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	3

ETHNIC MINORITY BUSINESS SERVICES

KEY STRENGTHS

- strong support for clients
- good training opportunities provided for under-represented groups

KEY WEAKNESSES

- poor planning of individual learning
- inadequate quality assurance of learning

THE INSPECTION

1. A team of three inspectors spent a total of 12 days at Ethnic Minority Business Services (EMBS) in July 2002. They interviewed 26 learners and visited the company's premises in Oxford and Banbury. They carried out 28 interviews with members of staff and observed and graded seven training sessions. They examined a range of documents, including 12 learners' portfolios of evidence, 32 individual learning plans, learners' records, the company's plans, policies and procedures, promotional literature and awarding bodies' reports. Inspectors also examined the company's most recent self-assessment report and development plan, which was published in April 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Information & communications technology	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
Foundation programmes	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	4
Total	0	1	3	3	0	0	0	7

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. EMBS is a private training provider, established in 1988 to provide business counselling and employment training to members of minority ethnic groups in Oxfordshire. Its main premises are in Oxford. It occupies training rooms in one building and has a crèche and administration offices in two other buildings nearby. It also has smaller training and administration facilities in Banbury. There are 12 members of staff. There is a manager and a board of directors. There are 39 clients funded by Jobcentre Plus for work-based learning for adults. Ten are working towards information technology (IT) qualifications as part of longer occupational training (LOT). Nineteen are following foundation programmes focused on English language, sewing or information communications technology (ICT) as part of basic employability training (BET). The number of clients following LOT in sewing and in crèche work were too few to inspect. All training takes place at EMBS's training centres. EMBS also has a franchise agreement with a local college for local Learning and Skills Council (LSC)-funded training, and has learndirect centre status. Learning on these programmes was outside the scope of this inspection.

3. Most Jobcentre Plus clients attend training in Oxford. In April 2002, the unemployment rate in Oxford was 1.6 per cent, compared with a national rate of 3.1 per cent. Unemployment in Oxford among people from non-white minority ethnic groups is almost double that of white people. Members of minority ethnic groups make up 9.2 per cent of residents in Oxford, compared with a national figure of 6.2 per cent, according to 1991 census figures. In 2001, the proportion of school leavers attaining five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 41 per cent, compared with a national average of 47.9 per cent. Service industries play a larger role and manufacturing a smaller role in the local economy than in England as a whole.

New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults

4. Achievement rates on ICT programmes are good, and satisfactory on foundation programmes. During the period April 2001 to March 2002, 72 per cent of clients on ICT programmes completed their planned learning. Sixty per cent of clients on foundation programmes completed all the targets in their individual learning plans, while a further 10 per cent are still in learning. During the current year, many clients have made good progress. A substantial proportion of clients working towards sewing qualifications or following ICT programmes are close to completion. Clients are proud of their achievements. The rate of progression into jobs during 2001-02 on all programmes was below the targets EMBS agreed with Jobcentre Plus.

5. Clients receive good support from EMBS's staff. This helps their motivation, confidence and self-esteem. They value this support highly. The quality of vocational skills training in sewing is good, and satisfactory or better in ICT. Trainers are knowledgeable and make effective use of the good resources available to help them teach. Planning to meet clients' individual learning needs is poor. Initial assessment is unsatisfactory. Clients often start programmes without having a thorough initial assessment of their knowledge, skills or aptitude. Action plans for clients' learning are weak. The targets they contain are usually too general and lack clear timescales for completion. EMBS's reviews of clients' progress are usually brief and superficial. Many clients on foundation programmes speak English as an additional language, and their language needs are often poorly met.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

6. The manager of EMBS is directly responsible to a board of directors drawn from people with links to organisations in the area, including the local authority. Most are members of minority ethnic groups. The management committee meets approximately every two months. Four tutors, a development officer who is based at the Banbury centre, and the assistant manager, report to the manager. The assistant manager is responsible for liaison with Jobcentre Plus and other funding agencies. She also acts as course manager and liaises with external verifiers and awarding bodies. In addition, she manages three administrative staff and the crèche supervisor, who in turn supervises two crèche workers. EMBS has an equal opportunities policy. The manager has overall responsibility for equal opportunities and quality assurance. There is a quality assurance policy, which outlines the company's quality assurance objectives. EMBS meets the requirements of ISO9001, an international quality assurance standard, for its training administration system and for provision of training. The company achieved the Investors in People Standard in 1998 a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people and was re-accredited in June 2002.

STRENGTHS

- clear strategy for development of training provision
- close links with local community groups and other agencies
- good training opportunities for under-represented groups

WEAKNESSES

- weak target-setting and monitoring
- inadequate quality assurance of learning
- inadequate use of feedback to evaluate and improve training

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better use of meetings for performance monitoring and sharing good practice
- more availability and use of management information
- more inclusive approach to self-assessment

7. EMBS has a clear strategy for the development of training provision. It has a well-defined aims, which focus on providing opportunities for minority ethnic groups and others disadvantaged in the labour market. The company has grown rapidly recently, while maintaining its focus on this client group. It is committed to widening participation and is successful in gaining additional sources of funding to provide further training opportunities for Jobcentre Plus clients and for others not eligible for Jobcentre Plus programmes. Directors of EMBS act as an advisory board and are experienced and

appropriately supportive of the manager and staff. They are clear about their role in supporting strategic development. They provide constructive direction for the manager and act as a moderating body when deciding future development. Staff are fully aware of the company's objectives and support its values. Seven staff are former clients of EMBS, reflecting the company's commitment to increasing employment opportunities.

8. There are close links between EMBS and individual staff who work for local community groups and other agencies. EMBS undertakes outreach work in Oxford and Banbury to raise awareness of its work among those people it is aiming to recruit. It is particularly effective in promoting opportunities for women in this way, leading to an increase in the number of female clients. Staff represent a range of communities and promote training opportunities within them. Many directors have minority ethnic backgrounds and have close links with their local cultural and business communities. Strong and developing links have been made with Jobcentre Plus. Managers visit local jobcentres regularly to promote training opportunities. Good links have been made with local businesses. For example, there were discussions with a local supermarket about difficulties caused by the proximity of its loading bay to EMBS' training centre. These discussions have resulted in a closer understanding of the work of EMBS. Training events have been held in the supermarket's training room and the supermarket manager now contributes to jobsearch training.

9. There is inadequate target-setting and monitoring. The current business plan sets targets for achievement of qualifications and jobs, but does not specify to which client groups these refer. For example, the target for clients gaining jobs is less than the performance achieved in 2001-02, but it is not clear whether this target includes Jobcentre Plus clients. Although EMBS records some information on achievement of qualifications and jobs on spreadsheets, staff do not routinely receive this information. Data are used to monitor monthly performance against the Jobcentre Plus contract targets, but not to identify trends in the retention and achievement rates of clients on different programmes or courses. EMBS is currently developing a database to improve the recording of information about clients.

10. Meetings of particular staff groups are held approximately every three to four months. These cover operational issues effectively, but are not routinely used to monitor the performance of programmes or share good practice. Minutes are produced but these do not clearly identify responsibility for action, or timescales. There is regular contact between tutors in the same vocational area, but few planned meetings or development activities. Directors' meetings do not include a review of performance of programmes.

Equality of opportunity**Contributory grade 2**

11. EMBS is very successful in enabling clients from minority ethnic groups to overcome the barriers to employment and training. Over 60 per cent of the clients EMBS recruited to Jobcentre Plus programmes, in the year beginning April 2001, were from such groups. The company recruits significant numbers of clients from refugee communities and other under-represented groups in employment, such as lone parents. It has carefully developed its provision so that many clients learn vocational skills that are important in the labour market, such as being able to use a computer. Courses in sewing and for crèche workers are effective in overcoming the cultural barriers to participation in training which women from some minority ethnic groups face. At the same time, these women acquire skills and qualifications to help them gain work in a range of culturally acceptable settings, especially the home. Foundation programmes focused on English language and personal development provide an important route into employment training for clients whose communication skills and confidence are low.

12. EMBS makes good use of data it routinely collects on clients' gender, ethnicity and age. It uses these in conjunction with data on the local population, to identify where to concentrate outreach activities and recruitment. For example, analysis of data helped managers to identify that although there is a significant Chinese community in south Oxford, there were no members of that community taking up training at EMBS. The company made effective links with relevant community organisations, which eventually resulted in sustained recruitment of Chinese clients. Most of EMBS's staff are from minority ethnic groups. They provide good role models for clients. EMBS makes effective use of the wide range of community languages its staff speak. These language skills are helpful when clients who lack the confidence to use English come to enrol and in supporting such clients when they are in training.

13. EMBS has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy covering compliance with legislation and the promotion of equality and diversity. The manager reviews and updates it annually. All clients receive a copy of the policy at their induction, when their tutors carefully explain it to them. For many clients, however, the language of the policy is too complex for easy understanding. They have little awareness of wider equal opportunities issues. Clients also receive a copy of the company's complaints procedures at induction. They are clear about who to complain to in the event of unfair treatment. When a client complains, EMBS follows up quickly and logs the progress and outcome of their complaint. There is a good range of procedures covering recruitment of staff and clients. There are sound procedures for staff to make complaints and raise grievances, as part of their employment contract. Coverage of these procedures and equal opportunities policies forms part of the induction of new staff.

14. There is poor access to EMBS' premises for people with mobility difficulties. The main building used for training at Oxford has a small entrance hall, making wheelchair access difficult to ground floor rooms. Much of the training takes place in rooms on the first floor of the building, which can only be reached by stairs. EMBS has recently taken over new administration offices in Oxford, and new premises for training and

administration in Banbury. Both are located on upper floors and access is by stairway only. EMBS rarely recruits client with mobility problems. The company does not currently collect data on clients' disabilities.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

15. There is inadequate quality assurance of learning. There are established quality assurance procedures covering many aspects of EMBS's operations, but they do not extend to the learning process. Two separate procedures refer to responsibilities for monitoring the quality of learning materials. One places the responsibility with the manager, the other with tutors. In practice, tutors produce and use their own learning materials, which are not routinely checked for quality or appropriateness. Audit procedures do not adequately identify deficiencies in the quality of information in some documents, notably individual learning plans. There is no established system for regularly observing tutors to evaluate their performance, for sharing good practice or for providing additional support when required. New tutors are informally observed during the early period of their employment. However, managers rely mainly on feedback from external verifiers and a local college to monitor the quality of teaching. There are too few formal procedures to ensure that tutors run programmes to fully meet the requirements of the Jobcentre Plus contract.

16. There is inadequate use of feedback to evaluate and improve training. Clients are invited to complete evaluation forms at the end of each programme. The questions are narrowly focused on the vocational elements of the programme and do not adequately cover other elements such as literacy, English language and jobsearch training. The information is collected, but not systematically analysed and used to evaluate the quality of training or to amend the content and structure of training. There is no comparison of feedback from courses of the same type, or analysis of trends over time.

17. The self-assessment report is the third EMBS has produced, and the first produced using the 'Common Inspection Framework'. The report was produced by the manager, with contributions from some staff. The report is detailed and identifies strengths and weaknesses. All staff were asked to comment on its content and findings, but were not routinely involved in its preparation. Directors were not involved in preparing the report, nor were they asked to comment on it after it was completed. EMBS produced a development plan during 2000-01, but it does not deal with all the strengths and weaknesses identified through self-assessment.

Good Practice

A bi-monthly newsletter and an informative annual report are used to communicate information about the work and success of EMBS to a wide range of companies, organisations and individuals. The newsletter includes contributions from learners, including accounts of their experience. One includes a highly expressive poem, which demonstrates a learner's skill in English language and understanding of ICT.

Oxfordshire County Council Museum Service employed two clients, who had recently completed sewing training at EMBS, to create costumes of the type currently worn by members of the Asian community in Oxford. These costumes will form part of the permanent textile collection at the museum. The museum service first became aware of EMBS when council staff attended cultural awareness training the company provided.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information & communications technology

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
New Deal 25+ and work-based learning for adults	10	3

18. EMBS provides training for 10 clients on a 13-week LOT programme at its two centres. In 2001-02, clients also followed short job-focused training (SJFT). Clients are working towards a basic computer literacy qualification. Following referral from Jobcentre Plus, clients are invited to an interview at EMBS. During the interview, clients' personal and language skills, career aims and their aptitude for ICT training are discussed. Clients are then invited to join the next available programme. Following recruitment, clients have a group induction in which the course content, and the company's health and safety and equal opportunities policies are discussed, as are the clients' rights and responsibilities. An individual learning plan is agreed. Reviews are carried out midway through the programme. Jobsearch activities are carried out with clients each week. There are three tutors and one internal verifier in this area of learning.

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	10		39						
Retained*	0	0	32	82						
Planned learning completed	0	0	28	72						
Gained job	0	0	10	26						
Still in training	10	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

- strong, motivating support for clients
- good physical resources
- comprehensive assessment practices
- good achievement rate of ICT qualification

WEAKNESSES

- inadequate initial assessment
- weak action-planning
- weak progress reviews
- insufficient jobsearch

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better advice on careers and progression opportunities

19. EMBS offers strong support to clients. Staff are very helpful and sympathetic to the clients' needs. They work hard to motivate clients and help them to progress. Many clients come back to the training centre after finishing their training to maintain contact with staff. There are frequent opportunities for clients to talk to staff on an individual basis. Staff empathise with the learners and successfully encourage trust to develop. This improves clients' self-esteem, confidence and communication skills. They appreciate the support staff give in removing barriers to progress. Clients have many opportunities to take additional qualifications. Some clients do not receive sufficient advice on future career possibilities and opportunities for progression.

20. EMBS provides good workshop resources for clients. There are sufficient, up-to-date computer workstations and software applications, which meet the needs of the clients well. The workshop accommodation provides an appropriate learning environment with good facilities for practical demonstrations and training, in background knowledge. Computer workstations are appropriately positioned. There is a large desk in each room for group work and other activities. Learning materials are well designed, with clear explanations, instructions and diagrams. Tutors make effective use of computer presentation software and learning materials to provide for clients' needs, both at the training centre and for individual study.

21. Assessment practices are comprehensive and well designed to meet the clients' vocational needs. EMBS's staff assess clients regularly throughout the programme. The

assessment process allows clients to progress at their own pace. Clients find this motivational and are proud of their ongoing achievements. Following each assessment, clients receive good verbal feedback, individual coaching and appropriate demonstrations. This is effective in helping clients to develop their practical skills.

22. The achievement rate for ICT qualifications is good. During the period April 2001 to March 2002, 72 per cent of the clients achieved their ICT qualification. This includes some clients on SJFT. During the current year, clients have made good progress and a substantial number are close to completion. The rate of progression into jobs during 2001-02 was poor at 32 per cent, which is below the targets EMBS agreed with Jobcentre Plus.

23. EMBS does not always adequately identify clients' needs at the start of their programme. Clients often arrive on their programme without having had a thorough initial assessment. Initial assessment is limited to an individual discussion and drawing up of an action plan. There is no assessment of clients' basic skills at this point. There is no assessment of learning styles and little formal assessment of occupational aptitude. However, when any learning needs are identified, clients receive good personal support.

24. The use of individual action plans is ineffective. Targets in individual learning plans are very general and rarely individual. Plans drawn up at the start of the programme vary in quality. While some contain sufficient information relating to the client's background, others often lack clear, short-term targets and dates. Little attempt is made to involve clients in setting challenging targets. Most clients are not given demanding targets for job applications. Clients are not routinely provided with a copy of their action plan.

25. Reviews of clients' progress are inadequate. The reviews are brief and general. The reviews are not evaluative and make little reference to the progress made towards the targets in the individual learning plan. No measurable targets result from the progress review.

26. There is insufficient jobsearch training. Jobsearch activity is ineffective for many learners. Jobsearch resources are inadequate. The video resources do not always match the needs and abilities of all clients and there are no reference materials or specialist trade journals. For many learners, jobsearch mainly consists of reading job advertisements in newspapers. EMBS has successfully attracted external speakers from many local organisations. However, some sessions do not sufficiently match the needs or interests of the learners.

Foundation programmes

Grade 3

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

27. EMBS provides BET for 24 clients. Eight clients are following English language programmes, seven clients are on programmes combining English and IT, six clients are on sewing programmes and three are on programmes leading to a basic IT qualification. Many learners are initially contacted through EMBS's outreach activities and advice service and then visit Jobcentre Plus offices. All learners are referred from Jobcentre Plus. They then have an interview at EMBS before they are offered a place on the next available programme. Programmes are organised into 13-week blocks, aligned with school terms. Following recruitment, clients have a group induction. An individual learning plan is drawn up. Reviews are carried out midway through the programme. Jobsearch activities are carried out with clients each week.

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	20		48						
Retained*	1	5	29	60						
Planned learning completed	0	0	29	60						
Gained job	1	5	9	19						
Still in training	19	95	5	10						

*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

- good vocational training
- good client support
- good development of personal skills

WEAKNESSES

- poor planning of individual learning
- insufficient focus on English language needs

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better photocopying of training materials

28. Vocational training in IT and sewing is good. Clients work purposefully and with enthusiasm. Trainers are very knowledgeable about their subject areas. They use a range of questioning and other techniques effectively to ensure clients' understanding. Learning sessions are generally well planned and organised. They focus strongly on developing clients' practical skills. Clients benefit from good resources, including modern computers and sewing machines. Clients are clearly making good progress on both the beginners IT programme and on the programme leading to a full qualification. All three clients following sewing programmes in 2001-02 achieved a recognised sewing qualification. Clients following sewing programmes currently are making very good progress.

29. Clients receive good support from staff at EMBS. Staff throughout the company are very positive towards the clients. Trainers develop a good rapport with clients which ensures that even those lacking confidence feel able to contribute in learning sessions. Trainers often work individually with clients, usually focusing on their short-term needs in the subject or skills area. They also discuss wider training and employment issues sympathetically and with interest when clients raise these. There is good welfare support available from staff. Administration staff are often able to make clients feel more at ease by discussing problems in the minority languages which clients speak. Staff know the clients personally, and offer helpful advice. They are knowledgeable and have links with a good range of specialist agencies to which they can refer clients with particular needs. Clients who have completed their training often return for continuing support, which is readily given. Clients appreciate and value this support.

30. Clients are developing their personal skills well. They take great pride in the work they produce. They have a strong belief in the progress they are making. Nearly all speak English as an additional language. They work co-operatively with fellow clients in classes, for example, interpreting when a client who speaks the same minority language does not understand an instruction. Most clients have developed their confidence in using spoken English sufficiently to use it outside the classroom for the first time in certain situations. Many are keen to gain employment and to overcome the barrier their English language skills pose. In the year from April 2001 to March 2002, the achievement rate was satisfactory. Sixty per cent of clients completed the targets on their individual learning plans, while a further 10 per cent are still in learning. Almost

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one in five clients gained jobs. This is below the target EMBS agreed with Jobcentre Plus, but it is satisfactory for this client group.

31. Learning for individual clients is poorly planned. Initial assessment is inadequate. Most clients whom Jobcentre Plus refers to EMBS have not had a detailed initial assessment of their needs. EMBS carries out only a short informal assessment before assigning clients to a class. Once in class, tutors generally carry out their own assessments with clients. However, these assessments are not standardised, either within a particular class or across the different classes at EMBS. Following their in-class assessment, tutors write individual learning plans for clients. These are unsatisfactory. The goals set for clients are very general and rarely specific to the client. Goals are not precise enough for it to be easily apparent if or when they have been achieved. The timescale for achieving goals is unclear. The mechanisms for tutors and clients to review progress are inadequate, and clients' goals are not modified in the light of changing circumstances. Where clients' learning plans have specific individual goals, these do not sufficiently influence the programme the client receives. Clients sign the learning plan at the beginning of the programme, but do not routinely receive a copy of it.

32. There is insufficient focus on the English language needs of clients. Most clients following BET speak English as an additional language. They have significant problems in aspects of reading, writing, listening and speaking in English. Their proficiency in these skills is not assessed systematically at the start of their training. Learning goals which EMBS set for clients often refer to these skills, but too vaguely. Managers do not organise classes carefully enough to maximise clients' English language improvement. For example, they place complete beginners in classes with clients whose spoken English is good. Some tutors give insufficient emphasis to clients improving their English language, especially where there is also a vocational goal such as an IT qualification. Tutors use too narrow a range of approaches to English language training, often relying on printed handouts which concentrate too much on vocabulary and spelling. EMBS does not currently use the national standards for literacy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), or the national ESOL curriculum when planning their programmes. Although EMBS's self-assessment report identifies Wordpower qualifications as inappropriate for current learners, many still receive assessments in class based around this qualification. Clients value jobsearch sessions highly when they offer practical work-focused language training. However, they find other parts of the programme unhelpful, for example, guest speakers, since they often do not have sufficient English to understand spoken English. Only one EMBS staff member has any qualifications or has received training to teach ESOL.

33. Tutors often photocopy training materials from textbooks and other printed originals. These copies are sometimes difficult to read and of poor appearance.