

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Coventry and Warwickshire Chambers of Commerce Training Limited Reinspection**

**12 November 2002**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Grading

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

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

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas. 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
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes 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.



## SUMMARY

### The provider

Coventry and Warwickshire Chambers of Commerce Training Limited (CWT) is based in Coventry. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Coventry and Warwickshire Chambers of Commerce. It offers work-based learning in engineering, business administration, hairdressing, hospitality, retailing, and customer service and early years care and education, leading to foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships or national vocational qualifications (NVQs). Most learners live and work in Coventry and Warwickshire.

### Overall judgement

The original inspection in June 2001 found that work-based learning for young people in engineering, business administration and hairdressing was satisfactory, but in retailing, customer service and transportation, hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, and health, social care and public services it was unsatisfactory. CWT's leadership and management, equality of opportunity and quality assurance were satisfactory. At the reinspection in November 2002, work-based learning in retailing, customer service and transportation was judged to be good and in hospitality it was satisfactory. Training in dental nursing ceased in the summer of 2002 and has been replaced by programmes in early years care and education. This was inspected in March 2003 and judged to be satisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, all aspects of the provision were found to be satisfactory or better.

### Grades awarded

	Original	Reinspection
<b>Retailing, customer service &amp; transportation</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	2

	Original	Reinspection
<b>Hospitality, sport, leisure &amp; travel</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	3

	Original	Reinspection
<b>Health, social care &amp; public services</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	3

## THE REINSPECTION

1. The reinspection of CWT was carried out in two stages and involved four inspectors over a total of eleven days. The first stage was for three days, starting on 12 November 2002, and covered two areas of learning. The second stage was for three days to inspect the new early years care and education provision. It finished on 21st March 2003. The inspectors used the self-assessment report dated July 2002, along with the relevant, up-to-date post-inspection improvements information for the three areas of learning. During the reinspection five learning sessions were observed, all of which were satisfactory or better. In addition, inspectors interviewed staff, workplace supervisors and learners, examined learners' individual learning plans and portfolios of evidence, assessment and internal verification records, and minutes of meetings.

Grades awarded to learning sessions at reinspection

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Health, social care & public services	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Retailing, customer service & transportation

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	29	2

2. CWT has 29 learners in this area of learning, all of whom are employed. There are three advanced modern apprentices in vehicle sales. Fourteen learners are working towards customer service qualifications, six are advanced modern apprentices, four are foundation modern apprentices, three are following an NVQ at level 2 and one at level 3. There are two foundation modern apprentices in distribution and warehousing and nine in retailing. One learner is working towards an NVQ in retailing at level 2. Most learners are recruited directly from employers. A few are referred from the careers service. Initial assessment is carried out by CWT, and includes key skills, prior learning and achievement and the matching of the learners' job role to the qualification. The results of the initial assessment are used to determine the level of additional support required. Prior learning and achievement are taken into account if they are current and valid. Most assessment is carried out by CWT's staff and one self-employed assessor. Assessment takes place in the workplace and learners are visited every two to three weeks. Employers provide on-the-job training, and CWT provides off-the-job training. The assessors carry out learners' initial assessments and progress reviews. The training, assessment and internal verification on the vehicle sales programme is subcontracted to another training provider as all the learners live and work out of the area.

### STRENGTHS

- good evidence in assessment portfolios
- wide range of supportive work environments
- particularly good key skills projects
- good management of action-planning and continuous improvement

### WEAKNESSES

- low, but improving achievement rates on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more challenging target-setting
- better presentation of training materials

3. The standard of learners' portfolios of evidence is good. They contain a variety of good evidence including observations of learners' day to day work, statements from candidates and witnesses, and product evidence. Good use is made of case studies and photographic evidence. Learners understand the requirements of the award and are fully involved in the collection and referencing of their evidence. Portfolios are well organised and the evidence is clearly presented. This strength was not identified in the self-assessment report. Assessment of learners' work is satisfactory and meets the requirements of the awarding bodies. The internal verification process is well documented and is carried out to a satisfactory level. It provides assessors with meaningful guidance to further improve the assessment process. CWT uses clear documents to plan and record assessment activity. Staff have the necessary qualifications in teaching and assessment with a wide range of backgrounds in the occupational areas, though for some staff this was obtained many years ago. Continuous professional development activities have been carried out and recorded.

4. Learners are employed in a wide range of supportive workplaces. Employers support their learners in effective practical ways, such as providing in-house training linked to their NVQ work and moving them between different roles in the workplace to help them collect their NVQ evidence. The impressive variety of businesses includes golf clubs, electrical distributors, sports and general stores, vehicle sales and office environments. This was partially recognised in the self-assessment report. Employers participate in the review process, help the learners to meet evidence requirements and support learners who have additional learning needs. For practical training that employers cannot provide in the workplace, learners attend workshops at CWT's training centre. CWT's assessors lend laptop computers to learners to support their information technology (IT) work. The learning environment at CWT is spacious and comfortable, and free refreshments are provided for learners. A wide range of resources is available to support learning. These include leaflets and guides from external agencies, and internally produced guides on topics including legislation on the sale of goods, trade descriptions and consumer credit. Induction is carried out by CWT. Learners attend CWT's premises for off-the-job training approximately every two weeks. This includes training in health and safety, equal opportunities and the rights and responsibilities of learners and the employers. Comprehensive lesson plans and handouts support the programmes, but training materials are not always well presented.

5. Key skills training is introduced at the beginning of the programme and learners are encouraged to identify appropriate evidence from the workplace at the earliest opportunity. Learners use real work tasks to cover the range of key skills requirements. These tasks are discussed and agreed with the employer. Learners and employers are able to see the relevance of key skills in the workplace and the results of the projects are often used to improve the operation of the business. The projects are presented well by the learners.



6. Following the original inspection, CWT has made considerable improvements to the provision which have had a significant impact on the learners' experience. Action plans were produced for each of the areas identified. These have been constantly reviewed, and useful short-term targets have been set. Work has been carried out on the weak assessment practice identified by the original inspection. This is now satisfactory and the improvements can be seen in learners' portfolios. Significant improvements have been made in the introduction and implementation of key skills projects. A member of staff has been appointed to give guidance and support to all learners across all key skills areas. The assessment of key skills remains with the vocational assessor. Arrangements for monitoring have been improved. The service level agreement remains and there is now a comprehensive monitoring system which takes account of internal and external verification records.

7. Learners are making good progress. The retention rate is satisfactory. The achievement rate for advanced modern apprentices is satisfactory and has averaged 50 per cent over the past two years. The achievement rate for foundation modern apprentices has improved from 34 per cent in 1999-2000 to 40 per cent in 2000-01. Achievement is also improving for learners on NVQ-only programmes.

8. Learners do not have sufficiently challenging targets. Individual learning plans include target dates, but some learners commented that they could have achieved their qualifications more quickly. The initial targets on some learners' individual learning plans have been amended to take account of their progress. Learners' progress is reviewed during assessors' visits, but where targets have not been met they are merely transferred to the next visit plan. The three learners on the subcontracted vehicle sales programme have not been set interim target dates.

#### Good Practice

*CWT gives employers a pack of information which contains details of the qualification learners are following, the learning and assessment process and the responsibilities of all those involved. It is particularly beneficial to those employers who have no previous experience of NVQs and/or work-based learning. It acts as a central point of reference for employers and is valued by them. It is used to store all the required documents such as copies of learners progress reviews.*

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

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

9. CWT provides foundation and advanced modern apprenticeship programmes in food preparation and cooking, reception, quick service and licensed premises. It also offers NVQ-only programmes. There is a hospitality team leader and two assessors. Currently there are two advanced and 15 foundation modern apprentices, and one NVQ learner. All are employed. Learners can join the programme at any time of the year. Employers range from hotels and private clubs to contract catering and pubs. Learners' initial assessments cover key skills, basic skills, prior learning, preferred learning styles, a motivation questionnaire and job role information. The information is used to design an individual learning plan and determine the level of additional support required. Support is provided both on and off the job according to the learners' needs. All learners are assessed in the workplace by CWT's assessors, and training takes place both at employers' and CWT's premises. Most learners are visited by CWT's staff every two to four weeks in the workplace for assessment. Learners' progress reviews are carried out every 12 weeks.

**STRENGTHS**

- good learning environments
- good assessment practice

**WEAKNESSES**

- low, but improving achievement rates

**OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better records of individual achievement in learners' portfolios
- more use of diverse assessment evidence

10. There are good learning environments both at CWT and at learners' workplaces, a strength that is recognised in the self-assessment report. The training rooms at CWT are well-equipped and resourced. Free refreshments are available to learners. There are IT and Internet facilities for learners to use during their break times. The learners' workplaces are of a high standard and well resourced and equipped. Learners have many opportunities to collect work-based assessment evidence. Most employers have

their own in-house training programmes and learning resources and give learners time in their normal working day to work on their NVQ. Many employers are keen for their learners to develop further and offer good promotion opportunities. Employers have a good relationship with CWT and are happy with the service and support that CWT offers. Learners benefit from regular assessors' visits at which all parties are involved in the learning and review process. Progress reviews are carried out by CWT's hospitality tutors. These staff are working towards training and development qualifications. CWT and employers respond well to the individual needs of learners. CWT has introduced additional key skills support for learners in their workplaces, and offers basic skills support as appropriate.

11. CWT has good assessment practices. Learners are actively involved in planning their assessments and have a good understanding of the process. Assessors carry out thorough and well-recorded observations in the workplace at appropriate times to match industry peak periods. There is good use of supplementary questioning to ensure learners' understanding. Competence is also demonstrated through additional photographic evidence. Learners are given comprehensive verbal and written feedback about the results of the assessment. Assessors have good knowledge and understanding of the occupational standards, are well qualified and occupationally competent. Good use is made by assessors of evidence in learners' everyday work, which maximises the assessment opportunities. Work-based projects in key skills are used for each sector of the hospitality industry. These are industry specific and broad enough to encompass all the key skills units at the appropriate levels. They are also tailored, where needed, to meet specific business and individual needs and experience. The projects are challenging and stimulating and enable learners to meet their qualification requirements.

12. CWT now manages hospitality training itself. This training was subcontracted at the time of the original inspection. Learners rate of progress is improving although CWT recognises that it is still a weakness. The two advanced modern apprentices are making good progress towards their qualifications. Achievement for the foundation modern apprentices has improved from zero in 1999-2000 to 29 per cent in 2000-01. So far, 13 per cent of learners who started programmes in 2001-02 have successfully achieved their qualifications, and a further 42 per cent are still in learning and making good progress towards completing their qualifications. Retention rates are also improving. In 1999-2000 no foundation modern apprentices were retained for the planned duration of their programme. Twenty-nine per cent were retained in 2000-01 and 55 per cent in 2001-02. CWT's assessors are now responsible for assessment practice. CWT identified that the previous poor retention rate was due in part to learners working in the fast food sector where staff turnover is notoriously high. CWT has now decided not to offer qualifications for workers in the fast food sector. Achievement rates for modern apprentices are still low, but there is clear evidence that they are improving.

13. In other occupational areas detailed records are kept of learners' achievements. Information on the elements of qualifications learners have gained are stored in their files. This does not happen in hospitality, and the good practice in other occupational areas is not shared with hospitality tutors.

14. Some learners are near to completing the NVQ part of their qualification, although they still have knowledge evidence to be assessed. The current assessment method is for learners to write answers to set questions. This is time-consuming and slows learners' progress.

**Good Practice**

*On arrival at one workplace, the assessor observed a learner performing activities which had not been expected or planned for. The assessor realised that this was an opportunity to collect good evidence for other NVQ elements. The assessor reviewed the plan, and negotiated with the learner to continue the assessment to this new plan. The assessment was fully recorded and referenced in the learner's logbook. This enabled the learner to complete outstanding assessments and finish a further two units of the qualification.*

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	20	3

15. Training in health, social care and public services has changed significantly over the past 18 months. At the time of the original inspection there was a small group of nine learners training as dental nurses. Training was subcontracted, and was judged to be less than satisfactory. Following an evaluation of other possible arrangements, CWT decided to withdraw from this sector as it could not provide the training and assessment locally. Coincidentally, part of CWT's strategy for 2002 was the introduction of early years care programmes. This has resulted in the recruitment of an assessor, the acquisition of centre approval for NVQs at levels 2 and 3, and extensive marketing of the provision to employers. There are 20 modern apprentices in early years care. Learners work in a range of private day nurseries and primary schools, and attend CWT's training centre for weekly off-the-job training in background knowledge.

**STRENGTHS**

- good review process
- good off-the-job training and support
- effective networking

**WEAKNESSES**

- some inadequate assessment practice

**OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- more sharing of good practice
- better attention to the needs of more able learners
- more emphasis on childcare and education principles
- more use of identified preferred learning styles to promote learning

16. Learners are recruited by CWT through the careers service and matched to employers' vacancies. An occupationally competent assessor discusses the vacancy with the learner and carries out an initial assessment of their suitability to the work area. Learners work towards NVQs in early years care and education at levels 2 and 3, key skills qualifications and the basic food hygiene certificate. As the early years care

provision has only been recently introduced, there is little achievement data available. Most learners have been recruited over the past six months.

17. The recruitment and selection process involves a thorough interaction between the applicant and the occupationally qualified assessor. Potential learners are made aware of all aspects of the modern apprenticeship before they start training. This ensures that they fully recognise the depth of work involved in early years care, and is intended to improve learners' chances of completing their programme. The use of taster days adds to potential learners' awareness of the sector's requirements.

18. The learners' review process is good throughout the programme. Learners' needs are clearly identified, and their existing occupational skills are checked, at the beginning of their training. The results of this initial assessment are used to devise an individual learning plan, determine the level of additional support they need, and match them to appropriate programmes. Progress reviews are carried out regularly. Learners understand their purpose and are fully aware of the progress they make. Tracking sheets are used to monitor learners' progress towards their NVQs, but there are no tracking sheets for key skills.

19. The weekly off-the-job training sessions are stimulating and involve the use of varied teaching methods and learning resources. There is active participation by learners in activities which engage their interest and develop their occupational skills. Learners' progress is good and their learning is checked effectively by the tutor. Most key skills evidence is integrated with NVQ work. There are no learners receiving basic skills support, although they are aware that it is available and know how to access it. More able learners who complete their tasks quickly are not given additional learning materials to stretch them and enable them to use their time effectively. Although learners' preferred learning styles are identified, this information is not always used in lesson planning. There is insufficient emphasis on children's development and the underlying principles of childcare. Learners' background knowledge is sometimes a little vague.

20. CWT has effective networking arrangements with local schools. It has developed a number of initiatives which are working well and creating good opportunities for school students. Four year 12 students working towards NVQs at level 2 are assessed by CWT once a week at a work placement. Sixth form students from a school with a large proportion of students from minority ethnic groups take part in a citizenship project working alongside childcare learners and completing the wider key skills units. Year 10 and 11 students on extended work experience are being supported by CWT to gain a profile of achievement from an awarding body.

21. Most learners' work is satisfactory, and some is good. Portfolios of evidence are well organised and evidence is easy to find. Learners' progress is satisfactory and they have completed assessments on many aspects of the NVQ units. However, the slow final assessment of written work is delaying the completion of some units and there is insufficient emphasis on completing units throughout the programme. Workplace assessment is taking place, but there is only one CWT assessor and she visits workplaces

on three days each week. She also provides off-the-job training on two days each week. There is insufficient assessment in the workplace. CWT is aware that there is very little use of work-based assessors and it plans to develop this area when the new assessment and internal verification practices are fully established. There is little sharing of good practice between the more established areas of learning and the assessor for early years care and education.

22. Some employers do not offer full employment and appropriate salaries to learners. CWT identified this as a concern in the self-assessment report. It can result in poorly motivated learners who are easily drawn to higher paid positions without training outside of the sector. The early years care sector is a new training area for CWT and there is insufficient awareness by key referral agencies and prospective employers about the provision. CWT includes this as an area for improvement in the self-assessment report.