

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GHQ Training Reinspection**

**02 July 2003**



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 **learnirect** 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

GHQ Training was established in 1992. It offers hairdressing, management, administration, early years care and education, customer service and retailing. There are 88 learners in hairdressing, 29 in early years, 15 in management and administration. GHQ Training is run by two partners and has two other full-time staff and 14 part-time staff with responsibilities for training. In addition, there is a dedicated member of staff responsible for recruitment, one in charge of management information systems and three people are employed as administrators. There are several work-based assessors in hairdressing, usually the owners or managers of salons. Off-the-job training is carried out on GHQ Training's premises in Plymouth. GHQ Training moved to new premises in June 2001 which created more space and enabled two modern hairdressing salons to be built for training purposes. Funding of work-based learning is through Devon and Cornwall Learning and Skills Council.

### Overall judgement

The original inspection in September 2001 found that the training in early years care and education was satisfactory, as were the arrangements for equality of opportunity. However, the training for hairdressing, and business administration and management were unsatisfactory. The leadership and management, and arrangements for quality assurance were also unsatisfactory. By the end of the reinspection process, all aspects of the provision were found to be good.

### Grades awarded

	Original	Reinspection
<b>Leadership and management</b>	4	2
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity	3	2
Quality assurance	4	2

	Original	Reinspection
<b>Business administration, management &amp; professional</b>	4	2
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	2

	Original	Reinspection
<b>Hairdressing &amp; beauty therapy</b>	4	2
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	4	2

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	Original	Reinspection
<b>Health, social care &amp; public services</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:		
Work-based learning for young people	3	2

During the reinspection process, the inspection team identified the following key strengths, weaknesses and other improvements needed:

### KEY STRENGTHS

- good learning and pastoral support
- good links between on- and off-the-job training
- effective integration of key skills with vocational training
- good resources for all learners

### KEY WEAKNESSES

- no key weaknesses identified

## THE REINSPECTION

1. Reinspection of GHQ Training (GHQ) was carried out in three stages. A total of 17 inspection days was used. The first visit was carried out on 6 February 2003. The second stage was on 31 March and 1 April 2003. The third stage was on 1 and 2 July 2003. A new self-assessment report was produced in October 2002 and the action plan from this report has been updated on a regular basis. The latest self-assessment report was produced in May 2003.

Grades awarded to learning sessions at the original inspection

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Health, social care & public services	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>

Grades awarded to learning sessions at reinspection

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Health, social care & public services	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
<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>

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

During the reinspection process, the inspection team identified the following strengths, weaknesses and other improvements needed:

### STRENGTHS

- good systems for quality assurance
- good communication
- good resources
- effective promotion of equal opportunities

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- establish the quality assurance process

2. Since the original inspection, new staff have been appointed to the training team, representing an increase of 55 per cent. A new member of staff has been appointed whose sole remit is the management of key skills provision and there is another new staff member responsible for the management information system. The staff team is very committed and there is good communication within the company. The management is responsive to change and much has been achieved since the original inspection. Issues identified from the visit in March 2003 had been resolved by the time of the visit in July 2003.

3. The resources are good. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. The teaching rooms are well equipped and are light and airy. There are good teaching materials available and ample computers for learners to use. Learners speak highly of the company and its resources.

4. The self-assessment process has been thoroughly reviewed and staff are now much more involved in the process. Staff make judgements about strengths and weaknesses in their own area of learning and will be responsible for writing the next self-assessment report. Action points are reviewed in the staff meetings, which are minuted and circulated to all staff. There are also up-to-date development plans which are shared with staff at the monthly meetings. In addition, there is a Friday morning meeting for training staff each week. The development plans are now clearly focused with specific aims and objectives.

5. The induction for learners has been reviewed by tutors and learners, and now includes a wider range of materials to ensure that it is more interesting for learners. An induction pack is given to each learner and an induction record is signed by the learners and retained by GHQ. The use of the basic key skills builder package has also enabled



learning needs to be identified in a more supportive way, which has resulted in fewer early leavers. Extra assessments have been included as well as the implementation of tighter target-setting and action-planning. A modern apprenticeship reward system has been introduced and this has been successful in encouraging learners to achieve national vocational qualification (NVQ) units.

6. A new management information system has been developed and has a dedicated member of staff to manage it. This has resolved several weaknesses from the original inspection relating to poor collection, recording and use of data. The new system will be fully implemented soon.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 2**

7. Equality of opportunity has a high profile at GHQ. There is a clear policy document which is readily available to all staff and learners. There is good evidence that the policies are effective and promotional material is responsive to issues of gender and ethnicity. Learners show a good awareness of equal opportunities and diversity. After 10 staff training days in equality of opportunity, a focus group was formed to review policy and practice. There are good facilities for learners who have a disability, and learners with additional learning needs are given extra help.

8. The original inspection identified that some employers did not have an equal opportunities policy or a copy of GHQ's policy. This has now been resolved by an employer pack which is delivered by hand to the employer. Employers are taken through the pack by an assessor and they have to sign say that they have been received. A survey of employers was carried out to identify those interested in attending a workshop in equality of opportunity and health and safety, and the response was good. Employers are also sent a letter to remind them of their health and safety responsibilities to ensure that they are prepared.

9. There is a procedure to identify and process any issues relating to equal opportunities, with the necessary action points identified. This is also used to check that learners have adequate reinforcement of equality of opportunity issues during their reviews.

**Quality assurance**

**Contributory grade 2**

10. The quality assurance systems are well recorded and have been reviewed since the original inspection. There is a comprehensive manual which is available to all staff. There is a system to ensure that the quality assurance policies are reviewed regularly throughout the year. There is a checklist of reviews for each month with a named member of staff for each area. It has been completed since July 2002 and has been an efficient way to measure the effectiveness of the quality assurance system. There is now a complaints log to record learner complaints. Any complaints have been dealt with effectively.

11. Major improvements have resulted from the implementation of a management information system, which has a dedicated manager responsible for it. Data on all aspects of the business are collected, collated, analysed and used to provide the management with information. Trends are identified, as are problems for individual learners, and these are discussed at staff meetings. The meetings are minuted and detailed action points are recorded and are checked at the next meeting. Performance data are readily available to monitor retention and achievement rates. Systems are in place for better attendance monitoring and the monitoring of learner feedback forms. This means that data are readily available to make year-on-year comparisons, as well as monitoring progress to date.

12. The internal verification system is thorough. It is well recorded and the sampling plans are up to date, with verification taking place at the appropriate time. There are sheets to monitor the sampling of course work for internal verification. There are regular standardisation meetings which are used as a training exercise to ensure consistency between the assessors. The meetings also enable internal verifiers to share good practice. There are some gaps in recording, such as in registration numbers and other portfolio details.

13. The self-assessment report was very thorough and identified many of the strengths. The weaknesses identified were typically less significant than those identified by GHQ. The grades given by GHQ were consistently lower than the grades given by inspectors.

**Good Practice**

*A modern apprenticeship reward scheme allows learners to be rewarded for achieving NVQ units and other selected key stages in their training. These rewards are all subject to approval by the employer and awarding body verification. This scheme motivates learners to progress more rapidly through their training and effectively develops their self-esteem.*

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Business administration, management & professional

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	15	2

During the reinspection process, the inspection team identified the following strengths, weaknesses and other improvements needed:

#### STRENGTHS

- good progress in administration frameworks
- wide-ranging assessment
- good learning and pastoral support
- supportive work placements

#### WEAKNESSES

- little key skills progress frameworks for management training

#### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better use of key skills concessions
- more concentration on unit completion in management NVQs

14. There is good progress by learners on administration programmes, which was identified as a weakness in the original report. Their unit achievements are being recorded and show that all learners are on target, and many are exceeding them. Learners have clear ownership of their well-presented portfolios and a good understanding of the framework requirements. The original report identified that key skills should be better monitored. Key skills are now effectively monitored. Learners are now progressing well and key skills and much of their evidence are vocationally related. There has also been good development of personal skills by learners. Learners are gaining self-confidence and are highly motivated and ambitious.

15. Retention rates for administration learners are good. For foundation modern apprentices the potential figure for this year is 100 per cent, against 75 per cent the previous year and 66 per cent the year before. For advanced modern apprentices the numbers are very small, but the learner who started this year is still in learning, and of the two starts in 2000, one left early and one is still in learning.

16. There is wide range of assessment being carried out. Assessment arrangements are

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very flexible and are tailored to meet individual needs. This strength was identified in the original inspection and has been maintained. Assessors visit learners on a weekly basis and call at times that fit in with observing ongoing activities. Assessment visits can be early in the morning, late at night or on Saturdays. Assessors often use digital cameras to enhance the observation evidence. The original inspection also identified weak assessment practices and these have been overcome. Assessors are using a wide range of assessment methods. Portfolios have good observations, witness testimonies, photographs, a lot of diverse product evidence and also detailed personal statements. All evidence is countersigned.

17. The good learning and pastoral support identified in the original inspection has been maintained. There is ongoing basic skills support every Monday afternoon. At these sessions, learners are not only working to improve their learning needs, but they are also working on their NVQ portfolios so that their main learning aims are linked with the basic skills support. Learners who have additional social needs are also well looked after and outside agencies have been used. This includes specialist assessments to identify very focused support. Learners who cannot visit the training workshops during the day have the option of attending an evening session. Many learners and employers said that the learners had made good progress in social skills, especially with their confidence and self-esteem.

18. The good support from GHQ is reinforced by strong support from employers. Employers give good training and are involved in the NVQ process. They have good knowledge of the learners' portfolios and work well with assessors to take the assessment process forward. Learners are carrying out challenging tasks, such as electronic presentations, and are going on foreign trips to enhance their technical knowledge. Many learners have progressed well within their companies and have gained supervisory or management roles. Some of the employers are ex-learners and are excellent role models. The original report identified poor links between on- and off-the-job training, but GHQ's staff have worked hard to overcome this and employers and assessors are well aware of each other's roles.

19. The slow NVQ progress identified in the original report has been rectified for learners in management programmes. However, the assessment is still very holistic and there are many nearly completed units. There have been problems gathering specific evidence and assessors and learners have identified that more concentration is needed to focus on these units. There has been little progress with key skills for learners on management programmes. This contrasts with the satisfactory progress being achieved with NVQs. Two learners who have been training for 18 months have very little evidence for key skills. A third of the learners have made little progress in eight months. Overall retention rates are satisfactory on management programmes.

20. While the training company is very efficient in applying for exemptions for key skills, it is unclear of the criteria for concessions.

**Good Practice**

*As the result of a specially arranged assessment with an outside agency, a learner was equipped with an overlay that enabled them to understand written work far more easily. The learner has progressed dramatically in their area of learning and social skills.*

**Hairdressing & beauty therapy****Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	88	2

During the reinspection process, the inspection team identified the following strengths, weaknesses and other improvements needed:

**STRENGTHS**

- good practical training
- good retention on rates for foundation modern apprentices
- good progress reviews

**OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better use of individual learning plans

21. GHQ offers good practical training sessions which are planned to meet the individual needs and requirements of learners. All learners have access to experienced and qualified trainers and assessors, in the GHQ training centre and in the workplaces. There are opportunities for all learners to take assessments during on- and off-the-job sessions. Most learners demonstrate a good level of practical skills. A structured scheme of work is in place for foundation modern apprentices and advanced modern apprentices. All off-the-job training sessions are supported by a standard lesson plan, and in most cases this describes the learning activity and a method of evaluating learners' understanding. There is a good ratio of learners to trainers, with one trainer to every eight learners. There are good working relationships between trainers and learners, and this creates an environment which is conducive to learning. Learners feel confident in their work and are well motivated to progress. GHQ matches hairdressing models to the skills required by the learner. Learning materials are good and there are well-resourced training and salon environments with a wide range of professional products. Three learning sessions were observed, all of which were good.

22. Learners have good progress reviews every four weeks at the training centre and every 12 weeks in the workplace. Progress reviews include the employer. Since the original inspection, GHQ has worked hard to develop its review process, which is now very comprehensive and covers all aspects of learners' progress. Learners are given clear short-term targets which are negotiated between the learner, employer and assessor. Targets are sufficiently challenging to motivate the learners and to help their progress. During the review process, on- and off-the-job training are co-ordinated to support the learners' needs. Learners feel motivated by their targets and have a clear understanding of what is required of them. The individual learning plan, although

available at the review process, was not used as a working document at the time of the original inspection. The provider has worked hard since then for this to be identified as a strength.

23. Retention rates for foundation modern apprentices are good. For 2000-01, 52 per cent of learners were retained and 41 per cent remain in learning. The retention rate for 1999 was 95 per cent. Retention rates for advanced modern apprentices were satisfactory, with an average over a three-year period of 66 per cent. Achievement rates for foundation modern apprentices and advanced modern apprentices are satisfactory. For 2000-01, the achievement rate for foundation modern apprentices was 17 per cent. However, it was identified that 10 learners were about to complete which raised the rate to 52 per cent. The achievement rate during 1999-2000 was 78 per cent. The achievement rate for advanced modern apprentices for 2000-01 was 38 per cent. However, it was identified that two learners were about to complete the framework, which increased the achievement rate to 63 per cent.

24. Since the original inspection, GHQ has appointed a key skills co-ordinator who is responsible for delivering key skills. Key skills are now introduced at the beginning of the learners' programme and are an integral part of the NVQ. Opportunities are taken by staff to reinforce the links between key skills and the vocational area. The rate at which learners complete the key skills work has increased and is now satisfactory. This was identified as a weakness at the original inspection.

25. Assessment practice is satisfactory. Feedback is given and assessment records are up to date. Assessment takes place at the training centre and also when an assessor visits the learners at work. Since the original inspection the provider has worked hard to increase the amount of assessment in the workplace. Internal verification is now satisfactory and takes place frequently. There is a long-term sampling plan and an effective method of monitoring the internal verification. Individual learning plans are used appropriately, but there is insufficient detail in some of the learners' plans, and some signatures and dates are missing.

26. Arrangements to assess learners' literacy and numeracy skills during the induction are adequate. Most learners' support needs are appropriately identified and learners are working at the correct level of qualification. Additional support is set in a vocational context, such as help with assignments and written work. Learners who have received help with their basic skills feel that they have benefited from the support.

#### Good Practice

*The provider challenged the learners to devise a way of increasing the number and type of hairdressing models attending GHQ. The learners decided that they should promote their work by displaying photographs in the salon. GHQ organised a professional photo shoot for its learners which produced images of sufficiently high standard as to attract additional models to the training centre.*

**Health, social care & public services****Grade 2**

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

During the reinspection process, the inspection team identified the following strengths, weaknesses and other improvements needed:

**STRENGTHS**

- good links between on- and off-the-job training
- good support and guidance for learners
- effective integration of key skills with NVQ units
- good access to a range of resources

**WEAKNESSES**

- slow progress for some learners

27. The strengths identified in the original inspection continue to be strengths and have overall been included in the findings for this inspection. The weakness and other areas for improvement have been effectively resolved and some of the issues are now strengths or are satisfactory.

28. Employers are made aware of training plans for off-the-job training. The system of forward planning is good and provides effective support for learners who are recruited on an ongoing programme. All learners have a copy of the yearly and termly session plans, and these are shared with employers and workplace supervisors. This is very effective and ensures that trainers, learners and employers are able to link the background knowledge sessions to the development of practical skills in the workplace. Employers make good use of training plans, and help the learners to plan activities to support the NVQ units. Trainers, assessors and learners liaise with employers to identify how practical assessment can take place. Some employers are able to support assessment by providing witness testimonies. However, some learners who have been training for some time are showing slow progress. Some portfolios show evidence of incomplete units, and targets in individual learning plans have not been met. GHQ has been successful in encouraging these learners to continue the programme. For example, learners who have become pregnant during their training have been given extra support to catch up on return from maternity leave, and application has been made to extend the programme beyond the planned duration date.

29. Assessment methods are varied and are carried out to meet the requirements set by the awarding body and the NVQ code of practice. Monitoring records are completed



to identify progress and achievement of NVQ units. The recording easily identifies the planned duration of the programme, and identifies the progress towards NVQ units.

30. Learners are recruited through advertisements, Connexions, and by request from employers. The employer and GHQ interview all learners. The employer gives an induction in the workplace and learners are made aware of routines and procedures in the nurseries. GHQ carries out an induction programme in the training centre, where learners are introduced to assessors and internal verifiers and the NVQ requirements are explained. Key skills are also carefully explained, and learners are made aware of how the full framework can be completed. GHQ offers a reward scheme for learners who complete units by the target dates and this is successful in motivating learners towards their goals. Issues relating to health and safety and equality of opportunity are covered during induction and learners are given a booklet to extend their understanding. Initial assessment is carried out to assess basic skills and to identify a suitable programme of learning. Extra support sessions are offered to learners who have additional learning needs, and GHQ liaises with employers to ensure that the sessions can be attended. To overcome missed attendance at some sessions, GHQ has developed a better monitoring system. Employers' contracts now include specific details of requirements for attendance at off-the-job training sessions. Learners express satisfaction with the training provision. Good working relationships have been formed with GHQ's staff, workplace supervisors and employers, and learners are confident to discuss personal and training issues, and report that problems are dealt with promptly.

31. Key skills are now introduced at the start of programme. Sessions are effectively planned to link them with the NVQ units. This is effective and has increased the learners' acceptance of key skills. Prior achievement of certificates and key skills is well recorded in individual learning plans, and most learners are able to identify their outstanding work.

32. All learners have access to a range of good resources in the training centre and in the workplace. Accommodation in the training centre is comfortable and spacious. There is good access to computers, the Internet, and photocopying and printing facilities. Learners have access to a range of magazines and books which are useful in planning activities and researching topics to support background knowledge. Learners are able to 'drop in' to use these resources to meet their own needs. Workplace accommodation is generally good and is usually in purpose-built nurseries. All staff in the training centre and in the workplaces are well qualified and have good knowledge and understanding of the NVQ.

33. Some of the recording in portfolios is incomplete. This was identified in the first stage of the reinspection and is ongoing. All learners show an awareness of equality of opportunity and complaints and grievance policies and procedures. There is a well-established and thorough system of internal verification. Standardisation meetings are used effectively to develop assessment methods. Staff have attended assessor and verification training organised by the awarding body. Since the first stage of the reinspection, one assessor has become a qualified internal verifier.

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34. Retention rates for foundation and advanced modern apprentices are satisfactory. However, training for some foundation modern apprentices has gone beyond the planned duration. Eighteen per cent of the learners have had the programme extended and are still in learning. Most of the advanced modern apprentices are still in learning and are within the planned duration of the programme.